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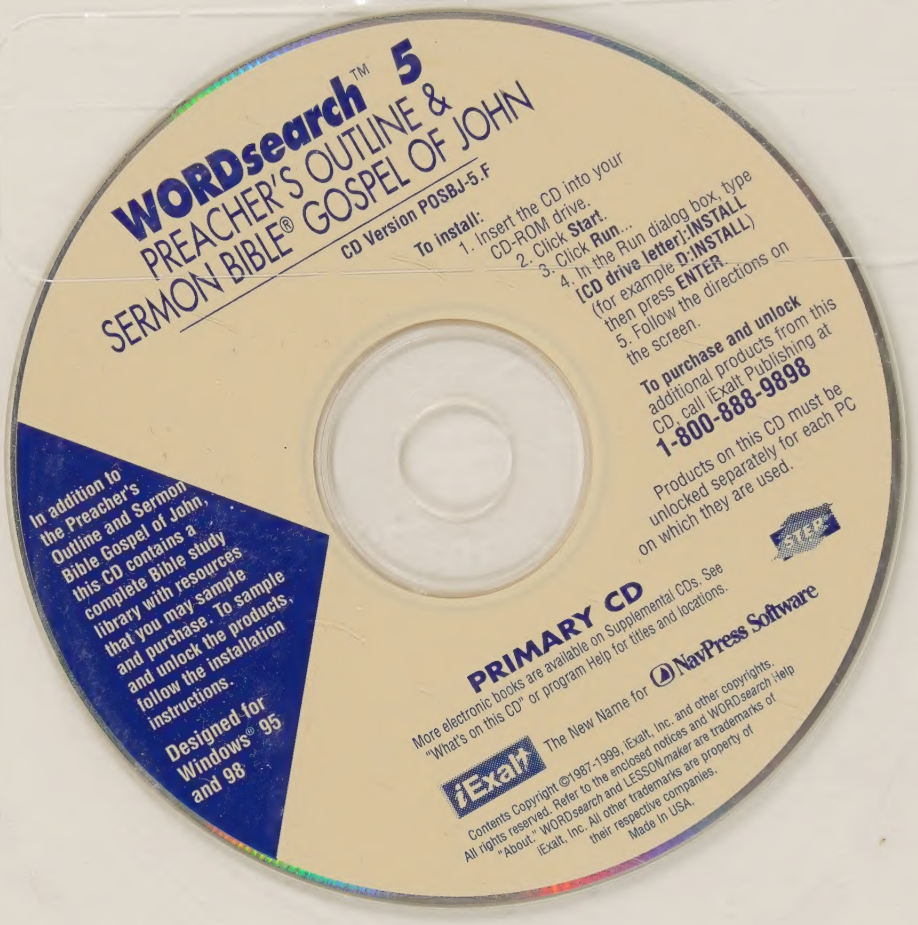
Volume 1

Matthew - John

King James Version

"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel"

(1 Cor. 9:16)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VOLUME 1

Matthew—John

THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE™

VOLUME 1

Matthew—John

THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE™

NEW TESTAMENT

KING JAMES VERSION

Leadership Ministries Worldwide
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THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE,™ Volume 1
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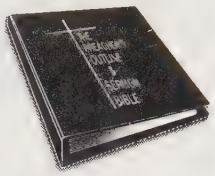

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Lord Jesus Christ
and
To the Mercy and Grace of God.

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  "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (I Tim. 2:3-4)

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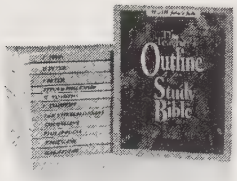



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Every child of God is precious to the Lord and deeply loved. And every child as a servant of the Lord touches the lives of those who come in contact with him or his ministry. The writing ministry of the following servants have touched this work, and we are grateful that God brought their writings our way. We hereby acknowledge their ministry to us, being fully aware that there are so many others down through the years whose writings have touched our lives and who deserve mention, but the weaknesses of our minds have caused them to fade from memory. May our wonderful Lord continue to bless the ministry of these dear servants, and the ministry of us all as we diligently labor to reach the world for Christ and to meet the desperate needs of those who suffer so much.

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MISCELLANEOUS ABBREVIATIONS

&	=	And
Arg.	=	Argument
Bckgrd.	=	Background
Bc.	=	Because
Circ.	=	Circumstance
Concl.	=	Conclusion
Cp.	=	Compare
Ct.	=	Contrast
Dif.	=	Different
e.g.	=	For example
Et.	=	Eternal
F.	=	Following
Govt.	=	Government
Id.	=	Identity or Identification
Illust.	=	Illustration
K.	=	Kingdom, K. of God, K. of Heaven, etc.
No.	=	Number
N.T.	=	New Testament
O.T.	=	Old Testament
Pt.	=	Point
Quest.	=	Question
Rel.	=	Religion
Resp.	=	Responsibility
Rev.	=	Revelation
Rgt.	=	Righteousness
Thru	=	Through
V.	=	Verse
Vs.	=	Verses
Vs.	=	Versus

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First: Glance at the **Subject Heading**. Think about it for a moment. ***Then***: Glance at the **Subject Heading** & the **Major Points** together.

Now: Glance at both the **Major Points** & **Subpoints** while reading the Scripture. Note how the points are beside the applicable verse—simply stating what the Scripture is saying—in Outline form.

Finally: Read the **Commentary**. KEY: Note that the *major point numbers* in the *outline* match those in the *commentary*.

MATTHEW 6:1-4

	CHAPTER 6		
	K. The Right Motive for Giving,[DSI] **6:1-4**		hypocrites c. Reward: Recognition by men only
			B
1 **Alms—doing good & giving** a. Warning: Do not seek recognition b. The reason: God will not reward	Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.	hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.	3 **The right motive** a. Giving unconsciously
2 **The wrong motive** a. Giving for recognition b. Characteristic of	2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the	3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.	b. Giving quietly—privately—secretly 4 **The reasons** a. Father sees in secret b. Father rewards openly

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

K. The Right Motive for Giving, 6:1-4

(6:1-4) **Introduction—Motive**: what a man does matters greatly to God. God expects men to be kind and to do good in the world: to help others both through personal involvement and through giving generously and sacrificially.

But there is something else that God expects, something of critical importance: God expects a man to have *the right motive*. Just why a man does good and shows kindness matters greatly to God. It matters so much that a person's eternal fate is determined by his motive. Because of this, Christ warns us about right and wrong motives.

1. Alms—doing good and giving (v.1).
2. The wrong motive (v.2).
3. The right motive (v.3-4).
4. The reason (v.4).

1 (6:1) **Alms—Service—Giving**: there is the giving of alms—doing good and giving to others. The word "alms" means righteous acts; giving in order to meet the needs of the poor. To the Jew, giving alms and righteousness meant the same thing. Giving alms was the great thing a Jew could do; it was the first act of religion. It was considered to be the very embodiment of righteousness, so much so that the two words began to be used synonymously. Giving alms merited and assured one of righteousness and salvation. (See note 5—Mt.5:6.) Christ warned there is great danger in giving and doing alms. Take heed and guard yourself. Do not give for recognition, or you will lose your reward.

Thought 1. There are two important lessons in this verse.

1) Man must guard and be alert to the deception of giving and doing good before men. A person's heart can be deceived. The sin creeps up on man; it is insidious and subtle. It will keep a person from receiving anything from God.
2) A person must give alms and do good. It is a duty of the Christian. In this passage alone Christ says four times, "Do alms."

E **"But all their works they do for to be seen of men" (Mt.23:5).**

"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts" (Lk.20:46).



"*Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel*" (I Cor. 9:16)



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MATTHEW

SECTION 1

(Matthew Chapters 1-16:12)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
MATTHEW
INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: Matthew. The Bible in no place says that Matthew is the author; however, the evidence for Matthew's authorship is strong.

1. Early writers have always credited the Gospel to Matthew. William Barclay quotes one of the earliest church historians, a man named Papias (A.D. 100), as saying, "Matthew collected the sayings of Jesus in the Hebrew tongue" (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1956, p.xxi). Irenaeus (about A.D. 175), the saintly bishop of Lyons, wrote: "Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the church" (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3.1.1).
2. Matthew was qualified to write the Gospel. He had been a tax collector which means that he was involved in large business transactions. A study of the Gospel shows that the author had an interest in figures, large numbers (Mt.18:24; 28:12), and statistics (Mt.1:17). The detailed messages of Jesus point to a man experienced with shorthand which he had apparently used in his business. Very little is given in the Scripture about Matthew.
   a. He was one of the twelve apostles (Mk.2:14).
   b. He left all to follow Christ (Lk.5:27-28).
   c. He introduced his friends to Christ by inviting them to a feast which he gave in honor of Christ (Lk.5:29).

DATE: Uncertain. A.D. 50-70. It was written some years after Jesus' ascension, but before A.D. 70.

1. The fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, is prophetic (Mt.24:1f).
2. The statements such as "unto this day" (Mt.27:8) and "until this day" (Mt.28:15) suggest a date sometime after Jesus' ascension, but not too far in the distant future.
3. The scattering of the Jerusalem Church due to persecution (Acts 8:4) suggests a date sometime after the ascension. A Gospel would not have been necessary so long as the church and apostles were together.
4. The quote by Irenaeus points to Matthew's writing during Nero's reign, "while Paul and Peter were in Rome."

TO WHOM WRITTEN: The Gospel was written originally to the Jews. However, it breathes a message for all, a message proclaiming the Messianic hope of the world for the Great Deliverer.

PURPOSE: To show that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior and King prophesied by the Hebrew prophets.

Matthew is a strong book, a book written to force belief in Jesus. Matthew sets out to prove that all the prophecies of the O.T. are fulfilled in Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth. It has one recurring theme: "All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying...." This is repeated approximately sixteen times, and there are ninety-three O.T. quotations.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

1. Matthew is *The Ecclesiastical Gospel*. Down through the centuries, Matthew has been widely used by the church. Its material is arranged primarily by subjects, not by a strict chronological sequence. It is somewhat a topical arrangement of the ministry and teachings of Jesus. As such, it has been extremely useful to the church: as an apology to defend the faith, as a handbook of instructions for new believers, and as a book of worship to read in church services.
2. Matthew is *The Teaching Gospel*. Much of Jesus' teaching is arranged so that it can be easily taught and easily lived. This material is clearly seen in five sections.
   a. The Sermon on the Mount (Mt.5-7).
   b. The Messiah's messengers and their mission (Mt.9-10:42).
   c. The Messiah's parables (Mt.13).
   d. The Messiah's disciples and their behavior toward one another (Mt.18).
   e. The Messiah's prophecy of His return and the end of time: the great Olivet discourse (Mt.24-25).
3. Matthew is *The Royal Gospel* or *The Kingdom Gospel*. The heart of Matthew's Gospel is that Jesus is King. Jesus is the Son of David, the greatest of Israel's kings. He is the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies that foretold the coming of a King like unto David.
   a. His genealogy shows Him to be David's son by birth (Mt.1:1-17).
   b. He was born King of the Jews (Mt.2:2).
   c. He was called the King of David time and time again (Mt.9:27; 15:22; 20:30; 21:9, 15; 22:42).
   d. He personally claimed the power of a king by over-riding the law: "I say unto you...." (Mt.5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34, 38-39, 43-44).
   e. He dramatically showed Himself to be King by His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mt.21:1-11).
   f. He deliberately accepted the title of King before Pilate (Mt.27:11).
   g. His cross bore the title, "King of the Jews" (Mt.27:11).
   h. He claimed the supreme power of the King of Kings, "All power is given unto me" (Mt.28:18).
   i. The word "Kingdom" is used fifty four times and "Kingdom of Heaven" thirty-two times.
4. Matthew is *The Apocalyptic Gospel*. Among the Gospels, it has the most comprehensive account of the Lord's return and of the end time (Mt.24-25).
5. Matthew is *The Gospel of the Church*. It is the only Synoptic Gospel that mentions the church (Mt.16:13-23; 18:17; cp. Mk.8:27-33; Lk.9:18-22).
6. Matthew is *The Gospel of the Jew*. Matthew never failed to show that Jesus fulfills O.T. prophecy. He makes more than one hundred allusions or quotations from the O.T. He is determined to compel the Jew to believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

OUTLINE OF MATTHEW
SECTION 1
(Matthew Chapters 1-16:12)

THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE™ is *unique*. It differs from all other Study Bibles & Sermon Resource Materials in that every Passage and Subject is outlined right beside the Scripture. When you choose any *Subject* below and turn to the reference, you have not only the Scripture, but you discover the Scripture and Subject *already outlined for you—verse by verse*.

For a quick example, choose one of the subjects below and turn over to the Scripture, and you will find this marvelous help for faster, easier, and more accurate use.

In addition, every point of the Scripture and Subject is *fully developed in a Commentary with supporting Scripture* at the bottom of the page. Again, this arrangement makes sermon preparation much easier and faster.

Note something else: The Subjects of Matthew have titles that are both Biblical and *practical*. The practical titles sometimes have more appeal to people. This *benefit* is clearly seen for use on billboards, bulletins, church newsletters, etc.

A suggestion: For the quickest overview of Matthew, first read *all the major titles* (I, II, III, etc.), then come back and read the subtitles.

OUTLINE OF MATTHEW
SECTION 1
(Matthew Chapters 1-16:12)

I. THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

- A. Jesus' Genealogy: Interesting Roots, 1:1-17
  (cp. Luke 3:23-28)
- B. Jesus' Divine Birth: Unusual Events, 1:18-25
  (Luke 1:26-28; 2:1-7)
- C. Jesus' Acknowledgment as King by Wise Men: An Unexpected Worship, 2:1-11
- D. Jesus' Childhood: Facing Danger after Danger, 2:12-23

II. THE PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, 3:1-4:11

- A. Jesus' Forerunner, John the Baptist: A Message for All, 3:1-12
  (Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3:1-20; John 1:6-8, 15-37)
- B. Jesus' Baptism: What Baptism is All About, 3:13-17
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CHAPTER 1

I. THE BIRTH & CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

A. Jesus' Genealogy:[DS1] **Interesting Roots, 1:1-17**
(cp. Lk. 3:23-28)

1 It shows Jesus to be the legal heir
a. To the throne of David
b. To the blessings of Abraham
2 It encourages believers scattered abroad
3 It symbolizes God's glorious mercy
a. In the Gentile woman, Tamar
b. In the Gentile woman, Rahab
c. In the Gentile woman, Ruth
d. In the sinful woman, Bathsheba
4 It demonstrates that God's grace is not inherited; it is given as He wills
5 It emphasizes the power of God to keep His promises
a. In delivering His people through terrible times (the Babylonian captivity)
b. In sending forth the Christ, the Messiah[DS2,3]
6 It symbolizes generations of spiritual history
a. Abraham-David: Birth & growth
b. David-Babylonian captivity: Regression & enslavement
c. Babylon-Christ: Liberation & triumph

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.
2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;
3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;
4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;
5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;
6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;
7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;
8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;
9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;
10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;
11 And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:
12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;
13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;
14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;
15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;
16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.
17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

DIVISION I

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

A. Jesus' Genealogy: Interesting Roots, 1:1-17

(1:1-17) **Introduction—Genealogy—Jesus Christ, Genealogy**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ is not barren ground for preaching and teaching. It yields rich fruit for the person who will seek out Jesus' roots. (See note—Lk.3:23.)

1. It shows Jesus to be the legal heir (v.1-2).
2. It encourages believers scattered abroad (v.2).
3. It symbolizes God's glorious mercy (v.3-6).
4. It demonstrates that God's grace is not inherited; it is given as He wills (v.7-10).
5. It emphasizes the power of God to keep His promises (v.11-16).
6. It symbolizes generations of spiritual history (v.17).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:1-17) **Genealogy**: see note—Lk.3:23.

1 (1:1) **Jesus Christ, Genealogy**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ shows that Jesus is the legal heir to the throne of David. The genealogy is not given to satisfy man's curiosity about Jesus' roots nor to give His followers a reason to boast in His ancestors. Far from it. Matthew traces the roots of Jesus Christ in order to prove that He is the promised Messiah.

The Messiah was to be the son of Abraham and the son of David; that is, He was to be a descendant of both.

1. God gave to Abraham and his seed (the Messiah) *the promise of blessings* for the whole world (Gen.12:1-3; 22:18. See notes—Jn.1:23; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; 8:54-59 for discussion.)

2. God gave to David and his seed (the Messiah) *the promise of eternal government* (2 Sam.7:12; Ps.39:3f; 132:11. See notes—Lk.3:24-31; Jn.1:23; DEEPER STUDY # 3—1:45; DEEPER STUDY # 4—1:49 for verses and fulfillment.)

The Jews believed these promises of God. Therefore, Matthew sets out to prove that Jesus "who is called Christ" (Mt.1:16) is the promised son of Abraham and the promised son of David (Mt.1:1).

Note how often Jesus was called the son of David. (Cp. Mt.12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Acts 2:29-36; Ro.1:3; 2 Tim.2:8; Rev.22:16.) It was the common title and popular concept of the Messiah. Generation after generation of Jews longed and looked for the promised deliverer of Israel. The people expected Him to be a great general who would deliver and restore the nation to its greatness; in fact, they expected Him to make the nation the center of universal rule. He would, under God, conquer the world and center the glory and majesty of God Himself in Jerusalem. From His throne, the throne of David, He would execute "the Messianic fire of judgment" upon the nations and peoples of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 1—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; notes—12:16; 22:42; Lk.7:21-23. Referring to these notes will show what the Jewish concept of the Messiah was.) If Matthew can prove that Jesus' roots go all the way back to David and Abraham, he will have shown how seriously man must take the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah. (See note—Mt.1:18.)

Thought 1. Believers shall share in the blessings of Abraham and in the eternal reign promised David. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25.)

> **"And he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also" (Ro.4:11).**
>
> **"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed [believers]; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all" (Ro.4:16).**
>
> **"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Ps.89:3-4).**
>
> **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:6-7).**
>
> **"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious" (Is.11:10).**
>
> **"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).**
>
> **"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:18-22).**

Thought 2. "Jesus, who is called Christ" (Mt.1:16) *actually came* through the line of Abraham and David. Everyone must sit up and take the claim seriously. He Himself has made the claim of Messiahship, and He has generations of people witnessing to the fact that they have experienced His presence and power as the Messiah. Matthew began the witness, and teeming thousands have followed. If Christ and His followers are telling the truth, then the world is making a fatal mistake in its rejection of Christ.

> **"And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest" (Mt.27:11).**
>
> **"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:36-37).**

2 (1:2) **Jesus Christ, Genealogy**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ encourages believers scattered abroad. Among Jacob's sons only Judas was an ancestor of Christ. Why then are his eleven brothers, all the sons of Jacob, listed in the genealogy of Christ given in Genesis Chapter 46? There is probably one main reason. Every Jew knew he had come through the line of Jacob; every Jew was a descendant of one of Jacob's sons. During the time of Matthew's writing, Rome dominated the world. Rome, just like the Babylonians, had scattered the Jews all over the world. Matthew wished to encourage

all Jews—encourage them by assuring them that they were descendants of Jacob's sons, and as such they had a part in Christ, the true Messiah. They were all in line to receive the promises made to Abraham and his seed and to be gathered back together under the government of David's seed. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18. This is an important note in seeing this point more clearly.)

Thought 1. Believers sometimes feel scattered abroad: all alone, lonely, frustrated, depressed, without purpose, meaning, or significance in life. They feel as if they are in a rut—going no place. They feel God is far away, unapproachable. They wonder why God will not answer and meet their need. Matthew is saying to everyone: every believer is in line to receive the promise of God to Abraham and to David (see notes— Mt.1:1; 1:3-6). God *meets* the believer's need in Christ and *will fulfill* His promises in Him.

> **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).**
>
> **"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 Jn.2:25).**
>
> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**
>
> **"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).**

3 (1:3-6) **Mercy**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ symbolizes God's glorious mercy. It is unusual to find the names of women in genealogies. They are listed in Jesus' lineage as a sign of God's mercy.

1. Tamar was a seducer and adultress whom God reached (Gen.38:24f).
2. Rahab was a Gentile rejected by the Jews. She was a prostitute who was saved from judgment because she exercised faith in God and in Israel as *His people* (Josh.2:1f).
3. Ruth was a citizen of a nation hated by the Jews, but she was a woman who chose to become associated with God and His people (Ruth 1f).
4. Bathsheba deliberately sinned with David, but she sought God's forgiveness along with David (2 Sam.11-12).

Thought 1. There are no barriers to God's mercy. He will have mercy upon anyone—no matter the sex, nationality, or sin. Glance at the four women listed in the ancestry of Christ. How marvelous the mercy of God!

Thought 2. There is a beautiful picture in the four women listed in Jesus' roots, a beautiful picture of the gospel of Christ: their sins are forgiven, and they are accepted by God as His own.

> **"Among whom [the disobedient] also we all had our conversation [behavior] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:3-5).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).**

4 (1:7-10) **Jesus Christ, Genealogy**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ demonstrates that God's grace is not inherited; it is given as He wills. There are both good and bad kings in the ancestry of Christ. Just because a king was good did not mean that his goodness was inherited by the next king.

1. The good kings given in vs. 7-8 are:
   - ⇒ Solomon (2 Ki.1:1-11:43).
   - ⇒ Asa (1 Ki.15:9-24; 2 Chron. Chapters 14-16).
   - ⇒ Josaphat (or Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. Chapters 17-20).
2. The wicked kings are:
   - ⇒ Roboam (or Rehoboam, 1 Ki.11:43f).
   - ⇒ Abia (or Abijah, 2 Chron.12:16f).
   - ⇒ Joram (or Jehoram, 2 Ki.8:21-24; 1 Chron.3:11).

Thought 1. Godliness and righteousness are not inherited. Not a single king was able to pass his nature down to the next king. Every human being stands as an individual before God and is responsible for his own life and behavior (Jn.1:12-13). A person may have godly parents and a godly family, but godliness is not passed from one person to another. A person has to confront Jesus Christ for himself.

> **"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham [a godly father] to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Mt.3:8-9).**
>
> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood [heritage, godly family], nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).**

5 (1:11-16) **Babylonian Captivity**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ emphasizes the power of God to keep His promises. God's power is seen in particular events.

1. God's power is seen in His delivering His people through terrible times (for example, the Babylonian captivity). Why is the Babylonian captivity so prominent in the genealogy of Christ (v.11-12, 17)? Matthew wants to stress a great fact. God alone could save a nation of people through so great a trial. The Babylonians took the people of the nations they conquered and scattered them in mass all over the world. By such methods they destroyed the conquered nations. Succeeding generations forgot their identity and loyalty to the old land and attached themselves to their present country. But not so with Israel; Matthew is saying that God preserved the Jews through the impossible—an attempt to stamp them out as a nation. And God did it in order to preserve the line of the Messiah who had now come (cp. Is.45:8-9).
2. God's power is seen in sending forth the Christ, the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18 for discussion).

Thought 1. It is an historical fact that God has preserved the Jewish people through every mad attempt to stamp them out. By such power He has fulfilled His promise to send His Son through the line of Abraham and David. Every person should take note both as a warning and as a hope.

Thought 2. God preserved the Jews through the Babylonian captivity; He kept His promise to send the Messiah. The believer can rest assured in God's promises and power, for He will fulfill all His promises. The world can be overcome: despair, depression, discouragement, emptiness, loneliness, and lack of purpose can be conquered. There is assured victory in His promises.

> **"There hath no temptation [trial] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**
>
> **"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him [Christ] Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor.1:20-22).**
>
> **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).**
>
> **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 Jn.5:4-5).**

Thought 3. It was centuries before God fulfilled His promise to send a Savior to the world. Many had despaired; others had forsaken the belief. There were some who went so far as to mock and persecute those who still believed. But "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son...." (Gal.4:4). There is application here for the second coming of Christ: "There shall come in the last days scoffers...saying, where is the promise of His coming...?" (Cp. 2 Pt.3:3-18.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:16) **Christ—Messiah**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt. 1:18.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(1:16) **Jesus' Birth—Son of God**: note the changed expression from "who begat." Jesus was born of Mary but not of Joseph. Joseph was the husband of Mary, but Jesus was not born of Joseph. He was born of the Holy Spirit through Mary.

This stresses a vital fact: Jesus was not born of a man but of the Holy Spirit (see note 1—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 8,9—1:23). He was Divine, yet human through His conception in Mary. He was God-Man, fully God—fully man. The real significance of this is that as God, He had the *capacity not to sin*. No other man since Adam has ever had this capacity, for all other men have had a human father and human mother, a father and mother contaminated with a sinful human nature. Therefore, the child of a man is born with the same nature, a nature that *cannot help but sin*. However Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God born by the Holy Spirit, had the capacity to live a perfect and righteous life. He had the capacity never to sin.

However, Jesus Christ, as man, also had the capacity to sin. He suffered the pull and strain and suffering of temptation as all men do. He could have *willed* to sin. (See note—Jn.6:38 for more discussion.)

But there is this glorious difference. He utilized the capacity never to sin. He learned obedience by the things that He suffered (Heb. 5:8). He never gave in to temptation; He never sinned (2 Cor.5:21). Thereby He became the Perfect and Ideal Man in whom all men find their salvation (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:23). (See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.1:23.)

6 (1:17) **Spiritual History**: the genealogy of Jesus Christ symbolizes generations of spiritual history.

⇒ The first period of Israel's history can symbolize God's giving *birth to Israel through Abraham* and *giving dominion through David*.

⇒ The second period can symbolize Israel's *losing its dominion* and being enslaved as a result of God's judgment upon sin.
⇒ The third period of Israel's history can symbolize Israel's *ultimate triumph* through the Messiah and His liberating power.

These historical periods can also symbolize the *spiritual pilgrimage* of any saved man.

1. Man was born and purposed to rule as king.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen.1:26-27).

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps.8:6).

2. Man, however, lost his right to dominion through enslavement to sin and the judgment of God.

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen.3:16-19).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

"Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Ro.5:12).

3. Man can now be liberated and restored to fulfill his original purpose through Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:8-10).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Ro.8:15-18).

	B. Jesus' Divine Birth: Unusual Events,[DS1] **1:18-25 (Lk.1:26-28; 2:1-7)**	Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.	is of the Spirit d. To reveal the child's destiny 1) His name: Jesus[DS5] 2) His mission: To save[DS6]
1 His birth was of the Spirit[DS2]	18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the	**4 His birth was a fulfillment of prophecy**[DS7] a. Predicting His virgin birth[DS8] b. Predicting His name: Immanuel[DS9]
2 His birth created a predicament a. Joseph's predicament: Mary was pregnant before marriage[DS3] b. Joseph's character & solution 1) Char.: A righteous man 2) Solution: Not to expose Mary[DS4]		
3 His birth necessitated a special revelation a. To give assurance 1) He was chosen 2) He was not to fear b. To guide: In taking Mary to be his wife c. To explain: The child		**5 His birth wrought a great obedience**

DIVISION I

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

B. Jesus' Divine Birth: Unusual Events, 1:18-25

(1:18-25) **Introduction**: the coming of God's Son into the world was one of the most phenomenal events in all of history. It necessitated and caused some very unusual events.

1. His birth was of the Spirit (v.18).
2. His birth created a predicament (v.18-19).
3. His birth necessitated a special revelation (v.20-21).
4. His birth was a fulfillment of prophecy (v.22-23).
5. His birth wrought a great obedience (v.24-25).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:18-25) **Jesus Christ, Birth**: Jesus' birth was one of the most convulsive and disturbing events in all history (cp. Lk.2:1-24).

1. There was Mary's pregnancy—the idea of her being an unwed mother (Mt.1:18; Lk.1:26f). Who of that day would ever believe her story? Required was a willingness to be available to God regardless of embarrassment and the opinions of family, friends, and neighbors.
2. There was Joseph's discovery of Mary's pregnancy (Mt.1:19). The shock of Mary's apparent broken trust and of personal embarrassment were more than Joseph could bear (Mt.1:20). Required was a willingness to forget self completely.
3. There was the child, the Son of God Himself, being born in a smelly manger (Mt.1:25; Lk.2:1f). Required was a willingness to be humble.
4. There was the family's having to be uprooted and moved to a foreign nation, Egypt (Mt.2:13f). Required was a willingness to obey at any cost.
5. There was the slaughter of all children under two years of age (Mt.2:16f). The heavy weight of feeling some responsibility was bound to attack Joseph and Mary. Required was a willingness on their part to bear anything.
6. There was the visit of the wise men showing that the foreign relationships of nations were affected (Mt.2:1f). Required was a willingness to bear the pressure of responsibility and the demands of being in the limelight.
7. There was the uproar of Herod's household traumatically affecting the lives of both Joseph and Mary (Mt.2:7-8, 15-16, 22). Required was a willingness to stand against all odds.

1 (1:18) **Jesus Christ, Birth**: Jesus' birth was of the Spirit. Never before had a man been born "through the Holy Spirit," but Jesus was. A person either accepts the evidence of Scripture at this point or rejects it. The Scripture is clear in what it says: "*Before they came together*, she [Mary] was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit." It is a matter of faith and trust in the *God of love*

⇒ who is revealed in Scripture as caring for man with an eternal and perfect love.
⇒ who set out to save man from his sins (v.21).
⇒ who caused the greatest event of human history: *God's becoming one with man*—"*God with us*" (v.23).

(See DEEPER STUDY # 8,9—Mt.1:23 for discussion and verses; cp. Mt.1:16; 1:18.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:18) **Christ—Messiah**: the word for "Christ" and "Messiah" is the same word: *christos*. Messiah is the Hebrew word, and Christ is the Greek word. Both words refer to the same Person and mean the same thing: *the Anointed One*. The Messiah is *the Anointed One* of God. Matthew says that Jesus "is called Christ" (Mt.1:16); that is, He is recognized as *the Anointed One* of God, the Messiah Himself.

In the day of Jesus Christ, people feverishly panted for the coming of the long-promised Messiah. The weight of life was harsh, hard, and impoverished. Under the Romans, people felt that God could not wait much longer to fulfill His promise. Such longings for deliverance left the people gullible. Many arose who claimed to be the Messiah and led the trusting followers into rebellion against the Roman State. The insurrectionist, Barabbas, who was set free in the place of Jesus at Jesus' trial, is an example (Mk. 15:6f). (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)

The Messiah was thought to be several things:

1. Nationally, He was to be the leader from David's line who would free the Jewish state and establish it as an independent nation, leading it to be the greatest nation the world had ever known.
2. Militarily, He was to be a great military leader who would lead Jewish armies victoriously over all the world.
3. Religiously, He was to be a supernatural figure straight from God who would bring righteousness over all the earth.
4. Personally, He was to be the One who would bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus Christ accepted the title of Messiah on three different occasions (Mt.16:17; Mk.14:61; Jn.4:26). The name *Jesus* shows Him to be man. The name *Christ* shows Him to be God's anointed, God's very own Son. *Christ* is Jesus' official title. It identifies Him officially as:

⇒ Prophet (Dt.18:15-19. See note—Lk.3:38 for verses and fulfillment.)
⇒ Priest (Ps.110:4. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.3:32-38 for verses and fulfillment.)
⇒ King (2 Sam.7:12-13. See note—Lk.3:24-31 for verses and fulfillment.)

These officials were always anointed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit who was to perfectly anoint the Christ, the Messiah (Mt.3:16; Mk.1:10-11; Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:32-33).

2 (1:18-19) **Joseph**: Jesus' birth created a predicament. Joseph faced the predicament of his life. The words "a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace" show a deeply troubled spirit. Joseph was literally torn between obeying the law (exposing Mary to the authorities) and his love for her. He struggled, for he was perplexed, troubled, and disappointed. His imagination ran wild. He felt deceived, experiencing jealousy and rage. Mary had committed whoredom against him. Yet he cared for her and loved her deeply. He did not want Mary to be hurt. He wanted to divorce her quietly and secretly. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Betrothed*—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Adultery*—Mt.1:19.)

Thought 1. Jesus' birth creates a predicament for every man. Imagine the emotions and the hurt Joseph felt when he discovered Mary, his fiancee, was pregnant. Imagine the thoughts that must have flooded his mind! What a predicament Jesus' birth created for Joseph! Jesus' birth creates a predicament for every man in that every man is now forced to make a decision about Christ and *His claims*.

Thought 2. There is no room for gossip and censorious judgment among God's people. In Joseph's mind, Mary's sin was great. She had committed whoredom against him. Yet, he cared and truly loved her. It was just this love that helped him in his treatment of her: "Love *covers the* [a] multitude of sins" (1 Pt.4:8). A person who truly loves cannot be critical, judgmental, or censorious. The person who loves will not talk, gossip, or criticize. He will get alone with God and pray about the problem—just as Joseph did.

> **"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?" (Mt.7:1-4).**
>
> **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal.6:1).**
>
> **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:32).**
>
> **"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col.3:12).**
>
> **"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pt.4:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(1:18) **Betrothed—Espoused—Engaged**: there were three steps involved in a Jewish marriage. (1) The engagement: the parents usually determined who a child was to marry—often at a very early age. (2) The betrothal: at a determined time, the couple agreed or disagreed with the engagement. If they followed through, the betrothal was immediately binding. A legal divorce was thereafter required. The betrothal lasted one year. When Joseph discovered Mary's pregnancy, they were already betrothed to one another. (3) The marriage: the consummation of the couple took place. It should be noted that in Joseph's case consummation did not occur until after Jesus' birth.

Thought 1. Believers are not to be unequally yoked together. Joseph was a just man; Mary was a virtuous woman. Both were godly. Believers should be careful in selecting their companions for marriage:

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor.6:14).

Thought 2. There is real wisdom in taking time to confirm one's decision to marry. It is much better to delay and be sure than to rush and be sorry.

Thought 3. A waiting period before marriage is wise. It gives God time to melt and mold the couple into one being spiritually—much more time than in a quick marriage. It also allows more time for a couple to grow together before being married. Having spent time growing together prevents a multitude of heartaches and much pain.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(1:19) **Adultery—Law**: the law said that a betrothed virgin who committed adultery was to be stoned to death (Dt.22:23-24).

3 (1:20-21) **Joseph—Son of David**: Jesus' birth necessitated a special revelation. Note the words, "But after he had considered this." Joseph did just what he should have done: he got alone with God to think and pray through the predicament. Because of his godly dependence and obedience, God met his need. God gave Joseph a special revelation. God's purpose was fourfold.

1. To give assurance to Joseph. When the angel called Joseph "son of David," Joseph was shocked. He was awakened to a glorious call. He was chosen by God as a son of David to be the earthly father to "The Son of David," the Messiah! All Jews knew the prophecies that said the Messiah was to be of the line of David. Joseph knew them; but to hear himself addressed as "Joseph, son of David," quickened his attention and alerted him to an extremely important message. It indicated to some degree a divine call. Remember: Joseph was only a humble carpenter.
2. To guide Joseph.
3. To explain the predicament.
4. To reveal the destiny of the promised child (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *6*—Mt.1:21).

Thought 1. There is a right way to confront traumatic experiences. Joseph demonstrated the right way. He got alone and "considered this thing" (v.20). Being a just and godly man, he got alone with God; he shared his thoughts with God. He probably wept as a child pouring out his soul to God. Believers often weep when facing terrible trials.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

Thought 2. There is a way to conquer criticism, murmuring, and censorious judgment. It is to do what Joseph did: hush, keep quiet, and get alone with God to discuss the matter.

Thought 3. God met Joseph when he took time to get alone and to think. The right frame of mind is essential in order to hear and receive the message of God.

Thought 4. The believer who gets alone with God and thinks through the trials confronting him will be met by God. God will give assurance and guide the believer (Mt.6:33; Ph.4:6-7; Jn.16:13; Ro.8:13; Heb.13:5).

Thought 5. A person is to say "yes" to God's call. Joseph received the call of God, and he accepted God's call and was obedient. Most reject God's call.

"Many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.20:16).

Thought 6. The vast majority of persons called by God are from humble stations in life. Joseph came from a humble station in life, and so did Christ.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called...." (1 Cor.1:26-27).

Thought 7. His name was *Jesus*. God chose His name and instructed that He be called by that name. Every person should know and call upon the name "Jesus."

Thought 8. Jesus' mission was to save. God gave Him His mission, His purpose for living. God gives the mission—the purpose for every person's life who looks to God as Jesus looked.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(1:21) **Jesus** (iesous): Savior; He will save. The Hebrew form is *Joshua* (yasha), meaning Jehovah is salvation; He is the Savior. The idea is that of deliverance, of being saved from some terrible disaster that leads to perishing (cp. Jn.3:16; Ro.8:3; Gal.1:4; Heb.2:14-18; 7:25.)

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(1:21) **Salvation—Jesus Christ, Mission**: the statement "He will save his people from their sins" is full of meaning. (See outline and notes—Acts 2:37-40. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Salvation*—Ro.1:16 for more discussion.)

1. The word *save* or *salvation* means to deliver (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.1:18). It is Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, who saves.
2. The words "His people" are significant. It infers that all people are not "His people."

> **"Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep...My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man [Greek: anyone, any being] pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:26-27).**

3. The words "from their sins" mean that Christ saves His people from:
   - ⇒ the power of sin
   - ⇒ the bondage of sin
   - ⇒ the guilt of sin
   - ⇒ the consequences of sin (See notes—Gal.1:4-5; 4:4-7; Heb.2:14-18; 7:25; Tit.2:14.)

Note Rev.14:4 where Christ is said to redeem believers "from among men [worldly men]." Note also Heb.7:26 where Christ is said to be "set apart from sinners." The believer is called to separation: to live away from, above and over sin; to conquer sin; to live victoriously over sin. (Cp. 2 Cor.6:17-18; Ro.12:2; 1 Jn.2:15-16.)

4 (1:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Birth**: Jesus' birth was a fulfillment of prophecy (see DEEPER STUDY # 7—Mt.1:22; Introduction, Purpose). Matthew stresses two prophecies in particular.

1. There was the prophecy predicting His virgin birth (see DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.1:23).
2. There was the prophecy predicting His name: Emmanuel (see DEEPER STUDY # 9—Mt.1:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(1:22) **Prophecy**: the basic elements of prophecy are given here. (1) Prophecy is "the Word of the Lord." It is not the word of men. The future is revealed by God, not by men. (2) The prophet is but a messenger—not the spokesman. (3) Prophecy must be fulfilled. It will always come to pass.

DEEPER STUDY # 8
(1:23) **Jesus Christ, Birth—Son of God**: note four convincing things about the virgin birth of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16; cp. Is.7:14).

1. Note the concern and great pains to which Matthew went in pointing out the supernatural birth of Jesus. He said very pointedly, "This is how the birth of Jesus *Christ* [not just Jesus, but Jesus Christ, the Messiah] came about."
   a. "Mary...was found with child *through the Holy Spirit*" (v.18).
   b. "What is conceived in her is from *the Holy Spirit*" (v.20).
   c. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled....'Behold, *a virgin*...shall bring forth a son'" (v.23).
   d. "All this took place to fulfill [the prophecy]....The virgin...will give birth to a son. They will call Him Immanuel...'*God with us*'" (v.23).

Matthew was not interested in giving a detailed account of Jesus' birth. His concern was simply to draw the reader's attention to two important facts.

First, the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah's birth were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Second, the Jews needed to know that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, especially those who misinterpreted the Old Testament prophecies and who were not expecting the Messiah to be virgin born. One of the slanderous reports facing the early Christian believers was that Jesus was born out of wedlock.

> **"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is.7:14).**
>
> **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Is.9:6).**
>
> **"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS" (Lk.1:31).**

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk.2:7).

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal.4:4-5).

"[Jesus Christ] who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:6-7).

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 Jn.4:2).

2. Note the simple profession of Mary that shows shock and amazement: "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" (Lk.1:34).

3. Note the mystery of life about which man knows so little.

"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all" (Eccl.11:5).

"Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works...when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought" (Ps.139:13-15).

4. Note the mystery of godliness.

"Without controversy [undoubtedly, it must be admitted] great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim.3:16; cp. Gal.4:4; 1 Jn.1:1-3; Jn.1:14).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same....For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed [flesh, nature] of Abraham....It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren" (Heb.2:14-17).

"Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God....took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:5-7).

"To wit [namely; O' to know] that God was in Christ...." (2 Cor.5:19).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).

"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn 10:33).

DEEPER STUDY # 9

(1:23) **Jesus—Immanuel—Son of God**: God with us. He is God manifest in human flesh. The word "Immanuel" is not a name or a title. It is a descriptive term. It characterizes a person. Jesus is Immanuel: God with us, God revealed in human flesh (cp. Is.1:26; 9:6; Jn.1:1, 14; 2 Cor.5:19; 1 Jn.1:2).

5 (1:24-25) **Jesus Christ, Birth—Mercy**: Jesus' birth wrought a great obedience. Very simply, Joseph obeyed God. Despite the predicament—despite the appearance of things—Joseph obeyed. He did exactly what God said. Imagine how difficult it must have been! Mary was pregnant, yet they were not married. How much gossip was there? What did the neighbors think? What did Joseph and Mary tell them? Would people believe the story of angels and of a virgin birth from two people whom they knew so well? What a situation! Yet, Joseph did exactly as God said—despite all. What a lesson for great obedience on the part of every believer!

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).

Thought 1. Joseph acted as God would have a man to act.

1) He was merciful and gentle and tender toward one who had hurt him so much.
2) He forgave as one who had been forgiven. He had the attitude that is needed by believers when a loved one or a fellow believer is found in sin.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal.6:1).

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph.4:2).

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:32).

	CHAPTER 2	least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall	
	C. Jesus' Acknowledgement as King by Wise Men: An Unexpected Worship, 2:1-11	rule my people Israel.	
1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem[DS1] a. In the days of Herod b. Wise men came seeking Him[DS2]	Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,	7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.	**4 Their unexpected commission: Having to search for the newborn King** a. Their testimony: The star b. Their commission: To go-search-find
2 Their unexpected question: Where is the newborn King? a. The unusual journey b. Their purpose:Worship	2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.	8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.	
3 Their unexpected disturbance a. Disturbed all the people in Jerusalem b. Disturbed Herod: He misconceived a threat[DS3] c. Disturbed the religionists 1) Herod quizzed them 2) They had ignored the Scripture (until now)	3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.	9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.	**5 Their unexpected sign: The star guided them again**
	4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.	10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.	
	5 And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,	11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.	**6 Their unexpected King: A humble child in humble surroundings** a. They found Him in a house b. They gave Him worship c. They gave Him gifts
	6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the		

DIVISION I

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

C. Jesus' Acknowledgment as King by Wise Men: An Unexpected Worship, 2:1-11

(2:1-11) **Introduction**: there was nothing usual or common about the birth and early childhood of Jesus Christ. Practically every event was unusual or uncommon, totally unexpected. There was the fact of His being God's very own Son, of the virgin birth, of the announcement by angels, of being born in a stable, and on and on. The unexpected continues right on through the experience of the wise men. The wise men are a picture of those who seek Jesus. As they sought Him, events totally unexpected happened time and again. This is usually the case with those who seek Jesus. But God is faithful. If a person is truly seeking Jesus, God takes the unexpected events and works them out for good (Ro.8:28). God leads the person to Jesus regardless of circumstances and events, expected or unexpected.

1. Jesus was born in Bethlehem (v.1).
2. Their unexpected question: where is the newborn King (v.2)?
3. Their unexpected disturbance (v.3-6).
4. Their unexpected commission: having to search for the newborn King (v.7-8).
5. Their unexpected sign: the star guided them again (v.9-10).
6. Their unexpected King: a humble child in humble surroundings (v.11).

1 (2:1) **Jesus Christ, Birth**: Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Three quick facts are worthy of note.

1. He was born in Bethlehem (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Bethlehem*—Mt.2:1).
2. He was born during the reign of Herod the Great.
3. He was sought by wise men from the East (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Wise Men*—Mt.2:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:1) **Bethlehem**: the city was only six miles south of Jerusalem. Its fame was due to two facts: (1) It had been the home and city of David (1 Sam.16:1; 17:12; 20:6); and (2) it was prophesied to be the city of the Messiah's birth (Micah 5:2). All Jews knew these facts, and those who truly believed in a coming Messiah looked for the Messiah to come through David's line and to establish an eternal government (see note—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(2:1) **Wise Men** (Magi): they were men from the East (probably Persia), emissaries from one or more foreign nations who were seeking truth. They were influential men of learning and authority, the skilled scientists of their day: skilled in philosophy, science, medicine, and astrology. It is thought that they were the priestly order of Persia, the ministers and advisors to the Persian rulers.

2 (2:2) **Seeking, Jesus**: the wise men's unexpected question—Where is the newborn King? How did the wise men know the King of the Jews had been born? The answer is not given, but two other significant facts are.

1. They had a most unusual journey: they were guided by a star. What is meant by "his star"? Again the answer is not given. However, v.9 seems to indicate that it was some astronomical light. This much is known: whatever it was, it was a miracle. It was a miracle at least in this sense: it appeared at the very time of Jesus' birth; it appeared to Gentile wise men far away in another nation; it guided them to Jerusalem where they were to worship Jesus; it appeared at the very time they were given knowledge of the newborn King; and it appeared again for the specific purpose of guiding them.
2. They had a most significant purpose: their purpose was to worship the newborn King. They had come to pay homage to a child whom they understood was to be King of the Jews. They expected what any foreigner would have expected: the child would be a son of the reigning king. Jesus, of course, was not. It was this fact that disturbed Herod so much. He concluded what any reigning monarch would: there was a movement to overthrow the throne (see note—Mt.2:3).

Thought 1. Where is He? Every person needs to be asked the question, for He has already come and most are not aware of it. Why? Because they are preoccupied with self and worldly affairs, with ambition and material possessions, with the physical and the flesh.

⇒ "Where is He?" It is totally unexpected that the message would come from the Gentiles and heathen of the world.
⇒ "Where is He?" It is totally unexpected that His own people do not know.
⇒ "Where is He?" It is totally unexpected that the religionists do not know.

How far away from God and how lost the world has become—not to know that God has sent the true King, His own Son, into the world!

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Tim.1:17).

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:7).

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan.7:14).

Thought 2. "He was in the world...and the world knew Him not" (Jn.1:10-11). How could God send His Son into the world and the world not know it? How clearly the wise men illustrate the world's blindness to eternal affairs. A wise man is a man who seeks after the King of the Jews.

3 (2:3-6) **Jesus Christ, Rejected—Religionists**: the wise men's unexpected disturbance. It was the wise men who affected the Jews, not the Jews who affected the wise men. Few Jews were even aware of their King's birth. Imagine the great anticipation of the wise men as they journeyed and approached Jerusalem. Picture the shock: no one knew about the newborn King—who He was, where He was, anything about Him.

Three groups in particular are mentioned as being disturbed. Why were they disturbed? They just did not know about Him—that He had already come.

1. *Some people* were disturbed because they had anticipated His coming, but He had not come as they had expected. They had expected a king, not a humble child, not a self-giving Savior (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). Others just did not believe; they could care less. Still others did not want to know about a king who might disturb their lives.
2. *The government* (represented in Herod) was disturbed because it did not want a king coming from God who might threaten the present line and form of authority (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.2:3-4).
3. *Some religionists* were disturbed because they did not want a king to come as He had come. He and His coming did not match their beliefs. Others did not want a king other than the one they had. They were comfortable in the material world and the humanistic religion of the world. Others were so wrapped up in their religious affairs and its *busyness* that they were not spiritually sensitive enough to be aware of His coming. However, some religionists did turn to Him later (Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17).

Note that Matthew stressed a point that is too often true of our generation: the religionists, the very people who should have known about the newborn Messiah, had ignored the Scriptures and its prophecy. The world (Herod) had to send them scurrying to pay attention to its message.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).

"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(2:3-4) **Herod the Great**: a bloody tyrant. Secular history records that he murdered many of his own family including his favorite wife (he had ten), her grandfather, her brother, and some of his own children. On one occasion, he had the whole Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Jewish government, assassinated. On another occasion, he had every notable man in Jerusalem murdered. He was very capable of the crime reported here. Christ was born during the latter years of Herod's reign, and his reign as king had been a long one (37 B.C.-4 A.D.). This fact shows just how much of a bloody tyrant Herod really was. Just imagine! He would not even be around when a child king would inherit the throne, yet he felt threatened by the reports of a child king. He was a man possessed by evil. He was suspicious, savage, and warped. Note that Herod had all the children killed, not only in Bethlehem but "in all the coasts thereof" (v.16).

4 (2:7-8) **Wise Men**: the wise men's unexpected commission: having to search for the newborn King.

Note the wise men's testimony about the star. The wise men had unashamedly testified to the supernatural, the star that had led them to seek the newborn King. All the city had heard their testimony, even Herod. The wise men were now commissioned to go and search and find the child. The *newborn King's* own people were not even aware of His coming. The wise men never expected they would have to search for Him.

Thought 1. What a shock! Some expect to find "the newborn king" *in the lives* of those who profess to be God's people, and they are unable to find Him! Too often they are forced to go elsewhere or to give up their search.

Thought 2. God used an evil man, Herod (without his knowing it), to help the wise men in their search. Any person who seeks *the newborn King* will be led by God to Him—no matter who God has to use to help the seeker (see outline—Ro.2:14-15).

5 (2:9-10) **Wise Men—Seeking God**: the wise men's unexpected sign—the star guided them again. Apparently the wise men did not expect the supernatural sign to appear again (v.10). They had searched faithfully and done all they could, and they were continuing on. God honors such effort. He met their need (Is. 64:5). But note: only the wise men went to search out the newborn King. And imagine—Bethlehem was only six miles south of Jerusalem!

Thought 1. God will meet the need of any man who faithfully searches and does all he can, the man who continues on and refuses to quit. Yet how few search Him out today (2 Cor.6:2).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

6 (2:11) **Jesus Christ, Birth—Worship**: the wise men's unexpected King—a humble child in humble surroundings.

They found the child King in a house. No doubt the wise men had *expected* the child to be the son of a reigning monarch with all the splendor, wealth, and royalty attached. They had expected Him to be known by all. How unlike what they found—a child with common parents in a humble house! Note: they gave the child King worship. Matthew records that they bowed down and worshipped the newborn king. He says nothing about their having worshipped Herod.

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker" (Ps.95:6).

"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth" (Ps.96:9).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

Thought 1. God's ways are not man's way (cp. 1 Cor.1:26-31). The newborn King is not a humanistic Savior. He is *God's Savior* who has come in God's way.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"But [Christ] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:7-8).

	D. Jesus' Childhood: Facing Danger after Danger, 2:12-23	diligently enquired of the wise men.	
		17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,	e. Scripture was fulfilled: The prediction of the children's slaughter
1 The first danger: Herod[DS1] plotted to find Jesus (see Mt.2:3-8, 12)		18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.	
a. The wise men were miraculously warned	12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.		
b. The wise men obeyed			
2 The second danger: Herod attempted to destroy Jesus		19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,	**3 The third danger: Archelaus reigned in Judea**
a. Joseph was miraculously warned to flee into Egypt	13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.	20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.	a. Joseph was miraculously instructed
b. Joseph obeyed	14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:	21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.	
c. Scripture was fulfilled:[DS2] The family sojourned in Egypt	15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.	22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:	b. Joseph was again miraculously warned: Herod's son Archelaus was a threat[DS3]
d. Herod slaughtered the children	16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had	23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.	c. Joseph obeyed d. Scripture was fulfilled: Jesus lived in Nazareth[DS4]

DIVISION I

THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, 1:1-2:23

D. Jesus' Childhood: Facing Danger after Danger, 2:12-23

(2:12-23) **Introduction**: from the first, even as a child, Jesus Christ faced danger after danger. Time and again there was an attempt to stamp out His life, yet God miraculously delivered and protected Him every step of the way. In the confrontation of these dangers, the believer can learn much about the protection and care of God. God cares and God will protect the person who places his life under God's care.

1. The first danger: Herod plotted to find Jesus (v.12).
2. The second danger: Herod attempted to destroy Jesus (v.13-18).
3. The third danger: Archelaus reigned in Judea (v.19-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:12) **Herod the Great**: see note—Mt.2:3-4.

1 (2:12) **Protection—Seeking God**: the first danger was Herod's plotting to find Jesus (cp. Mt.2:3-8, 12). Remember: Herod had become very upset when he heard about a child's being born who was supposed to be a king; therefore, he had sent the wise men to Bethlehem to search for the child king (cp. Mt.2:3-3, 12). It is difficult to imagine anyone harming a child, especially seeking to kill a child, yet it happens. (Note: this passage points out that two murderous attempts were made against the child Jesus.)

1. The wise men were miraculously warned by God. But note: God did not warn them of Herod's plot until they had followed through—actually found Jesus and worshipped Him.

Thought 1. There is an enormous drive in some men to worship God. The wise men had such a drive. They had a compelling drive to worship the newborn king, and they had been ever so faithful and diligent in seeking Him.

Anyone who diligently seeks God's Son can expect to be met and directed by God. God met and warned the wise men of impending danger. He will meet and direct the path of any believer who diligently seeks Him.

> **"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**

2. The wise men obeyed God's warning. The wise men chose to obey God rather than Herod. They went God's way rather than return to Herod. Therefore, God directed and protected them.

Thought 1. God directs and protects the lives of those who put Him first.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars" (2 Chron.16:9).**
>
> **"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Ps.34:7).**
>
> **"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shall thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Ps.91:4).**
>
> **"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).**

2 (2:13-18) **Deliverance—Obedience**: the second danger was Herod's attempting to destroy Jesus.

1. Joseph was miraculously warned to flee into Egypt. God knows all, and He rules over all. God knew Herod's thoughts and heart, but apparently no one else did. Herod's act was to be so terrible and wicked that he shared it with no one else. But God knew, and He moved to protect the life of His Son.

It was not uncommon for Jews to flee into Egypt. From the beginning of Jewish history, many had sought refuge in Egypt from both the tyranny of nature (famine) and man (Gen.12:10f). Every large city in Egypt had a large pocket of Jewish refugees. The great Egyptian city, Alexandria, had over a million Jewish emigrants.

God's grace can be seen in the traumatic movement of Joseph and Mary into Egypt. He leads them to flee into a country where they could more easily settle down and find friends. It is thought that Jesus was in Egypt for six to seven years.

Thought 1. The believer can rest in God's knowledge and providence. God knows all: every danger, threat, and trial.

> **"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb.4:13).**
>
> **"God...knoweth all things" (1 Jn.3:20).**
>
> **"Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?" (Job 31:4).**
>
> **"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).**
>
> **"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Ps.147:5).**

Thought 2. Belivers are *in Egypt*, yet not *of Egypt*. Throughout Scripture Egypt is a type of the world, and it symbolizes enslavement and bondage. There are several applications for the believer in this symbol of Egypt.

1) As Jesus Christ was sent into Egypt (the world), so believers are sent into the world (Jn.20:21; 2 Cor.5:20).
2) As Jesus Christ was "called out of Egypt," so believers are called out of the world.
   ⇒ Believers are called out of the world now.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

⇒ Believers are called out of the world eternally.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:6-8).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints" (cp. Ps.116:15).

2. Joseph obeyed. Note that Joseph was totally unaware of the danger, but he had been obedient to God's call, a most difficult call that had created a traumatic predicament for him (Mt.1:24-25). Because of his obedience, God delivered him from a terrible danger. Note that God's expectation was twofold.

a. God expected Joseph and Mary to be obedient without grumbling and murmuring. Joseph and Mary had two good reasons to be discouraged and to grumble.
   ⇒ This was God's child. Why was He having to flee anything?
   ⇒ They had been chosen to be very special servants of God. Why would God cause them to go through so much pain and trauma: being uprooted and having to move, and being persecuted and threatened with death? Why did God not just take care of Herod?

b. God expected Joseph and Mary to believe without questioning or doubting. And this they did. Joseph and Mary demonstrated great faith, great trust in God. They acted and obeyed without question.

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield" (Ps.115:11).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God" (Mk.11:22).

Thought 1. God delivers His obedient servant.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt.10:29-31).

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:17).

"O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Dt.5:29).

"O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).

3. Scripture was fulfilled: Jesus' sojourn in Egypt. His journey and life in Egypt was parallel to the sojourn of Israel (God's people) in Egypt. (See pt.1 of this note.)

4. Herod slaughtered the children. There are some very evil men in the world, men who are unreasonably wicked, cruel, savage, and bloody (Gal.5:19-21; Rev.21:8); men who cause unbearable pain (Mt.2:18); men who are *overly* wicked, excessively wicked (Ecc.7:17).

Their day of righteous judgment is coming. God will show His wrath against all evil men in the terrible day of judgment. Herod will be one of the men who will bear the righteous judgment of God.

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (2 Th.1:7).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

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

5. Scripture was fulfilled: the prediction of the children's slaughter.

Thought 1. Believers should expect persecution. Jesus was persecuted from the very beginning. The attempts to stamp out Jesus and His claims upon human life have continued down through the centuries. Persecutors now strike out against His followers, those who live and teach His Word.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(2:15) **Jesus—Prophecy Fulfilled**: the events of Jesus' childhood are declared to be a fulfillment of prophecy.

1. His birth in Bethlehem (Mt.2:5f; cp. Mic.5).
2. His exile in Egypt (Mt.2:15f; cp. Hos.11:1).
3. The children slain (Mt.2:17-18f; cp. Jer.31:15).
4. His residence in Nazareth (Mt.2:23f; cp. Isa.11:1).

3 (2:19-23) **Waiting on God—Deliverance**: the third danger was Archelaus' reigning in Judea.

1. Joseph was miraculously instructed. The family had been in Egypt for about six years. Joseph and Mary had probably asked God if they could return home (just as anyone would); however, they never attempted to return. They patiently waited for God's direction; and because they sat still, obeying God, God moved and directed them at the right time, miraculously.

Thought 1. Believers should wait upon God before acting. Waiting upon God is part of obedience, and God directs the obedient person time and again (cp. Mt.1:20-25; 2:13-14).

"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD" (Ps.27:14).

"Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us" (Ps.123:2).

"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee" (Pr.20:22).

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Is.40:31).

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (Hos.12:6).

Thought 2. All men die. Herod died *despite* his fame, wealth, and power. Think of the difference stated in Scripture:

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Ro.6:23. See note—Heb.9:27.)

2. Joseph was again miraculously warned: Herod's son Archelaus was a threat (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.2:22). Note that God led Joseph step by step. God did not tell Joseph where to go at first; He simply said "go into the land of Israel" (v.20). It was after he arrived back in Israel that God told him to go into Nazareth (v. 21-22).

Thought 1. Parents influence their children enormously. Look at the influence of Herod upon his son, Archelaus (see note—Mt.2:22).

"He [Ahaziah, the son of Ahab] also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" (2 Chron.22:3; cp. 1 Ki.22:52).

"But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them" (Jer.9:14).

"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.20:18-19).

"I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked" (Amos 2:4).

"And she [Herodias], being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger" (Mt.14:8).

Thought 2. God leads the believer step by step. There are three reasons for this.

1) It keeps the believer close to God.
2) It strengthens the believer's faith.
3) It keeps the believer from becoming discouraged by seeing the trials lying out in the future.

"For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Ps.48:14).

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps.73:24).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Pr.3:5-6).

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Is.30:21).

"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:1-2).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).

3. Again Joseph obeyed. He was a man who walked in obedience—again and again (Mt.1:24-25; 2:14, 21, 22).

4. Again Scripture was fulfilled: Jesus lived in Nazareth (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.2:23). The Old Testament Scriptures were fulfilled in Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.2:15.) The Jews were both the recipients and the trustees of God's Word (revelation) throughout the history of the Old Testament: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pt.1:21. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22.) They were familiar with the prophecies predicting the coming of the Messiah. Thus Matthew stresses time and again that "Jesus, who is called Christ" fulfills the Old Testament prophecies.

Thought 1. It is no dishonor to come from a humble home and a small town. Everything about Jesus' family and childhood was humble: his parents (see note—Lk.2:24); his home (Mt.2:11); his hometown, Nazareth (Jn.1:46).

Thought 2. The believer can rest assured that Jesus is the true Messiah.

"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (Jn.1:41).

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn.1:45).

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(2:22) **Archelaus**: was the son of Herod the Great who became king over Judea after Herod's death. He followed in the steps of his father: a cruel, bloody tyrant. Right after assuming the throne, Archelaus had over three thousand of the most influential Jewish people murdered.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(2:23) **Nazareth**: the hometown of Jesus' parents, Joseph and Mary, and of Jesus' childhood and early manhood. There were at least two advantages to Jesus' being brought up in Nazareth.

1. It was a quiet town, small and of little fame, ready-made for a close community and neighborliness and for quiet contemplation.

2. It was also a town in touch with the modern life and world events of that day. Two of the major roads of the world passed within eyesight of the hills surrounding the city: the road that stretched between Rome and northern Africa (North and South) and the road that ran between the great cities of the East and West. Jesus can be imagined standing on the hills observing (perhaps even meeting) some of the travellers and caravans using the major routes as they criss-crossed the world. He had opportunity to observe and study the nature and dealings of all kinds of men and all kinds of nationalities as they used the major routes. As a child, how often His heart must have ached and wept over a world lost and needing to be found.

	CHAPTER 3	sins.
	II. THE PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, 3:1-4:11	7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
	A. Jesus' Forerunner, John the Baptist: A Message for All, 3:1-12 (Mk.1:1-8; Lk.3:1-20; Jn.1:6-8, 15-37)	8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:
		9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have
1 John ministered in the wilderness	In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,	Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
2 His message to the people: Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand	2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.	10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
a. His message fulfilled prophecy: One crying, "Prepare"	3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.	11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he
b. His message was the message of a prophet: He dressed & ate as a prophet	4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.	that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:
c. His message bore fruit	5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea,	12 Whose fan is in his hand,
1) Crowds gathered	and all the region round about Jordan,	and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he
2) Crowds confessed & were baptized	6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their	will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.
3 His message to the religionists, the Pharisees and Sadducees *DS1*		
a. Point 1: Flee the wrath to come		
b. Point 2: Repent		
c. Point 3: Heritage is of no value		
d. Point 4: Judgment is at hand		
1) Immediate: Now		
2) Inevitable: Every unfruitful tree is cast into the fire		
3) Basis: Fruit		
4 His message to all: Christ—Messianic preaching		
a. Christ is greater...		
b. Christ shall baptize... *DS2*		
c. Christ shall judge & purge		
1) Gather some		
2) Burn some		

DIVISION II

THE PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, 3:1-4:11

A. Jesus' Forerunner, John the Baptist: A Message for All, 3:1-12

(3:1-12) **Introduction**: John the Baptist set a blazing example for every minister and believer of the gospel. His message is a message for all; he speaks to the common person and to the religionist alike.

1. John ministered in the wilderness (v.1).
2. His message to the people: repent...the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (v.2-6).
3. His message to the religionists, the Pharisees and Sadducees (v.7-10).
4. His message to all: Christ—Messianic preaching (v.11-12).

(3:1-12) **Another Outline: John the Baptist, Message**: the message preached by John stressed thirteen points.

1. Repentance (v.2).
2. The Kingdom of Heaven (v.2).
3. Prepare, for the Lord is coming (v.3).
4. Flee the wrath to come (v.7).
5. Bear fruit (v.8).
6. Do not be deceived over the merits of a godly heritage (v.9).
7. Acknowledge the power of God (v.10).
8. Judgment is at hand (v.10).
9. Fruit is demanded—now (v.10).
10. Everyone who bears bad fruit is condemned (v.10).
11. Repent—be baptized with water by man (v.11).
12. Repent—be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire (v.11).
13. The Messiah shall separate the wheat from the tares (v.12).

1 (3:1) **Judaea, Wilderness of**: John ministered in the wilderness. This was not a desolate, desert-like area. It was a country area with at least six cities scattered about, probably small communities or villages. It was in this country area, the wilderness of Judaea, that John emerged with the lightning cry for repentance: the long-awaited Messiah is at hand (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).

Thought 1. God uses the wilderness (quiet places) to prepare and launch the ministry of men. Quietness is essential: "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps.46:10). Meditation is essential (Gen.24:63; Josh 1:8; Ps.1:2; 63:6; 77:12; 119:15, 78; 119:23, 48, 148; 143:5; 1 Tim.4:15).

Thought 2. Believers are never alone, no matter how secluded they may be. God is there. He will reveal and manifest Himself in the place where believers are; He will use the believer in the place as a witness to His name.

Thought 3. The gospel began in a wilderness, not in a synagogue or temple or church (cp. Is.32:15; 35:1-2; 51:18-19).

Thought 4. God has the very place for every believer to serve. John's place was in the wilderness; Christ's was in the cities and synagogues as well as the countryside. Believers should witness and prophets should preach wherever they are—in the wilderness or in the city.

2 (3:2-6) **Preaching—Gospel—Ministers**: there was John's message to the people: repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

1. John's message fulfilled prophecy. It had been four hundred years since a prophet had arisen in Israel. Malachi had been the last. John's appearance made a thunderous impact. (Cp. Is.40:3; 1 Ki.18:21; 2 Ki.1:8; Mal.3:1; 4:5. See notes—Jn.1:19; 1:20-22.) John preached the gospel to all—to the general public and to the religionist alike. No one was excluded from the gospel (v.2-6; 7-10; 11-12). His message included three points.

a. Repent (see note, *Repentance*—Mt.4:17 for discussion).

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**
>
> **"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).**

b. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. John meant two things.

1) The Kingdom *is the Lord's*. He is the sovereign Lord of the Kingdom of Heaven. His coming is now; it is immediately upon us. Therefore, His kingdom or sovereign rule is now. Repent and get ready for His sovereign rule.

2) The Kingdom is *of Heaven*. It is of another world, of another dimension of being. It is not of this earth. It is spiritual; it is not physical, not something which we see, look upon, and handle. The coming kingdom of the Lord is "the kingdom *of heaven*," not the kingdom of this world. Only the Lord can bring the kingdom to this earth. The kingdom is of God, not of man. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for more discussion.)

> **"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:3; cp. Mt.25:34-35).**
>
> **"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).**
>
> **"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Lk.21:31).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor.4:20).**

c. Every man is to "prepare ye the way of the Lord" (v.3).

> **"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert, a highway for our God" (Is.40:3).**

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:12-13).

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:20-21).

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Mt.24:44).

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning" (Mk.13:35).

Thought 1. The cry of the prophet is:
1) Man has an inadequate righteousness; therefore, repentance is needed.
2) The present world is an inadequate world; therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven is needed.
3) Man has prepared an inadequate life for the Lord; therefore, he must prepare the way for the Lord.

Thought 2. God raises up His servant, His witness, His prophet in His time (v.3). Every believer (witness and prophet) is chosen by God. God chose and ordained the believer before the foundation of the earth. He may not be predicted by name in the pages and prophecy of Scripture, but he is conceived (predestined) in the mind and foreknowledge of God. This glorious truth should instill both confidence and a sense of responsibility in the believer (v.3. See outline and notes—Ro.8:28-30; Eph.1:4; 1:5-6. These two footnotes are forceful in striking the heart with the glorious truth: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" Jn.15:16.)

Thought 3. Preaching is to be to the people, not before them. It is to be affirmative, authoritative, and positive, not uncertain and negative. The gospel is not open for discussion; it is not just one of many possibilities; it is the truth of God (v.2-3, 6, 7-12).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

2. John's message was the message of *a prophet*: he dressed and ate as a prophet (v.4).

" And they answered him, He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite" (2 Ki.1:8).

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive" (Zech.13:4).

"Even these of them ye [the prophet] may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind" (Lev.11:22).

Thought 1. The believer is to be disciplined and to live moderately (v.4. See note—Lk.9:23; cp. Ro.12:1.)

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Ro.12:1).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

Thought 2. The believer's dress and habits should be adapted to meet the needs of his people (v.4).

"And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor.9:20-22).

3. John's message bore fruit. The crowds gathered and listened to his preaching, and they *confessed their sins and were baptized* (v.5-6).

Thought 1. The world should hear, respect, and respond to the messenger of God (v.5-6).

Thought 2. God forgives sin when a person confesses and repents of his sin (v.6).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin" (Ps.85:2).

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps.103:3).

"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer.31:34).

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic.7:18-19).

Thought 3. Confession is necessary; it is part of repentance (v.6).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (Ezra 10:11).

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin" (Ps.32:5).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

Thought 4. A person who says he is innocent, refusing to believe and admit his sin, is condemned already (v.6).

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn.1:8).

"Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned" (Jer.2:35).

3 (3:7-10) **Preaching—Religionists**: there was John's message to the religionists, the Pharisees and Sadducees (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8 for discussion). The religionists were a fact-finding committee sent from Jerusalem to investigate the phenomenal reports about John and his ministry: Could he honestly be a modern-day prophet sent from God? When John confronted the religionists, he knew several dangers threatened to deceive them. If they succumbed and were deceived by any of the dangers, they were doomed. Therefore, he warned them about...

- the danger of being a spectator only, of coming out to his meetings only to see what was happening.
- the danger of thinking that baptism protected them from the wrath to come.
- the danger of thinking that God's judgment was only for the heathen and the ungodly, not for them.
- the danger of verbal repentance only, thinking their conduct had no bearing on being accepted or rejected by God.
- the danger of thinking that the righteousness of their forefathers and families would cover and be sufficient for them.

John's message was fourfold.

1. Flee the wrath to come. The wrath of God was coming upon all who were only spectators. And baptism by itself was not enough, no matter how many baptisms a person went through.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:5-6).

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Ps.2:12).

2. Repent. Verbal repentance is not enough. Just being present in the midst of those who worship God is not enough. Repentance requires a change in conduct. The religionists rejected the message; they did not repent. Jesus informed us of their decision. What a warning (v.7-10)!

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him" (Lk.7:29-30).

Thought 1. Two types of persons often shut themselves off from God.
1) Persons of high estate (those of wealth and social standing).
2) Persons of religion (the self-righteous) (v.7-10).

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness" (Ps.52:7).

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch" (Pr.11:28).

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit" (Pr.18:11).

3. Heritage is of no value. The righteousness of others cannot make a person acceptable to God. Each person has to stand before God as an individual.

Thought 1. Many persons rest in two deceptions: (1) the godliness of family or friends, and (2) the righteousness of some good behavior. There has always been the tragic thought that a person is acceptable to God:

⇒ because he has done enough good for God to accept him. He is not bad enough for God to reject—not in the final analysis.

⇒ because his family or friends are living godly lives.

What is needed is to "wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved" (Jer.4:14). See notes—Ro.4:4-5; 4:11; Gal.3:10-12. See outline and notes—Eph.2:8-10.)

"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Lk.3:8).

"I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father" (Jn.8:38).

"They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (Jn.8:39).

"Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples" (Jn.9:28).

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal.3:10).

4. Judgment is at hand. Every tree that does not bear fruit shall be chopped down and destroyed. We must never forget that judgment is inclusive; it includes all. It does not matter how high (position) nor how green (appearance) the tree is. It must bear fruit or else be removed and destroyed (v.10. See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8.)

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).

"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (1 Pt.4:4-5).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge" (Jer.31:30).

Thought 1. Judgment should begin at the house of God, among the religious (v.10).

"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor.11:31).

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pt.4:17).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(3:7) **Religionists—Vipers**: both John and Jesus called the Pharisees and Sadducees "vipers," meaning full of poison and venom (false doctrine) and malice and enmity (against the truth). (Cp. Mt.12:34; 23:33. Cp. Jn.8:44.)

4 (3:11-12) **Messiah—Messiahship**: there was John's message to all: Christ—Messianic preaching. John's message had only one focus and one theme: the Messiah "cometh" (v.11); "this is he" (v.3); "prepare ye the way of the Lord" (v.3).

1. Christ is greater. Christ alone is to be exalted. John exalted Christ, not himself.

Thought 1. The person whom God uses is the person who exalts Christ (v.11).

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"That no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:29).

"That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor.1:31).

"Therefore let no man glory in men" (1 Cor.3:21).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

2. Christ shall baptize (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11 for discussion).

3. Christ shall judge and purge. His ministry was both to gather wheat, which is an act of love, and to separate and dispense with the chaff, which is an act of justice.
   a. There is a mixture of wheat and chaff right now: a mixture of true profession and false profession; true righteousness and false righteousness (v.12. See notes—Mt.13:1-52; DEEPER STUDY # 3—19:23-24 for discussion and verses.)
   b. There is a destiny for both the wheat and the chaff. The Kingdom of Heaven is the destiny of the wheat. The unquenchable fire is the destiny of the chaff (v.12).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(3:11) **Baptism—Jesus and John**: the word baptism (baptizein) means to dip, to immerse, to submerge, to place into. John's baptism was with water, but Jesus' baptism was "in [en] the Spirit and fire."

1. John's baptism was both a preparation and a symbol of the spiritual baptism that Jesus was to bring. John's water baptism meant two things.
   a. It symbolized cleansing from all sin. A person was being prepared for the cleansing that Christ would provide.
   b. It symbolized separation or dedication. A person was setting his life apart to God in a renewed spirit of dedication. He was committing himself to the Christ about whom John was preaching.

Note: John's baptism is called "the baptism of repentance"; that is, the person who repented was baptized. There could be no question; it was understood: if a person repented and actually turned to the Lord, he was baptized.

2. Jesus' spiritual baptism was a double baptism. (Only one preposition is used in the Greek for "the Spirit and fire," the preposition "in.")
   a. Jesus baptizes the person *in the Spirit*. He dips, immerses, and places the person in the Spirit. Whereas the person was carnal and materialisticly minded, he now becomes spiritually minded (Ro.8:5-7). The Jews had looked and longed for the day when the Spirit would come. The prophets had predicted His coming time and again. Therefore, the people knew exactly what John was predicting. The Spirit was expected to awaken and excite the people to such a degree that they would mobilize behind the Messiah, following Him in the overthrow of all oppressors. The Spirit was to lead the people in freeing Israel and establishing it as one of the greatest nations on earth (cp. Ezk.36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; Is.44:3; Joel 2:28).
   b. Jesus baptizes the person *in fire*. Fire has several functions that graphically symbolize the work of Christ. It illuminates, warms, melts, burns, and utterly destroys. The difference between baptism with water and fire is the difference between an outward work and an inward work. Water only cleanses the outside; fire purifies within, that is, the heart. Jesus Christ separates a person from his former life and purifies him within by the fire of His Spirit. It should be noted that in John's mind the "baptism of fire" meant that the Messiah was to destroy the enemies of Israel. It was "the messianic fire of judgment" that was to come from the throne of David (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; 22:42; note—Lk.7:21-23).

	B. Jesus' Baptism: What Baptism is All About,[DS1] **3:13-17 (Mk.1:9-11; Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:28-34)**	so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.	**righteousness**
1 The startling request of Jesus: To be baptized	13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.	16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight way out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:	**4 The unusual signs of Jesus' baptism** a. The heavens were opened b. The Spirit descended[DS2]
2 The humbling reaction of John: Humility & need	14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?	17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.	c. The voice of God was heard
3 The godly purpose of Jesus: To fulfill all	15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be		

DIVISION II

THE PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, 3:1-4:11

B. Jesus' Baptism: What Baptism is All About, 3:13-17

(3:13-17) **Introduction**: What is baptism all about? The answer is found in studying Jesus' baptism and John's reaction to Jesus' baptism.

1. The startling request of Jesus: to be baptized (v.13).
2. The humbling reaction of John: humility and need (v.14).
3. The godly purpose of Jesus: to fulfill all righteousness (v.15).
4. The unusual signs of Jesus' baptism (v.16-17).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:13-17) **Galilee to Jordan**: Mark said that Jesus came "from Nazareth of Galilee" (Mk.1:9). Note several things.

1. The last recorded event of Jesus' childhood was His return to Israel from Egypt. He was only a "young child" at that time (Mt.2:19-21).
2. The only other event recorded about Jesus' childhood and early manhood was His sharing with the religious authorities in the temple at age twelve (Lk.2:42f).
3. Jesus' hometown was Nazareth. He apparently lived there between His return from Egypt until the launch of His ministry when He was about thirty years old.
4. The distance from Galilee to the Jordan river was a long journey on foot.
5. Jesus deliberately chose Jordan as the place to launch His ministry. It was in Jordan that His forerunner, John the Baptist, had been preparing the way for Him. Many were now waiting "for the consolation of Israel," that is, the coming of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).

1 (3:13) **Jesus Christ, Baptism**: the startling request of Jesus—to be baptized.

1. Note the words "to be baptized of Him [John]." Jesus came specifically to John to be baptized. Jesus was compelled to be baptized, but not *just* to be baptized. He was compelled to be baptized *by John*. He was to identify Himself with John's ministry. He was the Messiah, the Lamb of God, being proclaimed by John.
2. Note why Jesus would seek to be baptized. The very fact that the Son of God would be baptized is startling. He was the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Founder of the movement of Christianity. He was the One who was making baptism *possible and effectual* (working) for man. John's baptism was a call for men to take a stand and to become identified with a life of repentance and righteousness. Jesus needed no repentance; He was already perfectly righteous. He was the *Purchaser* of righteousness, the Ideal Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). His righteousness was the pattern, the very righteousness that could stand for and cover every man. Why then would Jesus be baptized? Very simply, in His own words, "to fulfill all righteousness" (see note, pt.5—Mt.3:15).

2 (3:14) **Humility**: the humbling reaction of John—humility and need. John argued against Jesus' coming to him for baptism. Why? John simply said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" He was saying at least two things.

1. He was not worthy to baptize Christ. Christ's coming to him was too great an honor for him. He did not deserve the privilege of baptizing the Messiah, the Lamb of God (Jn.1:29).

John's humility was most unusual, for John was the *great one* in the eyes of the people at this time. Multitudes of people were flocking to him (Lk.3:7): the general public (Lk.3:10), tax collectors (Lk.3:12), soldiers (Lk.3:14), and religionists (Mt.3:7f). He had reached the summit in the public's eye. He was honored above all by vast numbers of people despite his being opposed by religionists and traditionalists (Lk.7:28). Yet when Christ approached him, he lowered himself and acknowledged that he was nothing in comparison.

2. He personally needed the baptism of Christ. He needed what Christ had. Christ was to baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire, and John was confessing his need to receive the Holy Spirit and fire from Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11).

Thought 1. No one is worthy of God's call; no one is worthy to minister to Christ. The fact that God allows any kind of relationship with Himself is beyond comprehension. Yet He has. He calls man to be with Him and to serve Him. This fact is too much for the human heart to contain.

> **"The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Mt.8:8).**
>
> **"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?" (Mt.25:37).**
>
> **"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Lk.5:8).**
>
> **"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Cor.3:9).**
>
> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor.5:14).**
>
> **"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8).**

Thought 2. Everyone needs what John had and what Jesus had. (See note—Mt.3:14.)
1) John had humility.
2) Jesus had the Holy Spirit and fire (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11).

> **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).**
>
> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**
>
> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**

Thought 3. It is no disgrace to confess one's need for Christ and for what He offers. John so confessed. How can a person be disgraced by confessing what everyone else already knows?
1) Man dies and desperately needs God to give him life—eternal life.
2) Man misbehaves and desperately needs the fulness of the Holy Spirit, that is, love, joy, peace.... (Gal.5:22-23).

Thought 4. The great (famous, powerful, wealthy) as well as the lowly need what Christ gives: the Holy Spirit and fire.

Thought 5. The believer always needs more and more of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. John had been "filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Lk.1:15). Now with Christ's confronting him face to face, he confessed his need for more of the Spirit of God and of the Lord's fire (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11).

> **"Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18).**

Thought 6. The closer a person lives with Jesus Christ the *clearer* he sees his need for more humility and more of God's Spirit. John was already close to God; in fact, he had been "sent from God" (Jn.1:6). But he saw his need for what Christ had to give. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11.)

3 (3:15) **Baptism**: the godly purpose of Jesus—to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus was baptized primarily "to fulfill all righteousness." He was symbolically predicting what He was going to do for sinful man.

1. He was going to fulfill every law of God for man. Baptism was one of those laws. Therefore, he had to be baptized. (Cp. Ex.29:4-7.)
2. He was going to pay man's penalty for having broken the law—the penalty of death. His immersion was a symbol of His coming immersion into death.
3. He was demonstrating to the fullest extent His humiliation in becoming a man. He had emptied Himself and "made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:6-7).
4. He was identifying with those He came to save, and He was insisting that all who follow Him become so identified.
5. He was pioneering the movement of repentance and righteousness which John was proclaiming. In founding the movement, that is, the life of righteousness, Jesus had to set the Ideal and the Pattern for every man. Every man was to be baptized, so the Son of God pioneered and established the ordinance of baptism.
6. He was initiating His ministry. John shows this (Jn.1:31-34). The High Priest had always entered his ministry in such a special ceremony (cp. Ex.29:4-7).

Thought 1. There are several lessons to learn from Christ's request to be baptized (see note—Mt.3:13).

1) Righteousness. Every man must determine to "fulfill all righteousness" just as Christ did. Every commandment of God must be fulfilled in the believer's life (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Righteousness*—Mt.5:6 for discussion).

> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another" (1 Jn.3:23).**

2) Sacrifice. Every man should be *so willing* to give of himself that he would die in order to live for God (see note—Lk.9:23).

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).**

3) Humility. Every man should demonstrate to the fullest extent his willingness to serve others. He should become one with others and set the example of such before all.

> **"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).**

4) Identifying with others. Every man should become one with all others, excluding no one from his life or service.

> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).**

5) Pioneering the life of repentance and righteousness. Every man should repent and live the life of righteousness, and every man should pioneer and proclaim such a life to all other men.

> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).**
>
> **"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).**
>
> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**

6) Ministry. Every man should minister to others; he should let his willingness to minister be known.

> **"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk.10:36-37).**
>
> **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).**
>
> **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).**

Thought 2. Christ calls and insists that a person accept His call, and Christ does not back down. Note four facts.

1) A person may feel unworthy and lacking in ability, but Christ has both the power and gifts to enable the person to accept His call.
2) A sense of unworthiness and inability is understood by God, but *refusal is not*.

3) Christ accepts only one answer to His call: "Yes, Lord—here am I" (1 Sam.3:4-6, 8; Is.6:8).
4) Humility does two contradictory things: it confesses unworthiness and inability, yet it yields and accepts the task or gift.

4 (3:16-17) **Jesus Christ, Baptism**: the unusual signs of Jesus' baptism. Three signs in particular are mentioned by Matthew.

1. The heavens were opened. This may be a scene of the clouds being rolled back and the dove descending from the heavens (clouds and sky). Or it may be some special vision given to Jesus and John, revealing that God was opening up heaven for the full approval and manifestation of God's power upon His Son. (Cp. Eph.1:1; Acts 7:56.)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-6).

2. The Spirit descended like a dove. The dove was given to John as a special sign that Jesus was the Son of God (Jn.1:33-34. See note—Jn.1:32-33; see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:16.)

Thought 1. Signs in Jesus' ministry were given to stir belief (Jn.5:36; 10:38). Most believers can point to very special signs and circumstances that were given by God to stir their faith and give direction to their lives. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:23.)

Thought 2. There are very special signs that prove a person has received the Holy Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

3. The voice of God was heard. Three significant things are said here.
⇒ *My Son*: this points to the deity of Christ (Mt.14:33; 27:43; 27:54; Mk.1:1; Jn.1:34; 3:18; 10:36; 11:4; 20:31; Acts 8:37; Ro.1:4; Heb.4:14; 1 Jn.3:8; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 13, 20).
⇒ *Beloved Son*: this points to the love within the Godhead (Trinity) (Jn.3:35; 10:17; Col.1:13; cp. Is.42:1).
⇒ *Well pleased*: this points to the perfect life Jesus lived. He was "yet without sin" (Heb.4:15; 7:26; cp. 2 Cor.5:21).

Thought 1. The one thing that a believer should want to hear is what Jesus heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
1) Believers are adopted as children of God (Ro.8:15; Gal.4:4-6).
2) Believers can have their lives and service approved by God.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Mt.25:21).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

Thought 2. God saw the life and behavior of Christ, and He judged Christ as *well pleasing*. God sees every man and shall judge the life and works of every man. Nothing is hid from His eyes.

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:2).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(3:16) **Spirit of God**: this is the first time the Trinity, the three persons of the Godhead, is clearly seen in the New Testament. The Son, Jesus Christ, was being baptized; the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son; and God the Father voiced His approval.

	CHAPTER 4	thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.	1) To test God 2) To attract attention by the spectacular b. Jesus' answer: From Scripture 1) God is not to be tested 2) God is to be trusted, not the spectacular
	C. Jesus' Temptation: *DS1,2,3* **Overcoming All, 4:1-11 (Mk.1:12-13; Lk.4:1-13)**		
1	**Jesus' temptation** a. *Led* by the Spirit b. Tempted by the devil	Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.	
2	**Tempt. 1: To prove His deity by using His power for personal reasons** a. The temptation 1) To secure by His own power 2) To trust Himself & His own ability instead of God b. Jesus' answer: From Scripture 1) Man needs more than bread 2) Man needs God's life—spiritual	2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, com-mand that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.	
3	**Tempt. 2: To prove His deity by the spectacular** a. The temptation	5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If	
4	**Tempt. 3: To prove His deity by compromise** a. The temptation 1) To achieve His purpose by another route 2) To switch loyalties or to take a *short-cut* b. Jesus' answer: From Scripture 1) A decisive choice 2) A worship of God alone		
5	**Conclusion: The triumphant victory**		

DIVISION II

THE PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH'S COMING, 3:1-4:11

C. Jesus' Temptation: Overcoming All, 4:1-11

(4:1-11) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Temptation**: Why was Jesus being tempted now, right after His baptism (a mountain-top experience) and right before the launch of His ministry? There is one primary reason.

Jesus Christ was about to launch His ministry—an unbelievable ministry that was to determine the eternal fate of every person who had ever lived or ever would live. The weight of its importance, the necessity of personal preparation, and the need for having the *right plan* pressed in upon Him. He had to be prepared—prepared mentally, prepared spiritually, prepared physically. How could He prepare Himself? There was only one way: He had to get alone with God and subject Himself; to gain complete control over His body and Spirit. He had to get completely apart from the world.

This Jesus did. He was "led by the Spirit" to separate Himself from food and from everything else. He got alone for forty days and nights in order to be with God. He was in earnest, ever so intense over His ministry which was about to be launched. He prayed; He thought; He meditated on the Scripture. And He planned. He bore so heavy a responsibility, and all the strain in all its weight and duty pressed in ever so heavily upon Him. Just imagine the pressure and weight pressing against His body. He prayed; He asked; He pleaded; He broke; He wept—He begged for strength and endurance to stand up under all that was to face Him in the upcoming years. The preparation went on for forty days and nights.

Once Jesus had worked out the plan necessary to launch His ministry, and once He had received the necessary strength to go forth, His personal preparation lacked only one more thing: confronting the temptations that would face Him in the upcoming years. Conquering the onslaught of temptations that lay ahead would complete His preparation. Thus "was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted...And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights...the tempter came to Him" (4:1-2).

> **"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb.5:8).**
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> **"In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb.2:18; cp.2:16-17).**
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> **"We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

1. Jesus' temptation (v.1).
2. Temptation 1: to prove His deity by using His power for personal reasons (v.2-4).
3. Temptation 2: to prove His deity by the spectacular (v.5-7).
4. Temptation 3: to prove His deity by compromise (v.8-10).
5. Conclusion: the triumphant victory (v.11).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(4:1-11) **Jesus Christ, Temptation**: this was not the only time Jesus was tempted.

1. Satan tempted Jesus through Peter when Peter tried to divert Him from the cross. Jesus revealed what really was behind Peter's apparent concern: "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Mt.16:23).
2. Jesus commended His disciples by saying: "Ye are they which have *continued with me* in my temptations" (Lk.22:28).
3. Jesus faced the severest temptation of His life in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was there that Satan made a last-ditch effort to divert Christ from the cross.

In referring to Christ's experience in Gethsemane, Scripture says to all believers: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb.12:4; cp. Lk.22:44).

Thought 1. The devil knows just where to tempt a person.

1) *In the wilderness*: when a person is without bread, when he really has need. This is the temptation that appeals to the lust of the flesh.
2) *On the pinnacle*: when a person is before multitudes. This is the temptation that appeals to pride—the pride of life (fame).
3) *On a high mountain*: when a person sees what is available—sometimes rightfully his, sometimes just desired. This is the temptation that appeals to the lust of the eyes.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(4:1-11) **Temptation**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.4:1-2.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(4:1-11) **Faith—Proof—Evidence—Corruption**: Jesus Christ was tempted three times by the devil. He was tempted to prove that He was the Son of God. What was wrong with proving His deity?

Proof is not God's way; faith is God's way. Proof is not what God wants; faith *is* what God wants. God wants to be trusted and loved. He wants to be freely loved, not loved because of force—because some person is constrained by irrefutable proof. There are facts, plenty of proofs that He is the Son of God; but in the final analysis, an act of faith has to be taken. No one has seen God. God cannot be known by the physical senses. To know God a person has to leap by faith, reach out for God in an act of belief, believing that God will reward his faith.

> **"Without faith it is impossible to please Him [God]; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6).**

Jesus Christ had come to establish and construct the way of faith. Therefore, Jesus Christ had to reject anything that led men away from the life of faith. Note that all three temptations had to do with man's senses and the physical world. If Christ had given in and secured the loyalty of men by feeding bread to the whole world, or by performing a spectacular miracle, or by taking over the kingdoms of this world, life would end and end soon. Why? Because all die. All waste away. The world is physical and material, corruptible and dying, deteriorating and decaying. It does not last. That is just the way of the physical world and all within it. This is the very reason Jesus Christ has come—to conquer the physical world of decay and death and to usher in the eternal world of the spirit—by the way of faith.

Therefore, Jesus Christ had to live the life of faith Himself. He had to walk the way of faith, of trusting and believing God Himself. He had to reject the devil's *proofs* and show and lead men by faith.

1 (4:1) **Jesus Christ, Temptation**: Jesus' temptation. Three facts need to be noted about Jesus' temptation.

1. Jesus was tempted immediately after His baptism. The word "then" shows this. All three gospels stress this fact. He had just had a mountaintop experience, a very special experience with God. Then, immediately, Satan attacked Him.
2. Jesus was the *only person* who knew about the temptations. He was the only person there. What the gospel writers recorded was what He had shared with them.
3. Jesus was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. Jesus was tempted for three reasons.
   a. To learn obedience—the control of His body, mind, and spirit.

> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).**

   b. To secure righteousness—the ideal perfection and sinlessness for man (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3).

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Co.5:21).**

   c. To experience all the infirmities of human life so that He would be able to succour man.

> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

In discussing temptation it is important to remember that God does not tempt man (Jas.1:13). God allows man to be tempted for the same reasons He led Christ to be tempted. God allows man to be tempted...

1. To prove and demonstrate his faith.
2. To strengthen and prepare him for heavier responsibility.
3. To demonstrate the mercy, grace, and power of God in a human life.

Thought 1. There are special times when communion with God is absolutely essential: (1) after a mountaintop experience (Christ's baptism); (2) before a great trial or time of temptation. Note that Jesus spent forty days alone with God *before* the tempter came to Him; (3) periods of great service for God. It is a great mistake to go before the public or to return from the public without spending a long time alone with God. The public, at least some of the public, will lay accolades at the feet of God's servant. Temptation lies just ahead. Preparation is essential.

Thought 2. The devil attacks anywhere and everywhere, in the wilderness and in the city when surrounded by others. But temptation is especially strong at certain points.

1) Right after a mountaintop experience.
2) Right before the launching of a new work.
3) During severe moments of weakness: physical and mental.

Thought 3. Note three facts about the person who really knows God and is set on serving God.

1) The more a person seeks to serve God, the more he can expect to be tempted. Note how heavy and intense the temptation was against Christ.
2) The more a person seeks to serve God, the more he needs communion with God. Time alone with God is essential. A quiet time in God's Word—meditating, communing, and worshipping—is an absolute essential for the believer.
3) Spiritual strength and maturity do not exempt a person from temptation. Everyone is tempted, even the Son of God Himself. No one is exempt (1 Cor.10:13).

Thought 4. Christ met temptation by doing three things.

1) He spent time alone with God.
2) He made sure He was led by the Spirit.
3) He relied upon the Scripture.

Thought 5. The devil is the tempter. He is the one who tempted Jesus Christ. He was the spiritual power who attempted to destroy the purpose of Christ (cp. Heb.2:14-15). The believer must prepare for the combat (see outline and notes—Eph.6:10-20. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9.)

Thought 6. What should the believer learn about fasting from the Lord's experience? Jesus fasted for forty days. He was facing an important and critical moment in His life; the weight was pressing in upon Him. He needed special preparation. Therefore, He separated Himself from the world; He got alone with God. He was so sincere and intense that He even separated Himself from food.

How often do believers *miss out* because they are not sincere and intense enough to put time with God before all else, even before food? How much more could be done if believers sought God with the same intensity? How much more growth and ministry could be gained?

2 (4:2-4) **Jesus Christ, Temptation**: the first temptation of Christ was to prove His deity by using His power for personal purposes. The devil tempted Christ to prove that He was the Son of God, that is, to secure the loyalty of men by two acts.

1. Christ was tempted to use His own power to meet both a personal and a world-wide need: hunger. He was hungry, and His hunger was critical. He had not eaten for forty days. The devil tempted Him to create bread to feed Himself, and in this suggestion was the hidden idea that He could feed the world, proving Himself to be the Son of God. By such, He could secure what He was after: the loyalty and worship of men. Men would rush to serve any Messiah or man who could meet their physical and material needs.
2. Christ was tempted to trust Himself, not God, and to choose another way other than God's way. God's way was the way of faith which included both time—time to suffer the trials of life—and the cross. The devil was saying "trust yourself, take a shorter route. Feed yourself and the world. Your needs can be met, and you can have the loyalty of men immediately."

There are two things wrong with the reasoning of this temptation.

1. Man needs more than bread. He needs more than physical life and physical needs' being met.
2. Man needs God's life. He needs eternal life and he needs his spiritual needs met.

Bread is a necessity of life. Jesus could have proven that He was the Son of God by using His supernatural power to create bread; He could have secured the loyalty of men by feeding them, that is, by meeting their physical needs. But He would have failed in at least two points.

1. He would have failed in meeting the spiritual needs of man.
2. He would have failed by teaching error—the error that the physical is more important than the spiritual and that receiving is more important than giving.

There is a spiritual hunger that is just not met by bread. Man's responsibility is the same as Christ's was: to trust God and to seek the things of God as he walks day by day throughout life.

> **"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and [then] all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**
>
> **"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name" (Dt.6:13.)**
>
> **"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12).**
>
> **"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Ps.119:103).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live" (Is.55:1-3).**
>
> **"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).**

Thought 1. Believers often face the very same temptation (cp. 1 Cor.10:13).

1) To prove who they are and to act in their own strength and their own ability.
2) To meet a real need (personal or community) in a wrong and illegitimate way: misusing one's position and abilities.
3) To stress physical needs over the spiritual needs of men—to feed them bread only, never bringing them to the cross (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).
4) To trust self, not God, trusting one's own strength and abilities.

Thought 2. Four clear lessons are seen in this temptation.

1) Temptation often attacks an area of desperate need such as hunger. There is a right and a wrong way to meet any need. It is often felt that if a real need can be met, then how it is met is excused. That is, the end justifies the means.
2) Man must learn that he does not live by bread alone. The physical alone will not satisfy. Man is spirit; therefore, he needs God and is dependent upon God. He cannot live without God. "Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied" (Micah 6:14 cp. Haggai 1:6, 9; Mt.6:24-34).
3) Temptation is to be resisted by using the Word of God. The believer must study and learn the Word of God in order to withstand temptation (Ps.119:9, 11; Col.3:16; 2 Tim.2:15; 3:16; 1 Pt.2:2-3).
4) When *needs arise*, a person must always strengthen himself against temptation. The greater the need, the greater the attack of temptation.

3 (4:5-7) **Jesus Christ, Temptation**: the second temptation of Christ was to prove His deity by the spectacular. The devil tempted Christ to prove that He was the Son of God by doing two more acts.

1. Christ was tempted to test God. He was tempted to do the spectacular. He was to jump off the towering pinnacle of the temple and let God send His angels to catch Him in mid-air and lift Him gently to the ground. Since He was God's only Son, God would certainly bear Him up (so the devil reasoned).
2. Christ was tempted to attract attention by the spectacular. The worshippers at the temple, seeing such a spectacular event, would accept and proclaim Him to be the Son of God.

There are two things wrong with the reasoning behind this temptation.

1. God is not to be tested. His will, His power, His protection, His promises are not to be presumed upon or taken advantage of or misused. God is not to be tested or tried; God is to be trusted. His will and His Word are to be trusted and obeyed just as they are laid down; all things are to be done exactly as He says.
2. God is to be trusted, not the spectacular. God wants men to believe Him because they love Him as their Father, not because of events and happenings, whether they be spectacular or commonplace (Is.43:10).

Christ would have failed in at least two points if He had given in to this temptation.

1. He would have tempted God to misuse His power. Christ would have placed Himself in a threatening position and risked His life, expecting God to save Him. This act would have abused God's will and misused what God had promised. This act would have ignored what God really wanted and had really said.
2. He would have centered people's attention on the spectacular. The mission of Christ was to focus people's attention on faith in God—in particular, their desperate need for God and His eternal kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God" (Mk.11:22).

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (Jn.6:28-29).

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Tim.6:12).

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb.10:22-23).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

Thought 1. Believers are often tempted the same as Christ (cp. 1 Cor.10:13).

1) They are tempted to test God, to lay hold of some Biblical promise and take it out of context, to misuse and misapply it. The motive is sometimes good, for the believer wishes to do great things for God. What happens is that he lays hold of some great promise of God and launches out, but the promise is misused and misapplied. The *great things* were not God's will for the believer. We must always remember that God does give us great promises. But we must stay close to God (meditation and prayer) and stay in His Word in order to rightly understand His promises. This alone will keep us from misusing and misapplying His promises.
2) To center people's attention upon the spectacular, not upon God and faith in God. God is to be trusted, not the spectacular. God is to be the focus and center of *all that is said and done*, not the spectacular.

Thought 2. Three things are absolutely essential in order to conquer this temptation.

1) Living with God moment by moment—genuinely living in constant communion with Him.
2) Living in God's Word—really knowing His promises in order to use them as they were meant to be used (cp. 2 Cor.2:12; 2 Tim.2:15; 3:16; cp. Acts 17:11; cp. Ps.1:2f).
3) Realizing that the power of Satan is a limited power. He can only tempt; he cannot force a person to sin. He could not push Christ off the pinnacle. He cannot push man into sin. The lust or desire is from within man. Satan's temptation can only stir and arouse the desire and lust. Satan cannot cause a man to lust. Therefore, if a person is living in communion with God and living in God's Word, he will be stirred to obey God more than he is stirred to yield to the temptation. (see outline and notes—Jas.1:13-18. See note—Jas.4:1-6.)

Thought 3. The temple or house of worship is a place of special interest to the devil. It is the place where the worship of God is centered. Therefore, to cause some diversion, pride, or false teaching—anything that detracts and leads people away from God—defeats God's purposes and *ruins people's lives*, sometimes eternally.

Thought 4. Satan knew Scripture and knew it well. It is possible to know the Scripture and not know God. It is even possible to know the Scripture and to stand against God, abusing and misusing His Word.

4 (4:8-10) **Jesus Christ, Temptation**: the third temptation of Christ was to prove His deity by compromise. The devil tempted Christ to prove that He was the Son of God by compromising.

1. Christ was tempted to compromise His ministry and His mission. He was tempted to secure the world without the cross, without paying the price. He was tempted to choose another way instead of God's way—to achieve His purpose by another route. He was attracted to use the wrong means for reaching the end of universal sovereignty. If He bowed down and worshipped the devil, the kingdoms of the world and the loyalty of men were to be His.
2. Christ was tempted to compromise His life and His loyalty. He was tempted to switch loyalties. He was offered the world and the sovereign leadership of the world if He would just do one thing: worship the devil. What does this mean? It means that Christ was tempted to allow the world (including man) to remain corruptible and dying with no hope of life eternal with God. It was a temptation to allow the world to continue as it is, and to allow the devil to continue his work within the world in order to frustrate God's eternal plan for the world.

There are two things wrong with the reasoning behind this temptation.

1. Compromise with the devil and the world is not God's way. God's way is to conquer the corruption and death of this world.
2. God alone is to be worshipped, not the devil nor the world and its power.

If Christ had given in to this temptation, He would have failed in at least two points.

1. He would have secured the kingdoms of this world through compromise, not by God's hands. God had promised Him the world and the loyalty of its citizens, but it was to come by way of the cross. The way of God was far better, for the kingdoms promised by God were to be eternal (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).
2. He would have switched His loyalty from God to the devil. He would have forsaken God for this world and its prince, Satan (Eph.2:2; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:3-4).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:11-12).

Thought 1. Note four significant lessons in this point.

1) A believer is often tempted to compromise both his life and his work or ministry. The tempter, Satan, wants a person to live for the world *only*, to ignore his spirit that is destined to live forever. He wants a person's attention and energy and effort. He wants a person given over to this world and to this life *only*.
2) Satan deceives and lies. The kingdoms of this world are only temporary—for a few short years. The life of a person and the life of the world itself is short, ever so short. It all ends.
3) Believers cannot receive from Satan what God has promised them, that is, eternal life (see note—Eph.1:3. Cp. 2 Pt.1:4; 3:8-15.)
4) Temptation must be resisted immediately. Jesus did not hesitate a moment in resisting temptation.

Thought 2. When a believer is tempted time after time, he faces two critical dangers.

1) Discouragement. The sheer number and force of extreme temptations can discourage a person. Succumbing to temptation and sinning can discourage a person. In fact, the greater the fall of a person, the more unworthy and self-accusing he becomes. Self-pity, shame, guilt, and failure always discourage to some degree. (Cp. 1 Pt.4:12-13.)
2) Over-confidence. When a believer overcomes temptation, he grows, becoming stronger and more mature and gains more confidence. However, there is danger in this. He can begin to feel strong and mature enough to conquer temptation. He can *feel above temptation*. Such feelings can lead to two gross errors.
   a) It can lead to liberal or loose behavior and beliefs. Before long, a person begins to think everything he does is right. He feels so mature and strong that he feels he can conquer any temptation. He feels that what he believes and does is bound to be right. He even pulls Scripture out of context to justify his ungodly and loose behavior.
   b) It can lead to conservative or narrow behavior and beliefs. Before long a person can begin to feel that he is so mature and so strong that he can conquer temptations on his own, that what he believes and does is also bound to be right. He lives by strict rules and regulations, judging himself and all others by the same rules. He, too, justifies his bigotry and narrow-minded behavior by Scripture.

5 (4:11) **Temptation, Conquered**: there was the triumphant victory. Christ resisted the temptation the only way He could: by doing exactly what the Word of God said. He simply obeyed God; therefore, He never got out of the will of God. The devil was defeated, and temptation and sin were conquered. Note that the devil left Jesus alone for awhile and some angels came and ministered to Him.

Thought 1. The devil is a conquered enemy.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14).

Thought 2. There is always an escape from temptation. God knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

Thought 3. When temptation is resisted, the devil flees and the believer is relieved for a while.

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas.4:7; cp. v.11).

	III. THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY, 4:12-25	14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,	**3 There was the deliberate decision to fulfill Scripture**
	A. Jesus' Ministry: Going Forth with Purpose, 4:12-17	15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;	**4 There was the mission** a. To go to needy lands
1 There was the sign to begin: John's imprisonment **2 There was the chosen headquarters: Galilee** a. Jesus left Nazareth b. Jesus headquartered in Capernaum	12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; 13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:	16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,	b. To take people in darkness & show them great light c. To take people in death & give them light **5 There was the message** a. Repentance b. Reason: the K. of Heaven is at hand

DIVISION III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY, 4:12-25

A. Jesus' Ministry: Going Forth with Purpose, 4:12-17

(4:12-17) **Introduction**: the time had now come—the time when Jesus was to go forth to His great purpose. There is much in this passage for every believer, layman and minister alike. Every believer is called of God, actually sent into the world for a specific purpose. The sad fact is that too many believers are not aware of their purpose. They do not know why God sent them into the world. They have not sought God to discover His purpose for their lives; therefore, they are just walking through life doing the same tasks and activities which occupied their time before they were saved. But for the believer who knows God's purpose for his life, the day comes when he is to go forth to His purpose. He is to go forth as Christ went forth, to carry on the great task which God has given him to do.

1. There was the sign to begin: John's imprisonment (v.12).
2. There was the chosen headquarters: Galilee (v.12-13).
3. There was the deliberate decision to fulfill Scripture (v.14).
4. There was the mission (v.15-16).
5. There was the message (v.17).

1 (4:12) **Jesus Christ, Ministry—Guidance**: there was the sign to begin—John's imprisonment. God showed Christ when to begin His ministry. The imprisonment of John was His sign to launch out in full force. He had been ministering in Judea (Jn.4:1) but not as publicly or as extensively as He was now to do. He could now go forth and tackle His task to the fullest. Why now? Why not earlier?

Jesus could not give the appearance of competing with John. If He had begun His ministry in full force before John's ministry had been completed, the loyalty of the people would have been divided. John was sent to prepare the way, and the way was not fully prepared until John was removed from the scene.

Thought 1. The believer who lives and walks in Christ will be *directed* by God.

1) He will know God's purpose for his life (see all notes—Mt.4:12-17).
2) He will know when to go forth to his task, when to carry out God's purpose for his life—just as Christ knew. God will guide and direct His servant.

> **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (Jn.16:13).**
>
> **"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Ps.25:9).**
>
> **"For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Ps.48:14).**
>
> **"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps.73:24).**
>
> **"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Is.30:21).**
>
> **"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Is.42:16).**
>
> **"Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go" (Is.48:17).**

Thought 2. The eclipse of John by Jesus holds a significant lesson for believers of every generation. The believer is to be serving the Lord from day one of his conversion, and when the day comes for him to launch out in full force to carry out God's purpose for his life, he must go forth. Within every generation, God raises up witnesses to follow other witnesses in order to carry on the work of the ministry (Eph.4:11-12). Believers are not rivals.

They are joint servants of the Lord who work together in their respective ministries. They are not to compete against each other. And when the time comes, when a servant's ministry is completed, he is to willingly step aside. In fact, a believer should prepare to have his ministry eclipsed, to move aside while God raises up others to carry on after he is gone. God cannot wait until a generation is gone to raise up others. There would not be time for the new generation to take over and affect a smooth transition. God has to raise up new servants and thrust them into the forefront as the older generation fades into the background. Such eclipsing should be accepted willingly and graciously.

> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us" (Ro.12:3-6).**
>
> **"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor.12:4-7).**
>
> **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph.4:11-12).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

2 (4:12-13) **Capernaum—Galilee—Nazareth**: there was the chosen headquarters—Galilee. Christ left Nazareth. Why? Nazareth was His hometown. Why did He not make His hometown His headquarters? The reason is clear: the city had rejected Christ: "No *prophet* is accepted in His own country" (Lk.4:24). They had thrown Him out and had attempted to kill Him (Lk.4:29). Therefore, Christ set up headquarters in the city of Capernaum. Capernaum lay in the northernmost point of Palestine. It was deliberately chosen by Christ as "His own city" (Mt.9:1; Is.9:1-7).

God had prepared Galilee down through history for the coming of His Son's ministry. Several facts show this (cp. Gal.4:4).

1. Throughout history Galilee had been invaded and repopulated again and again with different people and cultures from all over the world. Over the years such an influx of differing people had created an atmosphere susceptible to new personalities and ideas.
2. Galilee was strategically located. The world's leading roads passed right through its borders. Merchants from all over the world passed through, boarding in its cities.
3. Galilee was heavily populated. It was also surrounded by the Samaritans, Phoenicians, and Syrians making it an open door for world evangelization. It was one of the most fertile lands in that part of the world. This fact, plus the travelling trade, led numbers to settle within its borders. There were within the district over two hundred cities with a population of fifteen thousand or more (Josephus. Quoted by William Barclay. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.66). There were multitudes for Jesus to reach.
4. Galilee was open to new and fresh ideas. Its people, having come from all over the world, were liberal minded, always looking for new and fresh ideas to stimulate and challenge their thinking.

It was for these reasons that Christ chose Galilee to begin His ministry. The area was an open door for people to spread the news that the Messiah had come and the Kingdom of Heaven was being ushered in.

> **Thought 1.** A person's place of ministry should be deliberately chosen. He should consider strategic locations for ministry (see note—Mt.4:12).
>
> > **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).**
> >
> > **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
> >
> > **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **Thought 2.** People can reject the gospel and the Savior. Just imagine! The Lord's own hometown rejected Him. (See notes—Mt.9:1; Jn.1:10-11.)

3 (4:14) **Scripture—Jesus Christ, Fulfilled Scripture**: there was Jesus' deliberate decision to fulfill Scripture (Is.9:1-2; 42:6-7). This stresses the critical importance of the Scripture. A believer should heed the Scripture—all of it (see note 4—2 Tim.3:16; note 3 and DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2*—2 Pt.1:19-21).

> **"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (Jn.15:3).**
> **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn.17:17).**
> **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph.5:26).**

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb.4:12).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).

"Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Ps.119:9).

4 (4:15-16) **Mission—Purpose—Life**: there was the mission. Christ's mission was people; He focused on people.

1. Note what is said about the mission of Christ.
   a. Christ went to people in needy lands.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk.5:31-32).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

   b. Christ took people in darkness and showed them light (see note—Jn.8:12; 12:35-36; Ro.13:12).

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).**

   c. Christ took people in death and gave them light.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

Thought 1. The mission of every believer is people—to take people and to do what Christ did.

Thought 2. Since Christ came, two wonderful things are now present.
1) Light is now present. Man no longer has to seek light because God sent the light into the world.
2) Choice is now present. Man can now choose light; he does not have to remain in darkness.

2. Note what is said about the people of the world.
   a. People are in darkness (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:12; cp. Lk.22:53; Jn.1:5; Ro.13:11; 13:12).

> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
>
> **"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:5).**
>
> **"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).**
>
> **"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Th.5:4).**

   b. People sit in darkness. They accept and are comfortable in darkness, pleased with their lives. Scripture says men love darkness rather than light (Jn.3:19-21).

> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (Jn.3:19-21).**
>
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**

   c. People sit in the region and shadow of death. Note: they are in the region (territory, country, area) of death; but right now, while living on the earth, death is only a shadow. There is hope for man: man has the opportunity to be saved from death, from doom, and from condemnation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27; Heb.2:14-15).

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that be-**

lieveth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

d. People now see a *great* light, the greatest of lights: Christ Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35; cp. Jn.12:46).

e. People now have a light that is "sprung up." They have a light that grows and continues on. There is a growing opportunity to walk out of the darkness into the light and to live forever, conquering death (cp. Heb.2:14-15).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25-26).

5 (4:17) **Repentance**: there was the message. The words "from that time" are extremely significant. They indicate *urgency, persistance, perseverance*: three excellent words describing the obsession of Christ with His mission and message. It had two major points.

1. Christ preached repentance. Repentance means to change; to turn; to change one's mind; to turn one's life. It is a turning away from sin and turning toward God. It is a change of mind, a forsaking of sin. It is putting sin out of one's thoughts and behavior. It is resolving never to think or do a thing again. (Cp. Mt.3:2; Lk.13:2-3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 26:20.) The change is turning away from lying, stealing, cheating, immorality, cursing, drunkenness, and the other so-called glaring *sins of the flesh*. But the change is also turning away from *the silent sins of the spirit* such as self-centeredness, selfishness, envy, bitterness, pride, covetousness, anger, evil thoughts, hopelessness, laziness, jealousy, lust.

a. Repentance involves two turns. There is a negative turn away from sin and a positive turn toward God. It is a turning to God away from sin, whether sins of thought or action. (See note, *Repentance*—Lk.3:3. Cp. 1 Th.1:9; Acts 14:15.)

b. Repentance is more than sorrow. Sorrow may or may not be involved in repentance. A person may repent simply because he wills and acts to change; or a person may repent because he senses an agonizing sorrow within. But the sense or feeling of sorrow is not repentance. Repentance is both the change of mind and the actual turning of one's life away from sin and toward God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10.)

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19; cp. Acts 2:38).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

2. Christ preached the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:3).

"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor.4:20).

Thought 1. Four challenging lessons are seen in this point.

1) Believers should become obsessed with the mission of the Lord! They should be gripped and enslaved by the obsession of Christ! Here is why. Man no longer has to seek light. The Light of the world has come, but so many are still in darkness. They have not heard. Believers, in their lethargy and lack of urgency, have hoarded the message, failing to go forth as God's messengers of light (2 Cor.5:19-20; cp. Jn.20:21; Lk.19:10).
2) The ministry of believers is the same as Christ's: to preach. All other work and ministries are important, but the primary ministry of all believers is to preach, to proclaim the gospel to a world crying for help (see note—Acts 8:1).
3) The message of believers is the same as Christ's: (1) repent; (2) the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. All other subjects are important, but the primary message must be these two points (see note 7 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).
4) Believers are given the highest honor in the world: they are sent into the world on the same mission as God's very own Son. Imagine having the same mission and the same message as God's own Son!

	B. Jesus' Disciples: The Kind of Person Called, 4:18-22 (Mk. 1:16-20; cp. Lk. 5:1-11; Jn. 1:35-51)	Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.	Jesus—at once[DSI] d. Were called to another work e. Were responsive **2 The second men called** a. Were obedient sons working with their father—closely knit b. Were industrious, frugal c. Were simply called d. Were responsive: Left their livelihood & family
1 The first men called a. Were brothers who worked together b. Were industrious workers c. Were called to follow	18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them,		

DIVISION III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY, 4:12-25

B. Jesus' Disciples: The Kind of Person Called, 4:18-22

(4:18-22) **Introduction**: What kind of person does Christ call? This passage shows that Christ calls ordinary people who will simply make themselves available to Him.

Note *where* Jesus called His first disciples. They were not in a religious center or a learning center. Neither were they in a position of authority or power, nor did they possess wealth or financial security. They were out in the work-a-day world. This is not to de-emphasize the importance of religion or of learning, but it does teach at least two things.

First, position and power, wealth and security, religion and learning can hurt and keep a person away from God. Such things can make a person so self-confident and assured that he becomes useless to God. God is unable to work His power through him. The man's own abilities and energy block God's gifts and power from flowing through him.

Second, God can use and call anyone who is really available, whether religious or nonreligious, learned or unlearned, ordinary or extraordinary. The main ingredient is to be available and willing to respond.

1. The first men called (v.18-20).
   a. Were brothers who worked together.
   b. Were industrious workers.
   c. Were called to follow Jesus—at once.
   d. Were called to another work.
   e. Were responsive.
2. The second men called (v.21-22).
   a. Were obedient sons working with their father—closely knit.
   b. Were industrious, frugal.
   c. Were simply called.
   d. Were responsive: left their livelihood and family.

[1] (4:18-20) **Call—Ministers—Discipleship**: the first men called. Five traits are seen in these men, traits that show what kind of person is called by Christ.

1. The men called by Christ were brothers who worked together. The fact that they were working together says at least three things.
   a. They had good parents who had taught them to love and care for one another.
   b. They came from a closely knit family, a family that worked together.
   c. They followed and obeyed the teaching of their parents and maintained a brotherly spirit throughout life.

Thought 1. The disciples' brotherly and cooperative spirit shows us three things.

1) The need for a brotherly spirit—the kind of spirit Christ desires of His followers. The kind of kingdom Christ is building is a kingdom of followers with a brotherly spirit.

> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
> **"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:35).**
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).**
> **"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Ro.12:10).**
> **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).**

2) The need for reaching families for Christ: brothers and sisters reaching each other.

> **"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretations, A stone" (Jn.1:41-42).**

"So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him,Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house" (Jn.4:53).

"And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us" (Acts 16:15).

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Act 16:30-31).

3) The need for parents to train up their children in the way they should go (see outline and notes—Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:20-21).

"And thou shalt teach them [God's words] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr.22:6).

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph.6:4).

Thought 2. There is one essential for serving Christ that must be stressed among God's people: cooperation—a nature and willingness to serve together (see outline and notes—1 Cor.12:12-31).

"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:25-26).

"But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state" (Ph.2:19-20).

2. The men called by Christ were industrious workers. Note how Peter and Andrew were busy at work when Christ called them. This is a second essential for serving Christ that must be stressed: energy, industry, a willingness to work and to work hard. When Christ calls a person, the person is working, not sitting. God does not choose the lazy and inactive, but the energetic and industrious. Too many believers are sitting and are inactive. Therefore, they miss out on the higher calling of God.

"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a *herdman*, and a *gatherer* of sycomore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (Amos 7:14-15).

"So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him" (1 Ki.19:19).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch" (Mk.13:34).

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:12-13).

3. The men called by Christ were called to follow Him, and they were to *immediately* follow Him. The point is this: the disciple is called to follow Christ personally, to attach himself to Christ before he does anything else. Personal discipleship, that is, personal attachment, is essential (see note—Mt.28:19-20). A person must first learn Christ before he can serve Christ.

Thought 1. The Lord's call is to a personal relationship, to become attached to Him.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness...that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:8-11).

Thought 2. The disciples, although unlearned, were given about three years of the best and most extensive training in the world. They were taught by Christ Himself, God's own Son. Every believer needs to get alone with Christ and to do it often, to study and meditate upon Him and His Word.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh.1:8).

4. The men called by Christ were called to another work. This was a call to a different kind of employment, to another work and profession. It was a drastic, traumatic change. Note several facts.
   a. The call to a personal relationship had already been issued. John tells us this (Jn.1:35-42). A personal relationship must always be stressed before service.
   b. This call, the call to "fish for men," was a call to service. It was a call to care for men, to help and minister to them. No greater call can come to a man, for helping another human being is the greatest act in all of life. Imagine a person who gives himself to nothing but ministering and helping people. What greater call is there? (Cp. Mt.20:26; Mk.10:43; Lk.9:48.)
   c. The call was to *immediate and total detachment* from all else and to *immediate attachment* to Jesus and His mission (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.4:19).

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt.4:19).

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"He [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

"Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Is.6:8).

Thought 1. The Lord's call is twofold.
1) To follow Him, the Messiah. Before doing anything else, a disciple must first learn Christ.
2) To become a fisher of men.

Thought 2. Christ adapts a person's call to the knowledge and experience of the person. These fishermen were called "to fish for men."
1) This fact stirs some confidence and prevents some apprehension and fear in accepting the call of Christ. It means that Christ always considers a person's knowledge and experience when He calls him.
2) This fact also enables a person to serve more efficiently and effectively—to accomplish much more for God.

5. The men called by Christ were responsive. They responded immediately.

Thought 1. The call of God is critical and demands a decision.
1) It is immediate—right now! A person is to get up now, not tomorrow (see outline—Lk.9:57-62. This is an excellent picture of how some put off the call.)
2) It is unequivocal. It demands a positive response—immediately. How tragic that many are called, but few are chosen.

"So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen" (Mt.20:16).

"And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:59-62).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(4:19) **Discipleship—Call**: this was a call to service. Peter and Andrew had already been called as disciples (Jn.1:35-42). The thought is *immediate and total detachment* from everything. Matthew emphasizes the call to the Lord's *official mission or work*. Mark stresses the call to a *changed life*: "To become fishers of men" (Mk.1:17). Luke stresses the call to a *different profession* (Lk.5:10). John stresses the call to a *personal relationship* (Jn.1:40-42).

2 (4:21-22) **Call—Ministers—Discipleship**: the second men called. Four traits are seen in these men, traits that also show what kind of person is called by Christ.

1. They were obedient sons working with their father. They were from a closely knit family, and a closely knit family has an important influence upon the lives of its children. The point is that obedience is essential, both as a child and as a servant (see outline and notes—Eph.6:1-3).

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise)" (Eph.6:1-2).

"But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God" (1 Tim.5:4).

"Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God" (Lev.19:3).

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock" (Mt.7:24).

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt.12:50).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

2. They were industrious and frugal. Note how they were mending their nets, making use of what they had instead of running out to secure new nets. The point is that God does not care for wastefulness. The person God calls is frugal and thrifty, not wasteful.

"When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost" (Jn.6:12).

"The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious" (Pr.12:27).

"There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up" (Pr.21:20).

3. They were simply called. There was nothing dramatic or spectacular about their call. A dramatic experience was not necessary to reach them.

Thought 1. Some receive very simple calls, but they are as equally called as those who receive more dramatic and spectacular calls. God's call matches the nature and needs of a person. God's call considers a person's emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual needs. Some need more emotional calls than others. Some need more rational calls.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

4. They were responsive; they left their livelihood and family.

Thought 1. Some are called to leave more. Some leave not only businesses, but fathers and mothers. In some cases, this involves persecution and even the threat of death.

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death" (Mt.10:21).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

Thought 2. God's call involves a drastic change. It involves both a change of life and a change of one's primary profession (see outline—Lk.9:57-62; see note—Eph.4:20-24; 4:28. Cp. Col.3:22f.)

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:27-28).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

	C. Jesus' Dramatic Fame: A Successful Ministry, 4:23-25		
1 **Jesus' sphere of activity** a. Through all Galilee[DS1] b. In the synagogue[DS2]	23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching	brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those	4 **Jesus' power** a. Over the spiritual b. Over the mental
2 **Jesus' daily activities** a. Teaching b. Preaching the gospel[DS3] c. Healing	the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.	that had the palsy; and he healed them.	c. Over the physical
3 **Jesus' fame spread throughout all Syria**[DS4]	24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they	25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.	5 **Jesus' following** a. Great multitudes followed b. From everywhere: Both Jew & Gentile

DIVISION III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY, 4:12-25

C. Jesus' Dramatic Fame: A Successful Ministry, 4:23-25

(4:23-25) **Ministry**: a successful ministry is a ministry that follows in the footsteps of the Lord. This passage shows both what the Lord did and the results of what He did. His activities set a pattern for every believer, minister and layman alike.

1. Jesus' sphere of activity (v.23).
2. Jesus' daily activities (v.23).
3. Jesus' fame spread thru Syria (v.24).
4. Jesus' power (v.24).
5. Jesus' following (v.25).

1 (4:23) **Jesus' Sphere of Activity**: where Jesus ministered. Three things can be said about where Jesus ministered.

1. He went throughout *all* Galilee. He went throughout the *whole* area which He had set out to reach, the area (so to speak) which had been assigned to Him. *Once committed* to an area, He was responsible and faithful to it. (What a lesson for believers on commitment, assignments, and responsibilities.)
2. He went where there was a ready audience. He went where people would receive and hear Him, that is, in the synagogue (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.4:23).
3. He went where teaching and preaching were expected, in the synagogue. (He did not teach exclusively in the synagogue, but it was one of the primary places of His ministry.)

Thought 1. Every believer should have the same thing said about him that is said about Jesus: that he went forth just as God commanded Him.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

Thought 2. Note a significant point: Jesus followed the form of service already established. He did not try to change the establishment, not organizationally. He was on mission, and He had to have a receptive hearing (see note 2—Mt.4:23). He refused to be sidetracked by secondary matters which might cause change and disturb the people. Secondary matters would only detract from His preaching and ministering.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(4:23) **Galilee**: see note—Mt.4:12.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(4:23) **Synagogue**: the synagogue was the most important institution in the life of a Jew. It was the center of worship for the Jew, yet it was also the center of learning and education. Services and discussions were conducted daily in most synagogues. Wherever Jews were scattered over the world, every colony, no matter how small, had its synagogue.

Some cities had many synagogues. Jerusalem is an example: it has been estimated that there were hundreds of synagogues within the city. Five are mentioned in Acts 6:9. A synagogue service included prayers, Scripture reading, and a lecture or discussion. Distinguished persons, local or strangers, were invited to take part in the service; therefore, the door of the synagogue was wide open to Christ (cp. Lk.4:16f). Using the synagogue was part of His strategy (cp. Gal.4:4. See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.1:21.) It was also the strategy of Paul when the synagogues were open to him (cp. Acts 9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:1, 10; 18:4, 19; 19:8).

2 (4:23) **Jesus' Daily Activities**: the three activities of Jesus were teaching, preaching, and healing. The three activities are simply stated, but profound in their meaning.

Note there is a concentration of activity in this passage, a bombardment of ministry. Jesus is pictured running about, as active as He could be, serving and meeting the needs of people in a committed and tireless spirit. People's needs were being met with very special care, and they were being met rapidly in a concentrated effort.

The great needs of men are threefold: (1) to hear the gospel; (2) to be taught the gospel; and (3) to be healed personally. Jesus Christ knew man's innermost being, what his being lacked and needed, what made man tick. Therefore, His activities were geared to man's innermost being, to that which would meet his need.

⇒ Jesus Christ proclaimed the gospel. There is hope—hope for an eternal kingdom, an eternal heaven, a whole new dimension of being that is eternal.

⇒ Jesus Christ taught the glorious truths of the gospel. Man can hope in the gospel and be healed; that is, he can be delivered from all the enslavements of this life (Ro.8:1f; Heb.2:14-15).

Thought 1. God's servants ought to be engaged in the same daily activities as the Lord: teaching, preaching, and healing. That is their call and mission. There are many means of communication: speeches, discussions, devotions, homilies, vespers, lessons, and writings. However, as good as they are and as needed as they may be, they are not the primary call of God's people. God's people are called to preach and teach and heal.

> **"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Mt.10:7-8).**
>
> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20; cp. Mk.16:15).**

Thought 2. The mercy of God is being poured out in this passage—poured out upon people through preaching, teaching, and healing. Believers are now God's instruments of mercy. They are to pour out God's mercy upon all men who will receive it—through preaching, teaching, and ministry.

> **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).**

Thought 3. The works of Christ were His credentials, proof that He was God's Son. The believer's works are his credentials. Profession only, profession without works, is empty. A servant must serve.

> **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).**
>
> **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas.1:22).**
>
> **"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:14-17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(4:23) **Gospel—Kingdom of Heaven**: the gospel is the Kingdom of Heaven, and the news of the Kingdom is the greatest news to ever come to earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.15:1-11; note—Ro.1:1-4; note 4 and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.1:5). The Kingdom of Heaven surpasses the kingdoms of this world in two ways.

1. The Kingdom of Heaven is eternal. It is not physical and corruptible, lasting just for a season. It is a world in another dimension of being, a dimension entirely different from the physical world. It lasts forever and ever. What this means for man is that life is eternal. It is life that goes on forever and ever, but in a permanent, incorruptible, eternal dimension.
2. The Kingdom of Heaven brings wealth and assurance to the human soul forever. Man can be blessed by God Himself and live forever in those blessings. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; Eph.1:3 for more discussion.)

3 (4:24) **Jesus Christ, Ministry**: Jesus' fame spread throughout all Syria (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Syria*—Mt.4:24). People everywhere needed Christ. There was *no person* who did *not* need Him, so God in His providence saw to it that the news of His Son spread everywhere. (See note 4—Mt.4:24.)

> **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23; cp. Ro.6:23).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).**

Thought 1. Believers are now to carry the message of Christ everywhere. The world (so to speak) flocked to Christ, but believers are told to scatter all over the world and to carry the gospel of the kingdom with them (see note, pt.4—Acts 8:1).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(4:24) **Syria**: this was a great Roman province of which Palestine was a part. People from all over Syria were coming to see Jesus. Its chief cities were Damascus, Antioch, Byblos, Aleppo, Palmyra, and Carchemish. Beginning with the people flocking to hear Christ, Syria became prominent in the early history of the church. Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, and the first great Gentile church was founded at Antioch. It was the church at Antioch which sent out the first missionaries in Christian history and gave the name Christian to believers for the first time (cp. Acts 11:26).

4 (4:24) **Healing—Miracles**: Jesus' power was a great and glorious power. Jesus is said to have healed "*all* manner of sickness and...disease" (v.23) and "divers [many] diseases and torments" (v.24). However, only three specific healings are listed. These particular three symbolize the power of Christ over the whole man and over the physical universe.

⇒ There was spiritual healing: "Those possessed with devils."
⇒ There was mental healing: "Those which were lunatic."
⇒ There was physical healing: "Those that had the palsy."

The point is this: Jesus Christ has power over the whole physical universe. He has power over all the conceivable problems that can grip man: all the spiritual, mental, and physical problems.

Thought 1. This passage is a beautiful picture of Christ, the Great Physician. All believers must be physicians, and all must be about the ministry of healing the souls, minds, and bodies of men.

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt.9:12-13).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

5 (4:25) **Jesus Christ, Impact**: Jesus' following was great. This verse is emphasizing two points: (1) great multitudes of all sorts of people began to follow Jesus, and (2) they came from everywhere—from the farthest reaches of the great province, Syria.

"But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all" (Mt.12:15; cp. Mt.8:1).

"And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore" (Mt.13:2).

"And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them" (Mt.15:30; cp. Mt.19:2).

Thought 1. Where are the multitudes today? After two thousand years why are the nations not as aroused as Israel was by the presence of Christ?

1) Are people no longer hungry for God? Are the fields no longer white unto harvest?

"Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).

2) Do preachers not seek God as much as Christ did?

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).

"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray" (Mk.6:46).

"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Lk.5:16; cp. Lk.9:18).

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed" (Lk.22:41).

3) Are preachers not as compassionate and concerned as Christ was?

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them" (Is.63:9).

	CHAPTER 5 **IV. THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29 (Lk.6:20-49)** **A. The True Disciple (Part 1): Who He Is & His Reward (the Beatitudes), 5:1-12** (cp. Lk.6:20-23)	5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.	**4 The meek: Inherit the earth**[DS4] **5 Those who hunger & thirst after righteousness:**[DS5] **Filled**[DS6] **6 The merciful: Obtain mercy**[DS7] **7 The pure in heart: See God**[DS8] **8 The peacemakers: Called the children of God**[DS9] **9 The persecuted: Given the Kingdom of Heaven** a. The persecution 1) Reviled & insulted 2) Slandered & lied against 3) Persecuted & hurt b. The behavior expected: Joy c. The reason for joy 1) Great reward 2) Great examples: The prophets
1 Jesus saw multitudes a. Setting: Mountain b. Posture: Set—ready c. Audience: Disciples d. Purpose: To teach & prepare e. Blessed[DS1] **2 The poor in spirit:**[DS2] **Given the K. of Heaven** **3 Those who mourn: Comforted**[DS3]	And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.		

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

A. The True Disciple (Part I): Who He is and His Reward (the Beatitudes), 5:1-12

(5:1-12) **Introduction**: seldom in history have so few words been spoken with so much meaning. The Beatitudes of our Lord are powerful, holding before the world a descriptive picture of the true disciple of God. The Beatitudes cover the glorious hope and reward the believer can expect, now as well as in eternity.

1. Jesus saw multitudes (v.1-2).
2. The poor in spirit: shall be given the Kingdom of Heaven (v.3).
3. Those who mourn: shall be comforted (v.4).
4. The meek: shall inherit the earth (v.5).
5. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness: shall be filled (v.6).
6. The merciful: shall obtain mercy (v.7).
7. The pure in heart: shall see God (v.8).
8. The peacemakers: shall be called the children of God (v.9).
9. The persecuted: shall be given the Kingdom of Heaven (v.10-12).

1 (5:1-2) **Compassion**: Jesus saw the multitudes. It is to be noted that the Sermon on the Mount was given to *the disciples* not to *the multitudes*. "Seeing the multitudes," Jesus was moved with compassion over their desperate plight and need. He knew that He could not reach them by Himself, so He was driven to get alone with His disciples. He had to begin preparing them for their ministry to the multitudes.

How long was He with His disciples on the mountain? A day? A week? Several weeks? It simply says that "when He had come down from the mountain, multitudes followed Him" (Mt.8:1).

Thought 1. There are two basic ingredients for reaching the multitudes.

1) Compassion: seeing the multitudes; keeping one's eyes open so people and their needs can be seen.

> **"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).**
>
> **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).**

2) Discipleship: realizing that one cannot accomplish the task alone. Others must be taught to help in the great commission.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).**

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

Thought 2. Preaching and teaching are not to be done only in the church, but wherever people are found—on mountains, by the seashore, in homes, on the streets—any place and every place.

Thought 3. Crowds are important, but a small band of disciples is critical to accomplish the great commission. The mission of the Lord is reaching people, but the *method* of the Lord is to make disciples. It is giving intensive training to a small group so they can help in the ministry to the multitudes. Making disciples was also the method of Paul (see notes—Mt.28:19-20).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek....Him would Paul have to go forth with him" (Acts 16:1, 3).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

Thought 4. Christian leaders are to call together small bands of disciples for special training and preparation. Matthew says without any explanation that "His disciples came to Him" (v.1), but Mark and Luke say that Christ called the disciples together for training and preparation (Mk.3:13; Lk.6:13).

Thought 5. Three things are needed for training and preparation: a place, a time, and a message. The words "He went up...and when He was set" seem to be saying that Jesus had deliberately chosen this place and time for this training. All had been planned; Jesus was personally prepared. (What a lesson too often neglected.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:3) **Blessed** (makarios): spiritual joy and satisfaction that lasts regardless of conditions; that carries one through pain, sorrow, loss, and grief.

Thought 1. "To be blessed" is what men seek. The problem is that they seek it in the things of this earth: position, money, fame, power, and sensual pleasure.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:19-21).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

Thought 2. Man seeks to be blessed only in this world. This says several things about his nature.
1) Man is carnal and corruptible, and he is sinful and dying.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Ro.8:5-8).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

2) Man is deceived and blinded to his real need, that of a renewed spirit.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

3) Man is ignorant of the Kingdom of Heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of Heaven*—Mt.19:23-24).
⇒ He is misguided and deceived about it.
⇒ He is unbelieving about it.
⇒ He prefers something else to it.
⇒ He is hardened to it.
⇒ He is neglectful of it.
⇒ He is unconcerned about it.

2 (5:3) **Poor in Spirit**: to acknowledge spiritual poverty. It is poverty, absolute and abject poverty of spirit. It is being destitute and conspicuously poor in spirit. Note several significant facts about the "*poor in spirit.*"

1. Being *poor in spirit* does not mean that a man must be poverty-stricken and financially poor. Hunger, nakedness, and slums are not pleasing to God, especially in a world of plenty. Christ is not talking about material poverty. He means what He says: poor *in spirit*. Being "poor *in spirit*" means several things.
   a. To acknowledge our utter helplessness before God, our spiritual poverty, our spiritual need. We are solely dependent upon God to meet our need.
   b. To acknowledge our utter lack in facing life and eternity apart from God. To acknowledge that the real blessings of life and eternity come only from a right relationship with God (see note—Eph.1:3; cp. Jn.10:10; Gal.5:22-23).
   c. To acknowledge our utter lack of superiority before all others and our spiritual deadness before God. To acknowledge that we are no better, no richer, no more superior than the next person—no matter what we have achieved in this world (fame, fortune, power). Our attitude toward others is not proud and haughty, not superior and overbearing. To be "poor in spirit" means acknowledging that every human being is a real person just like everyone else—a person who has a significant contribution to make to society and to the world. The person "poor in spirit" approaches life in humility and appreciation, not as though life owes him, but as though he owes life. He has been given the privilege of living; therefore, he journeys through life with a humble attitude and he contributes all he can to a needy world out of a spirit of appreciation.
2. The opposite of being "*poor in spirit*" is having a spirit that is *full of self*. There is a world of difference between these two spirits. There is the difference of thinking that we are righteous versus acknowledging that we need the righteousness of Christ. There is the difference of being self-righteous versus being given the righteousness of Christ. Self-righteousness goes no farther than self; that is, it goes no farther than death. Self dies and everything with self including our self-righteousness. But the righteousness that is of Christ lives forever. (See notes—Ro.3:21-22; note 3 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.2:15-16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—2:16. See outline and notes—Ro.10:6-7.)

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Ro.3:21-22).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Ph.3:9).

3. Two critical steps are taken by the person who truly acknowledges his spiritual poverty.
   a. He turns his primary attention away from the things of this world. He knows things can never make him rich in spirit.
   b. He turns his primary attention to God and His kingdom. He knows God alone can make him rich in spirit (see note—Eph.1:3).
4. The "poor in spirit" are weary and burdened for the world. They know the truth of this world and of eternity. Therefore, they have set their faces to do their part for both.
   a. They are weary of the deceptive appearances and enticements of this world. They have learned that "all is vanity [empty]" and all is corruptible. All waste away, even human life itself. Therefore, they feel weary and burdened for those who are still lost in the world.
   b. They are weary from having labored so much to reach their generation. They have labored to serve and make their contribution as God has called them. They have toiled so laboriously for one reason only: the love of Christ constrained them to reach their generation (2 Cor.5:14).
5. The "poor in spirit" are those who approach the world as a child (see notes—Mt.18:1-2; DEEPER STUDY # 2,3,4—Mk. 10:14. These notes give an excellent description of what it means to be "poor in spirit.") All children are very, very precious to God and are given angels to look over them (Mt.18:10 cp. Ps.91:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:3) **Poor in Spirit—Reward—Kingdom of Heaven**: the "poor in spirit" are blessed with the Kingdom of Heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). The "poor in spirit" inherit three significant things.

1. The poor in spirit receive forgiveness of sin and God's continued remembrance: the assurance that God will never forget.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb.8:12).

"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb.10:17).

"He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations" (Ps.105:8).

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,

saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer.31:34).

2. The poor in spirit receive a fellowship with other believers who walk as they walk. (See outline and notes—Acts 2:41-47; Eph.2:19-22.)

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:19-22).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

3. The poor in spirit receive the gift of life that is forever: the eternal fellowship with both God and the congregation of those who are poor in spirit.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

3 (5:4) **Mourn** (penthountes): to have a broken heart. It is the strongest word possible for mourning. It is like the deep mourning and wailing that occurs over the death of a loved one. It is sorrow—a desperate, helpless sorrow. It is a sorrow for sin, a broken heart over evil and suffering. It is a brokenness of self that comes from seeing Christ on the cross and realizing that our sins put Him there (cp. Jas.4:9). Note several significant facts.

1. Who is it that mourns? Who is it so full of grief that he cries and weeps and utters groanings deep from within? There are three persons who mourn and utter such groanings.

a. The person who is *desperately sorry* for his sins and unworthiness before God. He has such a sense of sin that his heart is just broken.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner" (Lk.18:13).

b. The person who really feels the desperate plight and terrible suffering of others. The tragedies, the problems, the sinful behavior of others—the state, the condition, the lostness of the world—all weigh ever so heavily upon the heart of the mourner.

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

c. The person who experiences personal tragedy and intense trauma.

2. Men are to mourn over their sins. This leads to confession and humility before God and results in being lifted up (Jas.4:8-10).

3. The person who mourns is comforted by Christ Himself. Christ was called the "man of sorrows" and was acquainted with grief (Is.53:3). He is able to succor and to draw a person ever so close, comforting and strengthening him beyond imagination (Heb.2:18; 4:15-16).

4. There is a godly sorrow, but there is also a worldly sorrow (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10 for more discussion). There is also a self-centered sorrow (see notes—2 Cor.1:6-7).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(5:4) **Comfort**: they who mourn *shall be* comforted (see note—2 Cor.1:3).

1. There is a present comfort.

a. A settled peace: a relief, a solace, a consolation within.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

b. An assurance of forgiveness and acceptance by God.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation [sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

c. A fullness of joy: a sense of God's presence, care and guidance (Jn.14:26); a sense of His sovereignty; a sense of His working all things out for good to those who love Him.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

"And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people" (Ro.15:11).

"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor.6:10).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

2. There is an eternal comfort.

a. A passing from death to life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

b. A wiping away of all tears.

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it" (Is.25:8).

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev.7:17).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev.21:4).

4 (5:5) **Meek** (praeis): to have a strong, but tender and humble, life. It is a strong, yet teachable, spirit. It is not being weak, bowing or spineless. It is a man who is strong, very strong, yet he is humble and tender. It is a man with all the emotions and ability to take and conquer, but he is able to control himself. It is discipline—a man disciplined because he is God-controlled. The opposite of meekness is arrogance or pride. In too many persons there is an air of sufficiency and superiority. A meek person knows that he has needs and does not have all the answers.

1. Who are the meek?

a. The person who is *controlled, not undisciplined*. The mind and body are disciplined, never let loose. Passion and urges, speech and behavior, sight and touch are always controlled.

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Ro.6:12).

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor.6:12).

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor.9:27).

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (Jas.3:2).

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Pt.1:5-7).

b. The person who is *humble, not prideful*.

1) He is humble before God. He knows his need for God and for God's hand upon his life, his need to be saved and controlled by God.

2) He is humble before men. He knows he is not the epitomy of mankind, nor the summit of knowledge among men. He does not have it all nor does he know it all.

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

c. The person who is *gentle, not easily provoked.* He is always in control when dealing with people: cool, even-tempered, able to show displeasure without reacting impulsively, able to answer softly. (Cp. *Christ*, Mt.11:29; 1 Pt.2:23; cp. Moses, Num. 12:3.)

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim.2:24).

"[Love] doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil" (1 Cor.13:5).

d. The person who is *forgiving, not revengeful.*

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Mt.6:14).

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:19-21).

2. The meek person is a *quiet* person. He studies to be quiet.

"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (Ps.4:4).

a. He is quiet before God. He quietly surrenders to God, acknowledging his need without show or pomp, and he quietly goes before God daily, depending upon God for guidance and care.

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).

b. He is quiet before men. He walks quietly before men, controlled in all things, in both speech and behavior.

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Th.4:11).

"[Pray] for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim.2:2).

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:4).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(5:5) **Inherit the Earth**: there are two points to be stressed in the reward to the meek (cp. Ps.27:11).

1. The meek inherit the earth *now*; that is, they presently enjoy and experience the good things of the earth.

a. The meek have found themselves. They are comfortable with themselves. They know who they are; therefore, they are strong and confident, yet tender and humble.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

b. The meek know where they are going; they are teachable. They have nothing to prove. They have purpose, meaning, and significance in life.

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:8).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

c. The meek are assured of victory, conquest, triumph over whatever confronts them. They are controlled; therefore, they control circumstances instead of letting circumstances control them. They are free from stress and tension.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and

hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:1-5).

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

d. The meek have peaceful souls. They carry whatever pressure and tension comes their way to Christ, and He relieves it all.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-30).

2. The earth is theirs eternally, that is, the new heavens and earth. An inheritance of eternal life and dominion is promised them, for they are joint-heirs with Christ.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4; cp. 2 Pt.3:10-13).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev.21:1).

5 (5:6) **Hunger and Thirst**: to have a starving spirit. It is real hunger and starvation of soul. It is a parched and dying thirst. It is a starving spirit and a parched soul that craves after righteousness. But there is something more: righteousness means *all righteousness*. The true believer is starved and parched for *all righteousness*. This is shown by the Greek, for the verbs hunger and thirst are usually in what is called the Greek genitive case. This simply means that a person sometimes feels a little hunger and a little thirst; therefore, he hungers and thirsts for a bit of something, for example, an apple or a glass of juice. But in the beatitude, hunger and thirst are in the accusative case. This is most unusual. It means a hunger and a thirst for the *whole thing*—for all righteousness, not for little tid-bits. This is significant: it means that the promise of a *filled life* is conditional. A person must starve and thirst for *all righteousness* if he wishes to be filled with the fulness of life. Note several significant points.

1. Who is blessed? The person who hungers and thirsts *to be* righteous and *to do* righteousness. To do righteousness is not enough. To be righteous is not enough. Both are essestial in order to be blessed (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6).

Thought 1. Many want just bits and pieces of righteousness—just enough to make them comfortable.

2. There are those who *stress being righteous* and *neglect doing righteousness*. This leads to two serious errors.
   a. The error of false security. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he has believed in Jesus Christ. But he neglects doing good. He does not live as he should, obeying God and serving man.
   b. The error of loose living. It allows a person to go out and do what he desires. He feels secure and comfortable in his faith in Christ. He knows that wrong behavior may affect his fellowship with God and other believers, but he thinks his behavior does not affect his salvation and acceptance with God.

The problem with this stress is that it is a false righteousness. Righteousness in the Bible means *being righteous* and *doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing about being righteous *without living righteously*.

3. There are those who *stress doing righteousness* and *neglect being righteous*. This also leads to two serious errors.
   a. The error of self-righteousness and legalism. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he does good. He works, behaves morally, keeps certain rules and regulations, does the things a Christian should do, and obeys the main laws of God. But he neglects the basic law: the law of love and acceptance—that God loves him and accepts him not because he does good, but because he loves and trusts the righteousness of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6).
   b. The error of being judgmental and censorious. A person who stresses that he is righteous (acceptable to God) because he keeps certain laws often judges and censors others. He feels that rules and regulations can be kept because he keeps them. Therefore, anyone who fails to keep them is judged, criticized, and censored.

The problem with this stress is that it, too, is a false righteousness. Again, righteousness in the Bible is both *being righteous* and *doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing of being acceptable to God without *being made righteous* in Christ Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6; cp. 2 Cor.5:21. See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22 for more discussion.)

4. The answer to righteousness is not what most men think when they think of righteousness. When most men think of righteousness, they think of doing good—doing good deeds, good works, and helping their fellow man. As man walks through life, he faces appeal after appeal for help, and he helps. And he feels comfortable with himself because he has helped. He feels his *good deeds* make him acceptable and righteous before God. But the Bible is not saying that men never do good; it is saying that men are not righteous—not perfectly righteous within their hearts (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6).

5. Christ does not say, "Blessed are the righteous," for no one is righteous (Ro.3:10). He says, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst *after* righteousness." Man is not righteous, not perfectly righteous. His chance to be righteous is gone. He has already come short and missed the mark. He is already imperfect. Man has but one hope: that God will love him so much that He will somehow *count* him righteous. That is just what God does. God takes a man's "hunger and thirst after righteousness" and counts that hunger and thirst as righteousness. God does this because He loves man (Ro.5:6, 8-9. See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22; note—5:1.)

Thought 1. The question each person needs to ask is this: how much am I seeking after righteousness? Am I seeking at all—seeking a little—seeking some—seeking much—seeking more and more? What Christ says is this: a person has to crave, starve, and thirst after righteousness. A person must seek righteousness more and more if he wishes to be saved and filled.

6. Every person has some pull and some influence that urges him to do good. The pull and influence need to be nourished. In fact, it has to be nurtured or else it weakens, and it can be subdued and weakened so much that it is killed completely. It is just hardened against doing anything except what self wants to do (Heb.3:13 cp. Prov.21:29; 28:14; 29:1).

7. Righteousness is the only thing that will fill and satisfy man's innermost need. Food and drink will not. Any honest and thinking man knows there is nothing anywhere on this earth that can meet his deep need for life (permanent life, life that never ends). Only God can fill a life and satisfy the deep need for permanent life. This is the reason Christ says to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Thought 1. Being filled means to "be filled with the spirit" (Eph.5:18). "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...." (Gal.5:22-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(5:6) **Righteousness**: What is righteousness? (Also see notes—Ro.3:21; 4:4-5; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—4:22; notes—5:1; 10:5; 10:6-7; note 3 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.2:15-16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—2:16; cp.Gal.3:10.) In the Bible "righteousness" means two simple but profound things; it has a double meaning. It means *to be* right and *to do* right. It may be said another way: to *be good* and to *do good*. This is critically important in the Bible.

"There is none righteous, no, not one" (Ro.3:10).
"There is none good but one, that is, God" (Mt.19:17).
"All...come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

What is being said is that God alone is righteous; He alone is perfectly good. Man is not perfectly righteous; he comes short. How then can a man become perfectly righteous? What is the answer? The answer is what Christ says: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." What happens is this.

God takes a person's "hunger and thirst after righteousness" and *counts* it as righteousness. The person is not righteous, but God counts him righteous. This is the great love of God. A man hungers and thirsts after righteousness; therefore, God fills him.

Several things need to be said about righteousness.

1. Righteousness is explained throughout Scripture in the word *faith*. Faith is believing God and trusting the goodness of God to take our faith and count it as righteousness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22; note—5:1; cp. 4:1-3). Hebrews 11:6 says it clearly: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

It is the person who *diligently seeks God* who really believes God. The man who so *hungers and thirsts after God and His righteousness* shall be counted righteous and shall be filled. (See outline and notes—Ph.3:7-16.)

2. The righteousness of God has been shown to man. Just what God wants man *to be* and *to do* has been demonstrated perfectly in Jesus Christ. This is the love of God. God has not given man just the written Word describing His righteousness; He has given man a life—the life of His own Son—to show what He means by righteousness. Jesus Christ is perfect righteousness; He did nothing but good. This is what the Bible means when it talks about Christ's being "the righteousness of God." Christ is the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of righteousness—of *being right* and of *doing right*.

"Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us...righteousness" (1 Cor.1:30).
"...the righteousness of God in Him [Christ]" (2 Cor.5:21).
"Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Ph.3:9).

3. Righteousness involves the mind. Scripture says it involves being "renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph.4:23), and being "renewed in knowledge" (Col.3:10).

What does this mean? Very simply, the man who seeks "after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." He "puts on the new man" and is "renewed in the spirit of [his] mind" (Eph.4:23).

Another way to say the same thing is this: the man who seeks after God has "put off the old man with his deeds; and [has] put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:9-10).

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(5:6) **Filled—Life, Abundant**: the believer who hungers and thirsts after righteousness is wonderfully filled with both abundant life and eternal life.

1. He is "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge" (Ro.15:14).
2. He is "filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph.3:19).
3. He is "filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18).
4. He is "filled with the fruits of righteousness" (Ph.1:11).
5. He is "filled with the knowledge of His [God's] will" (Col.1:9).
6. He is "filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:52).

6 (5:7) **Merciful** (eleemones): to have a forgiving spirit and a compassionate heart. It is showing mercy and being benevolent. It is forgiving those who are wrong, yet it is much more. It is empathy; it is getting right inside the person and feeling right along with him. It is a deliberate effort, an act of the will to understand the person and to meet his need by forgiving and showing mercy. It is the opposite of being hard, unforgiving, and unfeeling. God forgives only those who forgive others. A person receives mercy only if he is merciful (cp. Mt.6:12; Jas.2:13). Several significant facts need to be noted about mercy.

1. The person who is merciful has a tender heart—a heart that cares for all who have need, seen or unseen. If he sees the needful, he feels for them and reaches out to do all he can. If he does not see them, he feels and reaches out through prayer and giving as opportunity arises. The merciful just do not hoard or hold back any kind of help, no matter the cost.
   a. They have the love of God dwelling in them.

> **"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).**
>
> **"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (Jas.2:15-16).**

   b. They know that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**

2. Every believer can be merciful. Some may not have money or other means to help, but they can be tender and compassionate, demonstrating mercy through expression and prayer. In fact, God instructs the believer to be merciful. He charges the believer to do some very practical things:
   a. "Deal...bread to the hungry" (Is.58:7; Jas.2:15).
   b. "Bring the poor that are cast out to thy house" (Is. 58:7).
   c. "Cover him [the naked]" (Is.58:7; Jas.2:15).
   d. Strengthen and comfort the broken and grieving soul (Job 16:5).
   e. Pity the afflicted (Job 6:14).
   f. Bear the burdens of others—even to the point of restoring them when they sin. But we reach out to them in a spirit of meekness. (Gal.6:2 cp. 6:1).
   g. Support the weak (Acts 20:35).
3. The results of being merciful are numerous.
   a. A person is given the mercy of God—forgiveness of sins (Ps.18:25; cp. 2 Sam.22:26).
   b. A person does good to his own soul (Pr.19:17).
   c. A person is paid back what he gives—by God Himself (Pr.19:17).
   d. A person behaves like God Himself (Lk.6:36; cp. Ps.103:8; Joel 2:15).
   e. A person is blessed (Ps.51:1).
   f. A person is assured of finding "mercy in that day" (2 Tim.1:18).
   g. A person shall inherit the Kingdom of God—forever (Mt.25:34-35).
4. The unmerciful are warned by God.
   a. They shall face "judgment without mercy" (Jas.2:13).
   b. They shall face the anger and wrath of God (Mt.18:34-35).
   c. They are not forgiven their sins (Mt.6:12, 14-15).
5. Two opposite attitudes are shown toward mercy.
   a. The attitude of shutting up one's compassion from those in need (1 Jn.3:17; cp. Jas.2:15-16).
   b. The attitude of putting on a heart of mercy (Col.3:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(5:7) **Mercy**: see note—Eph.2:4-5 for discussion.

7 (5:8) **Pure** (katharoi): to have a clean heart; to be unsoiled, unmixed, unpolluted; to be cleansed, purged, forgiven; to be holy; to have a single purpose, that of God's glory. There are several significant points to note about the "pure in heart."

1. The person who is "pure in heart" lives a clean life.
   a. He "keeps himself unspotted from the world."

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

b. He washes his heart from wickedness that he may be saved.

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).

c. He obeys the truth through the working of the Holy Spirit.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).

d. He keeps his hands clean.

"He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation" (Ps.24:4-5).

e. He seeks to be without spot and blameless.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:14).

2. A person's very best behavior is seldom (if ever) free from some mixture of self. It is questionable if a sinful creature can ever act perfectly—perfectly free from mixed motives. As the Bible says, "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ro.3:12). The believer is to constantly search his heart and cleanse it of impure motives. Motives involving self are insidious and deceptive.

a. Is a person employed primarily for self, or to serve Christ and to earn enough to help others who have a need (Col.3:24; Eph.4:28)?
b. Is a person ministering to help the needful, or to have a sense of self-satisfaction (cp. Mt.5:7)?
c. Is a person worshipping to honor God, or to satisfy a feeling of obligation?
d. Is a person praying daily to fellowship with God, or to gain comfortable feelings that he pleases God through praying?

Impure motives enter the believer's heart so quietly, so deceptively. The believer is too often unaware of their presence. He needs to pray often: "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps.51:10)!

3. The "pure in heart" minister in two very practical areas:

- They visit the fatherless.
- They visit widows in their affliction.

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

DEEPER STUDY # 8

(5:8) **Pure in Heart**: there are two wonderful promises made to the "pure in heart." The pure in heart "shall see God" (Mt.5:8).

1. Presently, the pure in heart shall see God by faith, "through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor.13:12). Just imagine! The "pure in heart" endure in the faith "as already seeing Him who is invisible" (Heb.11:27).

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor.13:12).

"By faith he [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb.11:27).

2. Eternally, the pure in heart shall see God face to face. They shall see Him as He is and behold "His face in righteousness."

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor.13:12).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps.17:15).

8 (5:9) **Peacemakers**: to bring men together; to make peace between men and God; to solve disputes and erase divisions; to reconcile differences and eliminate strife; to silence tongues and build right relationships.

1. Who is the peacemaker?

a. The person who strives to make peace with God (Ro.5:1; Eph.2:14-17). He conquers the inner struggle, settles the inner tension, handles the inner pressure. He takes the struggle within his heart between good and evil, and strives for the good and conquers the bad.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Eph.2:14-17).

b. The person who strives at every opportunity to make peace *within* others. He seeks and leads others to make their peace with God—to conquer their inner struggle, to settle their inner tension, to handle their inner pressure.

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Ro.14:19).

c. The person who strives at every opportunity to make peace *between* others. He works to solve disputes and erase divisions, to reconcile differences and eliminate strife, to silence tongues and build relationships.

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Ph.2:3).

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" (2 Tim.2:14).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim.2:24).

2. The peacemaker is the person who has made *peace with God* (Ro.5:1), and knows the *peace of God* (see note—Jn.14:27).

3. Peacemakers love peace, but they do not passively accept trouble. There are those who claim to love peace, yet they remove themselves from all trouble. They ignore and flee problems and threatening situations, and they often evade issues. They make no attempt to bring peace between others. The peacemaker (of whom Christ speaks) faces the trouble no matter how dangerous, and works to bring a true peace no matter the struggle.

4. The world has its troublemakers. Practically every organization has its troublemakers, including the church. Wherever the troublemaker is, there is criticism, grumbling, and murmuring; and, too often, a division within the body—a division that is sometimes minor, sometimes major; sometimes just distasteful, sometimes outright bitter. The peacemaker cannot stand such. He goes forth to settle the matter, solve the problem, handle the differences, and reconcile the parties.

5. The gospel of Christ is to be spread by peaceful means, not by forceful means. There are many kinds of force.
   a. There is verbal force through loudness, a dominating conversation, improper sales tactics, threats, bigotry, and abuse.
   b. There is physical force through facial expressions, body motions, an overpowering presence, and attacks.

DEEPER STUDY # 9
(5:9) **Children of God**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Adoption*—Gal.4:5-6; notes—Ro.8:15-17; 1 Jn.3:2.

9 (5:10-12) **Persecuted**: to endure suffering for Christ; to be mocked, ridiculed, criticized, ostracized; to be treated with hostility; to be martyred. (See note—Lk.21:12-19; note 1 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.4:12; note—4:14.) Note several significant points.

1. There are three major kinds of persecution mentioned by Christ in this passage:
   ⇒ Being reviled: verbally abused, insulted, scolded, mocked (cruel mockings, Heb.11:36).
   ⇒ Persecuted: hurt, ostracized, attacked, tortured, martyred, and treated hostily.
   ⇒ Having *all manner* of evil spoken against: slandered, cursed, and lied about (cp. Ps.35:11; Acts 17:6-7; cp. "hard speeches," that is, *harsh, defiant words*, Jude 15).
2. Who are the persecuted?
   a. The person who lives and speaks for righteousness and is reacted against.
   b. The person who lives and speaks for Christ and is reviled, persecuted, and spoken against.
3. Persecution is a paradox. It reveals that the true nature of the world is evil. Think about it: the person who lives and speaks for righteousness is opposed and persecuted. The person who cares and works for the true love, justice, and salvation of the world is actually fought against. How deceived is the world and its humanity to rush onward in madness for nothing but to return to dust, to seek life only for some seventy years (*if* nothing happens before then)!
4. Believers are forewarned; they shall suffer persecution.
   a. Believers shall suffer persecution because they are not of this world. They are *called out* of the world. They are in the world, but they are not of the world. They are separated from the behavior of the world. Therefore, the world reacts against them.

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (Jn.15:19).

b. They shall suffer persecution because believers strip away the world's *cloak of sin*. They live and demonstrate a life of righteousness. They do not compromise with the world and its sinful behavior. They live pure and godly lives, having nothing to do with the sinful pleasures of a corruptible world. Such living exposes the sins of people.

> **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you....If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" (Jn.15:18, 22).**
>
> **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).**

c. They shall suffer persecution because the world does not know God nor Christ. The ungodly of the world want no God other than themselves and their own imaginations. They want to do just what they want—to fulfill their own desires, not what God wishes and demands. However, the godly believer dedicates his life to God, to His worship and service. The ungodly want no part of God; therefore, they oppose those who talk about God and man's duty to honor and worship God.

> **"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (Jn.15:21).**
>
> **"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).**

d. They shall suffer persecution because the world is deceived in its concept and belief of God. The world conceives God to be the One who fulfills their earthly desires and lusts (Jn.16:2-3). Man's idea of God is that of a *Supreme Grandfather*. They think that God protects, provides, and gives no matter what a person's behavior is, just so the behavior is not too far out, that God will accept and work all things out in the final analysis. However, the true believer teaches against this. God is love, but He is also just and demands righteousness. The world rebels against this concept of God.

> **"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:2-3).**
>
> **"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).**
>
> **"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not know the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you" (Jn.16:1-4).**
>
> **"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (1 Th.3:3).**
>
> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).**
>
> **"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 Jn.3:13).**
>
> **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (1 Pt.4:12-14).**

5. Persecutions can erupt from the most devilish imaginations of men (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.4:12 for a description of some of the sufferings of God's dear people).

6. What is to be the believer's attitude toward persecution?
   a. It is *not* to be retaliation, pride, spiritual superiority.
   b. It *is* to be joy and gladness (Mt.5:12; 2 Cor.12:10; 1 Pt.4:12-13).

7. The persecuted are promised great rewards.
   a. The Kingdom of Heaven—now.
      ⇒ They experience a special honor (Acts 5:41).
      ⇒ They experience a special consolation (2 Cor.1:5).
      ⇒ They are given a very special closeness, a glow of the Lord's presence (see note—1 Pt.4:14).
      ⇒ They become a greater witness for Christ (2 Cor.1:4-6).

   b. The Kingdom of Heaven—eternally (Heb.11:35f; 1 Pt.4:12-13; see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

	B. The True Disciple (Part II): The Salt of the Earth—Serving God, 5:13 (Mk.9:50; cp Lk.14: 34-35; Col.4:6)
1 The disciples' character: Salt **2 The disciples' place to salt: The earth** **3 The disciples' mission: To salt the earth** **4 The disciples' danger: Becoming useless & destructive**	13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

B. The True Disciple (Part II): The Salt of the Earth—Serving God, 5:13

(5:13) **Introduction**: there is so much in this little parable, but the main thrust is *distinctiveness*. Salt is distinctively different from the thing upon which it is put. By nature and by purpose it is different. So are believers. They are distinctively different by nature and by purpose. *By nature* believers are a new creation, born of God (2 Cor.5:17; 1 Pet.1:23); *by purpose* believers are to penetrate and change the very taste of the earth. They are like salt.

1. The disciples' character: salt (v.13).
2. The disciples' place to salt: the earth (v.13).
3. The disciples' mission: to salt the earth (v.13).
4. The disciples' danger: becoming useless and destructive (v.13).

1 (5:13) **Salt**: the disciples' character is like salt. Believers are *called and designed* (made) to be the salt of the earth. Several things can be said about salt that point out just what Jesus means.

1. Salt is *distinctive*. It is totally different from the food or object upon which it is put. The power of salt lies in this difference. Believers, just as salt, are to be different from the world. The power of their lives and their testimony lies in their being different and distinctive. They are to be "unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

2. Salt *preserves*. It keeps things from going bad and decaying. It cleanses and disinfects. Believers, just as salt, are to cleanse and preserve the world. They are to disinfect the world and keep the germs of the world from causing things to go bad. They are to save the world from corruption.

> **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pt.1:22-25).**

3. Salt *penetrates*. It inserts a new quality, substance, and life. It changes that upon which it is put. Believers are likewise to penetrate the world and insert a new life into it.

> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

4. Salt *flavors*. It influences the taste of things. It takes a bland, tasteless food and makes it enjoyable. Believers are to so flavor and influence the world for Christ. They are to take the bland and the tasteless and salt them, making them enjoyable and desirable within the world.

> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**
>
> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**

5. Salt is *quiet*. It is visible, but it works silently, making no noise whatsoever during its work. Believers, the salt of the earth, are to work quietly and discreetly.

> **"Let it [your behavior] be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:4).**

6. Salt *spreads*. Its flavor spreads all about. A sprinkle of salt has a widespread effect. A believer's *salt* spreads far and wide.

> **"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).**
>
> **"For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis" (Col.4:13).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**
>
> **"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing" (1 Th.4:11-12).**

7. Salt is *irrepressible*. Once applied, it cannot be stopped. A believer's *salt*, his testimony, is irrepressible; it cannot be stopped.

> **"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Is.55:10-11).**

2 (5:13) **Ministry, Place**: the disciples' place of ministry is the earth. The world is the place where believers are to move about and salt (live and minister). Why? Because the world is (1) bland and tasteless, (2) decaying and rotting, (3) corrupting and foul.

> **Thought 1.** Too many believers live as though they are already in heaven: safe and secure from all harm. They do not pay enough attention to this earth: its needs, its turning bad, its decay, its corruption. While on this earth, believers are called to salt and flavor the earth, not heaven.
>
> **Thought 2.** There is a sense in which the church is the salt factory and the world is the marketplace for the salt. Too much salt is being stored and locked up at the church. There is not enough salt being sent out into the marketplace. The result? The world is not being salted and flavored enough.
>
> > **"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Lk.10:2).**
> >
> > **"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).**
> >
> > **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).**

3 (5:13) **Mission**: the disciples' mission is to salt the earth. Note a critical point: believers are the salt of the earth, not of heaven. They can do nothing to salt heaven. They cannot penetrate, flavor, or preserve heaven. Any relationship whatsoever they have with heaven is a gift from heaven. However, believers are the salt of the earth; they can penetrate, flavor, and preserve the earth. But two things are necessary *before a person can salt* the earth.

1. Believers must have salt in themselves.

> **"Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another" (Mk.9:50).**

2. Believers must spread out into the world. But one thing must be known when a believer *scatters* into the world: his salt is necessary and useful. There is no salt other than the believer's salt. There is nothing else that can salt the earth, nothing whatsoever. The task is the believer's and his alone. The success of the mission rests upon the believer and him alone.

> **"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col.4:6).**

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

4 (5:13) **Judgment—Cast Out**: the danger of the disciple is that of becoming useless and destructive. Salt does not lose its saltiness and flavor. However, in the time of Christ the salt of Palestine was gathered in such a manner that dirt and other impurities were often mixed with it. The salt was thus useless and good for nothing. In fact, it actually destroyed the fertility of the soil. Therefore, it was not only useless, but destructive. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.25:30.) Note two significant points.

1. This is a picture of the backslider, of a believer who loses his flavor and saltiness or testimony. Three things can be said about the backslider.
   a. He becomes useless just as salt does.
   b. He is of no value. He may as well be cast out and trodden underfoot.
   c. He actually destroys the fertility of some out in the world by becoming a stumbling block and by not being able to salt them.

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

"Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first" (Lk.11:26).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (2 Pt.2:20).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev.2:4).

2. If the believer's salt loses its flavor, the believer will experience the judgment of God.
   a. He will be cast out.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Mt.5:13).

   b. He will be a castaway.

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor.9:27).

   c. He will experience loss when he appears before the judgment seat of Christ.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:11-15).

Thought 1. If salt loses *its* flavor, what is going to restore *its* flavor? There is nothing. Once the saltiness is gone from salt, it is gone. It can no longer salt the earth.

Thought 2. There is no one other than Christ who can salt and save a person from decay. A person who professes to have salt and remains bland, tasteless, and corruptible either lets Christ salt him or else he is never salted.

Thought 3. A person who has not been salted and saved from decay is doomed to ruin. He is good for nothing but to be cast out (cp. Jn.3:16-18; Heb.9:27).

	C. The True Disciple (Part III): The Light of the World—Shining for God, 5:14-16 (Mk.4:21-23; Lk.8:16-18; 11:33)
1 The disciples' character: Light **2 The disciples' place to shine: The world** **3 The disciples' unavoidable witness** a. Like a city on a hill b. Like a candle set on a candlestick **4 The disciples' purpose** a. To show forth good works b. To stir men to glorify God	14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put in under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

C. The True Disciple (Part III): The Light of the World—Shining for God, 5:14-16

(5:14-16) **Introduction—Believer, Light**: "God is light" (1 Jn.1:5). Jesus Christ said, "I am the light of the world" (Jn.8:12; 9:5). Here Jesus says, "Ye are the light of the world." What an enormous compliment! God is light, Christ is light, and the believer is said to be "the light of the world." The believer is what God and Christ are: light. No greater compliment could be paid the believer. But note: to be identified with God is an enormous responsibility as well as a compliment. Whatever light is and does, the believer is *to be and do*.

Four things are said about the believer as the light of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Jn.12:35-36; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12. See Subject Index.)

1. The disciples' character: light (v.14).
2. The disciples' place to shine: the world (v.14).
3. The disciples' unavoidable witness (v.15).
4. The disciples' purpose (v.16).

1 (5:14) **Believers, Light**: the disciples' character is light. Christ said, "I am the Light of the world" (Jn.8:12; 9:5). Here He says the disciple is to be like Him—"the light of the world." The disciple is to undergo a radical transformation: he is to *become like* Christ more and more and *to reflect* the light of Christ (2 Cor.3:18; 4:6-7). Light is and does several things.

1. Light is clear and pure. It is clean, that is, good, right, true.

> **"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as the children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth)" (Eph.5:8-9).**

2. Light penetrates. By nature it cuts through and eliminates darkness.

> **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Th.5:5).**

3. Light enlightens. It enlarges a person's vision and knowledge of an area.

> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).**

4. Light reveals. It opens up the truth of an area, a whole new world, and it clears up the way to the truth and the life.

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light" (Jn.12:36).**

5. Light guides. It directs the way to go, leads along the right path.

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide [walk] in darkness" (Jn.12:46)

6. Light strips away the darkness.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn.3:19-20).

7. Light routs the chaos.

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

8. Light discriminates between the right way and the wrong way (see note—Eph.5:10; cp. 5:8-10).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

9. Light warns. It warns of dangers that lie ahead in a person's path.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:11-14).

10. Light protects. It protects a person from the dangers of darkness, from stumbling, falling, and injuring himself.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).

Thought 1. Believers are *now* the light of the world. Jesus said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (Jn.9:5). Jesus is no longer in the world, not bodily. His light is now in the lives of believers. Believers are *reflections* of Him.

Thought 2. A person's light is only a reflective light. He reflects "the light of the Lord."

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph.5:8).

Thought 3. The character of light is pure. The believer is to walk in light, that is, in purity.

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph.5:8).

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

2 (5:14) **Ministry, Place**: the disciples' place to shine is the world. The world is the place where believers are to move about and reflect their light (live and minister). Why? The world is...

- unclear
- stumbling
- groping
- falling
- uncler
- unseeing
- unaware
- in chaos
- in darkness
- in trouble
- in danger
- undiscriminating

Note that the light *is* in the world; the city is in the world, and the candlestick is in the home. The same is true of believers: believers occupy some place in the world. Wherever that place is, they are to let their light shine.

Thought 1. "Ye are the light!" The world has no other light. "Ye are it"—the light. Therefore, the light is to be placed where its influence can be *best used and felt*. What a lesson for believers in their life and work and play! Every community, city, state, and nation—the whole world—is to be illuminated by the light of believers.

"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

3 (5:14-15) **Witness**: the disciples' unavoidable witness. Two things are said about the city: it sits on a hill and it cannot be hid. Two things are said about the candle: it is put on a candlestick, and it gives light to all that are in the house. Note that the disciples' light is in the world, on a hill, and in the house.

Thought 1. Several lessons can be learned from this parable.
1) Believers shine as lights in the world. They are like cities and like candles sitting in a dark world.
2) Light has different strengths. It can be strong or weak, bright or dim. In fact, it can be so dim and provide so little light that a person can stumble and fall.
3) Some places in the world are brightly lit; others are dimly lit. Some cities have many bright lights, other cities have few bright lights. Some homes have strong lights; other homes have weak lights. Every city, every home, and every business—every place on this earth that has the witness of a Christian believer—has some light, either weak or strong.
4) A light can become so weak it is of no use.
5) A light is not lit to be hid. It is lit to be seen and to give light. Therefore, a light is conspicuous. It has many eyes upon it.

Thought 2. There are times when everyone wants light—at least for some time. They seek it out; admire it; walk in it; reap its benefits; joy in it and suggest its use.

> **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).**
>
> **"But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light" (Eph.5:13-14).**

4 (5:16) **Mission**: the disciples' purpose. The believer has light. The light is already within him. He is the light of God upon earth. Note the exact words spoken by Christ: "*Let* your light so shine." The believer can refuse to *let* his light shine. He can turn it off, refuse to turn it on, shade it, darken it, turn it away, direct its beam in another direction.

Note the two purposes for *letting* our light shine.

1. Believers are to let their light shine in order to show forth good works. The command "Let your light so shine" means *let your good works be seen*. The believer is to show good works to the world, but he must be careful how he does his works before others (Jas.3:13).

> **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).**
>
> **"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Tit.2:7).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men" (Tit.3:8; cp. Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:24-25).**
>
> **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).**
>
> **"Having your conversation [behavior] honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pt.2:12).**

2. Believers are to let their light shine in order to stir men to glorify God. This is the supreme reason why our light is to shine before men: to stir men to glorify God. The glory of God is to be the primary aim of all believers (1 Pet.4:11; 5:11). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2-6—Mt.6:9-10.) The very way God is glorified is by the light, the good works of believers shining before men. Note two things.
   a. God is glorified when believers get out into the darkness where men are.
   b. The good works of believers are to be done out in darkness, not within cloistered walls with other lights.

> **"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).**
>
> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).**
>
> **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever" (1 Pt.4:11).**

Thought 1. There are several significant lessons in this point.
1) Light has one purpose: to shine *before men*. Light is not seen unless it is placed *before men*. If there are no people, there are no eyes to see the light. A believer must not seclude himself from others.
2) Other lights do not need light. It is the people in darkness who need light. Believers! "Let your light so shine before men"—before men out in darkness! Believers are not to be secluded in the church, moving only among other lights. The more light that is put out in the darkness, the more the darkness is eliminated.
3) Believers are not the only ones who are to glorify God. They are to go out and cause those in darkness to glorify Him.

	D. The Law & Jesus: Breaking the Law of God,[DS1] **5:17-20**		**the law in order to be great in the Kingdom of Heaven** a. If a person disobeys & influences others he is ranked least b. If a person obeys & influences others he is ranked great
1 A person must know that Christ came to fulfill the law[DS2] a. The law is not to be destroyed b. The law is perpetual—more sure than heaven & earth	17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.		**3 A person must have more righteousness than a religionist to enter the Kingdom of Heaven**
2 A person must do & teach	19 Whosoever therefore shall	break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.	

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

D. The Law & Jesus: Breaking the Law of God, 5:17-20

(5:17-20) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ was accused of destroying the law of God. He has always been accused of minimizing God's law. Every generation has its proponents who feel that Jesus *emphasized* love and de-emphasized the law. Many have felt that the thrust of Jesus is love and forgiveness, and the afterthought is law and justice. As a result, many have felt less obligated to follow God's law. They have felt freer to live a looser life and to do as they wished. The feeling has been that if they keep the law of God in the back of their minds, they have the Christian liberty to interpret behavior as they see fit (within some reason). After all, it is argued, the "priesthood and security of the believer" are two of the basic teachings of Scripture. Therefore, the law's clear restrictions and obligations and its demand for obedience are minimized, and what is called love and forgiveness are emphasized.

Christ pulls no punches and comes straight to the point: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law...." (v.17), "whosoever therefore shall break one of these *least* commandments...." (v.19), "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees...." (v.20).

1. A person must know that Christ came to fulfill the law (v.17-18).
2. A person must do and teach the law in order to be great in the Kingdom of Heaven (v.19).
3. A person must have more righteousness than a religionist to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (v.20).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:17-48) **Law—Jesus, Fulfills Law**: this Scripture is of critical importance. It is God's Son explaining the law of God.

1. Christ confirmed God's law, all the Scripture of the Old Testament. Christ said He was not destroying *the law or the prophets*. The term "the law and the prophets" was a reference to the whole Old Testament. What Christ said was that He, as God's Son, came to fulfill the law; and His teaching was just as binding as the Old Testament law. (See note—Mt.5:17-18.)
2. Christ illustrated God's laws, explaining the broad principles which were and still are to be applied to everyday life. He took a few practical laws and showed how a person was to take the broad principle and apply it to his own daily behavior.
3. Christ condemned the oral or Scribal Law (condemned it rather strongly.) When Jesus Christ and the other New Testament writers condemned the law, it always referred to the oral or Scribal Law, not to God's Law (see note—Mt.5:17-18).

1 (5:17-18) **Jesus—Fulfills Law**: a person must know that Christ came to fulfill the law. Jesus said He was neither contradicting nor destroying the Old Testament Scriptures nor standing against them. He was fulfilling them, completing them, bringing out what was implied. He was showing what the real meaning of the Old Testament Scripture is, its full meaning—all that God intended the Scripture to say. As God's Son, He is the Revelation of the truth. He is to reveal the true and complete meaning of the Scriptures.

There are several ways in which Jesus Christ fulfilled the law.

1. Before Christ, the law described how God wanted man to live. The law was the ideal, the words that told man what he was to do. But Christ fulfilled and completed the law; that is, God gave man more than just mere words to describe how He wants man to live. He gave man the Life, the Person who perfectly pictures and demonstrates the law before the world's very eyes. Jesus Christ is the Picture, the Living Example, the Pattern, the Demonstration of life as it is to be lived. He is the Perfect Picture of God's will, the Ideal Man, the Representative Man, the Pattern for all men.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).

"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not" (Jn.8:45).

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15).

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:3).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pt.2:21-23).

2. Before Christ, the law was only words and rules. It could only inject the idea of behavior into the mind of a person. It had no spirit, no life, no power to enable a person to do the law. But Christ fulfilled and completed the law. He was *Spirit and Life*, so He was able to put spirit and life into the words and rules of the law. He was able to live the life described by the words and rules. As such, He was able to inject both the idea and the power to behave into a person's mind and life. It is now His life that sets the standard and the rule for the believer; it is His Spirit and life that gives the believer power to obey.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Ro.8:1-4).

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:19-20).

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Gal.5:16-18).

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Heb.8:10; cp. Heb.10:15-16.)

3. Before Christ, the law stated only the rule and the principle of behavior. It did not explain the rule nor the spirit behind the rule. Neither did the law give the full meaning of the rule. The law always had to have an interpreter. But Christ fulfilled and completed the law. He explained the rule and the spirit behind the rule. He interpreted the law. He gave the law its real and full meaning.

"But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal.3:23-24.)

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Ro.3:20-22).

4. Before Christ, the law demanded perfect righteousness; it demanded a perfect life. But man failed at certain points. Man just could not obey the law perfectly; he fell short of perfect righteousness. But Christ fulfilled and completed the law. He kept the law in *every detail*. He secured the *perfect righteousness* demanded by the law. He fulfilled all the requirements, all the types, and all the ceremonies of the law—perfectly. As such, He became the Perfect Man, the Ideal Man, the Representative Man for all men. As the Ideal Man, He simply embraced all men; He embodied the righteousness that man must now have.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Ro.3:20-22).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:26).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

5. Before Christ, the law demanded punishment for disobedience. If a man broke the law, he was to be punished. But Christ fulfilled and completed the law. In fact, He went to the farthest point possible in fulfilling the law. He paid the maximum price, showing the ultimate love. He bore the punishment of the law for every man's disobedience; He took the

punishment of the law upon Himself. As the Ideal Man, He not only embodies the righteousness that must cover all men, He also frees all men from the penalty of the law. And He makes them sons of God. (Cp. Ro.8:15-17; Gal.3:13-14; 4:1-7.)

Thought 1. Several other passages need to be looked at for a complete understanding of Christ and the law and the believer. (See notes—Ro.7:4; 7:14-25; 8:2-4; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:3; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.3:10. Also see Master Subject Index for other passages.)

Thought 2. Christ speaks to two different types of people.

1) The strict religionist or legalist. Christ does not destroy or weaken the law. The liberty He preaches fulfills the law as it should be fulfilled. He is *not to be rejected* because a person thinks His liberty weakens the law. He is to be acknowledged as God's Son who is to be followed and obeyed. (See outlines and notes—Ro.14:1-23; Gal.5:13; 5:16-18.)
2) The carnal or loose religionist. Christ does not weaken the law by allowing a person to live as he wishes—by conscience only. He does not release men from the duty and responsibility of the law. He fulfills and strengthens and even enlarges the law. Liberty does not mean license; it means that a person is now free to serve God in the spirit and life of the law, not just in the letter of the law (see outlines and notes, pt. 2—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.5:21-48; note—Ro.8:1-17).

Thought 3. The Old Testament is the Word of God—according to Christ. (See notes—2 Tim.3:16; note 3, 1 Pt. 1:11; 2 Pt.1:19-21.)

Thought 4. Christ considered His coming to be significant—one of the pivotal points of history. The following words show this (cp. v.17-18).

⇒ **"I am come...."**
⇒ **"I am come...to fulfill."**
⇒ **"I say unto you, until heaven and earth pass...."**
⇒ **"Till all be fulfilled."**

He speaks as a person whose entrance into the world held great meaning for the world. This fact says something of extreme importance to man: "Hear ye Him." What He says is binding. It is *as* binding, if not *more* binding, than the law itself.

> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the rightousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).**
>
> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:47-48).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:17) **Law**: the law referred to four different writings to the Jews.

1. It referred to *the Ten Commandments*.
2. It referred to *the first five books* of the Bible, that is the Pentateuch.
3. It referred to *the law and the prophets*, that is, all the Scripture of the Old Testament.
4. It referred to *the oral or the Scribal Law*.

God's law, given in the Old Testament, was not enough for the Jews. They reasoned that if the law was really God's Word, then it must include—have embodied within it—every rule and regulation for conduct. Therefore, they took the great principles of the law and reduced them to thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations. These rules and regulations became the oral or Scribal Law.

There were two groups who gave their lives to the teaching and keeping of the law.

1. The Scribes: they were the writers and teachers of the law (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2).
2. The Pharisees: they were the strict followers of the law (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8).

2 (5:19) **Law—Obedience—Disobedience—Teachers—Ministers**: a person must do and teach the law in order to be great in the Kingdom of Heaven. *Breaking* and *doing* the law carries with it the idea of continuous action. No person is perfectly obedient all of the time. Every person fails sometime (Ro.3:23; Jas.3:2; 1 Jn.1:8, 10). But any person who continues to break a commandment, even if it is the least commandment, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. And the person who continues to obey the commandments shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. A person cannot break a commandment and ask forgiveness, then go out and break another commandment and ask forgiveness over and

over. Such a person cannot expect God to think he is serious about the commandments of God. No man would think he is serious—why should God? The person only deceives himself. Note two significant points.

1. Three persons teach the law to others.
   a. The *keeper* and the *breaker* of the law. A person teaches by what he does. Others see and observe and learn from what he does. If a person repeatedly breaks a law, no matter how small a law, he teaches that the law is not important—not worthy enough to be kept.
   b. The *instructor* of the law. This refers to the teachers of the law and of religion. Each instructor either adheres to or rejects the law. Each instructor teaches his students the truth or else deceives his students into following human reasoning. The person who breaks and teaches the breaking of the law attempts to *void the law*, that is, to do away with it. (See note—Ro.3:31; cp. Mt.15:3; Ps.119:126; cp. 89:39.) It would seem that an attempt to *void the law* is much more serious a crime than to disobey a commandment. Note also that continuing to disobey a commandment is denying the commandment—treating it as though it is unimportant and unnecessary. It treats the commandment as though it is not even existing and has no bearing upon a person's life. Such behavior is consciously or unconsciously teaching men to *void the law*.
2. Christ warned all who break and teach others to break the law, even if they break only the least commandment: they shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. Note: there are four persons who are severely warned.
   a. The worldly or carnal: the person who continues to break the commandments of God.
   b. The teacher or instructor: the person who teaches that the commandment of God is a farce. The person who says there is no such thing as God's law, there are only the commandments of men.
   c. The person who teaches and encourages others to sin and to disobey the commandments of God—even if the commandment is one of the least. Nothing is more contemptible and nothing will be judged more severely. This is one of the most serious offenses among men. (See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.2:17-29.)

> **"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones" (Lk.17:2).**
>
> **"Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ro.2:23-24).**
>
> **"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat [example], for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).**
>
> **"But though we, or an angel, from heaven, preach [or teach] any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal.1:8-9).**

   d. The mocker or persecutor: the person who rebels, mocks, and curses *God's law* and its strictness (and the God and the followers of it).

> **"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).**
>
> **"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:6).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Th.1:7-9).**
>
> **"For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:2-3).**
>
> **"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed" (Jude 14-15).**

Thought 1. Four significant lessons are seen in this point.

1) All the commandments of God are important, but some are less important than others. The man who *breaks the least* commandment and continues and continues to break it (teaching men such) shall be *called the least* in the Kingdom of Heaven.
2) Breaking a commandment of God and continuing to break it is serious, even if it is one of the least commandments. Such behavior teaches men that the commandment is not important. The result: a person shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven.
3) When a commandment is broken, a person is to ask forgiveness and repent (see note 7 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30; 1 Jn.2:1-2). He is not to continue breaking the commandment and asking forgiveness over and over. Continuous disobedience teaches that the commandments of God are not really all that important. It is that person who will be judged severely (see outline and notes—1 Cor.3:10-17. Cp. 2 Cor.5:10.)

4) The obedient person can expect great reward.
   ⇒ He shall be called great in heaven.
   ⇒ He is loved in a special way by both God and Christ (Jn.14:10, 14).
   ⇒ He receives very special manifestations of Christ's presence (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:21). (See *Rewards*—Master Subject Index.)

Thought 2. Who fails to do the law? Who breaks the law?
1) The person who neglects the law—just fails to do it.
2) The person who disobeys the law—does what it says not to do.
3) The person who does not know the law—cannot do it because he just does not know it.
4) The person who narrows the law, that is, limits and weakens the law by making it say less than what it really says. Many make the law apply only to what they want because it allows them to do their own thing and to live as they wish.

Thought 3. A person may neglect the law for several reasons.
1) He is deceived about the law's importance. Someone has misled him about its importance.
2) He is too preoccupied with worldly affairs to place much importance in the law.
3) He is reacting against some strict teaching in his past; therefore, he now neglects the law.
4) He has not been taught the seriousness of keeping God's law.
5) He fears the restrictions the law will place upon his life and behavior. He does not want to live as the law says, so he neglects it.

Thought 4. The law of God is often broken for two tragic reasons.
1) Some have never heard about God's law. Believers have failed to take the message of the law to the world.
2) Some do not have the law impressed upon their minds enough to worry about keeping it. Believers have not stressed the message with enough conviction and power to show its importance.

3 (5:20) **Righteousness—Religionists**: a person must have more righteousness than a religionist to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Note three facts.

1. Righteousness is necessary to enter heaven (see note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6; notes—Ro.3:21; 4:5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; notes—5:1; 10:6; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.2:16; cp. 3:10).

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro.1:18).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one....For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:10, 23).

2. The religionists, the Pharisees and the Scribes, had some righteousness. They just did not have enough. They were, in fact, strict religionists. They worked at obeying thousands and thousands of rules and regulations, governing everything ranging from dress and social behavior to ministry and work. However, they lacked the one essential: loving God so much that they would deny themselves and seek their righteousness in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Ro.3:20-22).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).

3. The point is shattering: a person must have more righteousness than a strict religionist to enter heaven. Many are religious, but few are strict religionists. What did Christ mean? Who can enter heaven if a strict religionist cannot? (See notes—Ro.4:5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; note—5:1. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6.)

"To him who worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Ro.4:5).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:4-5).

Thought 1. There are four facts in this verse that must be heeded. They should stir everyone of us, stir us to search our hearts and make sure we are approaching God as we should.

1) Many religionists make the same fatal mistake that the Pharisees and Scribes made. They seek acceptance with God...
   - by giving God a formal worship instead of giving God a confession of unworthiness and of their need for Him in a personal way.
   - by giving God good works instead of giving God their hearts.
   - by giving God a clean and moral body instead of giving God a confession of needing help spiritually.
   - by giving God only a part of their lives, instead of giving God the total abandonment of themselves.
   - (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23.)

2) Many make the fatal mistake the religionists made, but to a lesser degree. They worship and do good...
   - to be respectable in the community
   - to seek the acceptance of God
   - to have the fellowship of others
   - because they were forced by their parents to do good
   - to feel comfortable within their own consciences
   - to secure the approval of family and friends
   - because they were taught to do good

3) Some feel they must do good to be acceptable to God. Their motive in life is to work and work at doing good in order to secure God's acceptance. They have never learned the truth: they cannot do enough good to be perfectly acceptable to God. They must trust His love—that He loves them so much that He will take their trust and count it as righteousness (see note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6; note—Ro.4:5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; note—5:1).

4) Many worship and do just enough good to satisfy their consciences. They do just enough good to make them feel comfortable and acceptable to God. But they miss the whole point. What God is after—the only thing that makes a person acceptable to God—is the giving of his total being over to God (day and night).
   - ⇒ in unworthiness and confession: that he has need for God in his life now and forever.
   - ⇒ in trust and love: that he trusts and loves God because God has given His own Son and promised to accept him in His righteousness.
   - ⇒ in thankfulness and appreciation: because God has accepted and assured abundant life now and eternally.
   - ⇒ in adoration and praise: because God is God (Elohim) and has revealed His glorious love in Christ who has redeemed him eternally.
   - ⇒ in worship and service: because the love of Christ constrains him.

	E. The Real Meaning of Murder,[DS1] **5:21-26**	rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;	
1 The law	21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:	24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.	a. The urgency: Must precede worship b. The time: While some openness exists
2 The real meaning: Anger	22 But I say unto you, That	25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art	**6 The danger or damage of holding anger**
3 The growth of anger a. A brooding anger	whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall	in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary de-	a. Earthly judgment
b. A contemptuous anger	be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall	liver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the	b. Divine judgment symbolized
c. An accusing, cursing anger	be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say,	officer, and thou be cast into prison.	
4 The judgment of anger[DS2]	Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.	26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means	**7 The terrible end of anger: Judgment is sure**
5 The answer to anger: Reconciliation	23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there	come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.	

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

E. The Real Meaning of Murder, 5:21-26

(5:21-26) **Introduction—Murder—Anger—Contempt—Cursing**: civilized societies have always considered murder to be a serious crime worthy of judgment. But anger is a different matter. Few have ever thought of anger as being on the same level as murder and worthy of serious judgment. However, Christ says that anger "without a cause" is the same as murder and shall receive the same judgment from God.

Note the words "brother" and "whosoever" (v.22, 23, 24). Christ is saying that every human being is a brother under God's creation. Therefore, His words apply universally to every human being.

1. The law (v.21).
2. The real meaning: anger (v.22).
3. The growth of anger (v.22).
4. The judgment of anger (v.22).
5. The answer to anger: reconciliation (v.23-24).
6. The danger or damage of holding anger (v.25).
7. The terrible end of anger: judgment is sure (v.26).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:21-48) **"Ye have heard"—"It hath been said"**: these words are found in every paragraph or subject of these verses. It is important to understand this: Christ is referring not only to the Ten Commandments, but also to the Scribal Law of the Jewish teachers. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2; DEEPER STUDY # 4—6:7 for discussion.) He is directing the listeners' attention to what they had heard from their teachers, that is, to their interpretation of the law. Very simply put, Christ is giving the real meaning of certain laws, just what God originally intended the law to say.

1 (5:21) **Murder**: the law against murder is the sixth commandment (Ex.20:13; Dt.5:17). Note that God's law is given to protect life. Life is to be respected and cherished. No life is to be taken, neither one's own life nor the life of anyone else.

> **"Thou shalt not kill" (Ex.20:13).**
>
> **"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Ro.13:9).**
>
> **"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" (1 Pt.4:15).**

2 (5:22) **Anger**: the real meaning of this law is anger. Note what Christ is saying: He is saying that man has a problem. Man misreads God's law. Man interprets God's law to say what he wishes it to say. He applies it only to the outward act, in this case to the act of murder. He fails to look inside—within himself—to the cause (see notes—Mt.5:17-18; Mk.7:14-23).

Murder is deeper than just an outward act. It is an inward act: anger, bitterness, enmity. Murder is born from within, from an uncontrolled spirit, from an unregulated urge, from an inner anger. Anger itself is the real sin, the sin that breaks the law of God. Anger is...

- bitterness and enmity
- indignation and wrath
- striking out against a person
- a hatred of oneself
- slandering and destroying a person's image (who is created in God's image)
- rage and fury
- an uncontrolled spirit
- desiring a person's hurt
- envying and killing a person's happiness

Thought 1. Note three facts.

1) Jesus speaks to those who know the law. The person who *knows* the law (the Word) needs this message as much as anyone.
2) God's law (Word) existed from the beginning ("of old time"). It will never be annulled or done away with. It is always to govern man. Man is always to heed it.
3) Striking out at a person is clearly forbidden, but so are the bad *feelings* against a person. Anger—any bad feelings whatsoever against a person—is sin, serious sin.

3 (5:22) **Anger**: the growth of anger is dangerous. Unresolved anger will fester. It can become uncontrollable and give birth to murder. There are three steps in the growth of anger given here.

1. The anger that broods, that is selfish. It harbors malice; it will not forget; it lingers; it broods; it wills revenge and sometimes seeks revenge.
2. The anger that holds contempt (raca). It despises; it ridicules; it arrogantly exalts self and calls another person empty and useless. This is an anger that is full of malice. It despises and scorns (raca). It arises from pride—a proud wrath (Pr.21:24). Such feelings or anger walk over and trample a person. It says that whatever ill comes upon a person is deserved.
3. The anger that curses. It seeks to destroy a man and his reputation morally, intellectually, and spiritually.

There is a justified anger. In fact, the believer must be an angry person—angry with those who sin and do wrong, and are unjust and selfish in their behavior. However, a justified anger is always disciplined and controlled; it is always limited to those who do wrong either against God or against others. The distinguishing mark between justified and unjustified anger is that a justified anger is never selfish; it is never shown because of what has happened to oneself. It is an anger that is purposeful. The believer knows that he is angry for a legitimate reason, and he seeks to correct the situation in the most peaceful way possible (see notes—Eph.4:26-27; Ro.12:18; Jn.2:14-17).

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph.4:26).

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peacably with all men" (Ro.12:18).

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changer's money, and overthrew the tables" (Jn.2:13-16).

Thought 1. Anger is cast against many. Too often hurt feelings exist between those who are supposed to be the closest: husband and wife, parent and child, neighbor and friend, employer and employee. The Lord is clear about the matter: we must never allow anger to take hold of us without just cause.

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Col.3:8).

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (Jas.1:19).

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 Jn.3:15).

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil" (Ps.37:8).

"He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly; and a man of wicked devices is hated" (Pr.14:17).

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Pr.16:32).

"The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression" (Pr.19:11).

"Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools" (Eccl.7:9).

Thought 2. There are reasons why people get angry and develop feelings against others:

⇒ To seek revenge and to hurt.
⇒ To show ego or authority.
⇒ To reveal passion or secure some end.
⇒ To show hurt, resentment, and bitterness.

⇒ To express disagreement and displeasure.
⇒ To correct a wrong (a justified anger).
⇒ To give warning.

4 (5:22) **Anger**: the judgment of anger. It is a serious matter to hold feelings against another person—a very, very serious matter. There is (1) the *danger of judgment* (2) the *danger of having to come before earthy courts*, and (3) the *danger of hell fire*.

Thought 1. Violence is to be judged—not only before the councils of the world, but before the councils of God.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:22) **Hell Fire or Gehenna (geenna)**: the word is used eleven or twelve times in the New Testament, and in every case it is spoken by Jesus except in the Epistle of James. It illustrates the terrible truth of the second death, of man's final separation from God. Jesus pointed to the burning, repulsive rubbish dump outside the city limits of Jerusalem and said that it was exactly what hell was like. The dump was called Gehenna. It was in the Valley of Hinnom which served as a public incinerator. Hanging over it was a layer of thick, smoldering smoke arising from what seemed to be an eternal flame. The smell and filth became a breeding cesspool for a loathsome worm that was difficult to kill (Mk.9:44). Thus, Jesus found in Gehenna a description of just what it means to be separated from God eternally and to die the second death. Note several facts about hell or Geheena.

⇒ It is the same as the lake of fire (Rev.19:20; 20:10, 14-15).
⇒ It has to do with the second death (Rev.21:8; Jn.8:24).
⇒ It is hell (5:29-30; 10:28; 23:15, 33; Lk.12:5).
⇒ It is everlasting fire (Mt.18:8).
⇒ It is hell fire (Mt.18:9; Jas.3:6).
⇒ It is unquenchable fire (Mk.9:43-49).

The teaching of Jesus should always be remembered. Remembrance is critical in determining a person's fate. Hell is a definite place, a real place that is specifically located. It was originally prepared for the devil and his angels. But all men who choose to follow self and evil and to reject God shall also be sent to hell eternally.

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).

"And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Mt.5:29-30).

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.7:19).

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).

"And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (Mt.11:23).

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth....and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:42, 50).

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt.16:18).

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Mt.18:8-9).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves....Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt.23:15, 33).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mk.9:43-48).

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Lk.3:9).

"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell" (Lk.10:15).

"But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Lk.12:5).

"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Lk.16:23-24).

5 (5:23-24) **Anger**: the answer to anger is reconciliation. Christ had two surprising things to say about this point.

1. The urgency of reconciliation. Reconciliation is always to precede worship. Even when we are entering the church to worship, if there is a problem with a brother, we are to turn around from worship and go to our brother seeking reconciliation. There are four reasons why reconciliation is more important than worship.

a. Reconciliation with God is one of the major purposes for worship. A person worships in order to seek reconciliation and fellowship with God and His people. Therefore, God does not accept the worship of a person who holds malice against Him or against any of His people. Statements of the fact make the point perfectly clear.

⇒ A break with another person means a break with God.
⇒ Unforgiveness toward another person means unforgiveness by God.
⇒ Not being right with another person means not being right with God.
⇒ Broken fellowship with another person means broken fellowship with God.
⇒ Bad feelings toward another person mean unacceptance by God.
⇒ Anger against another person means rejection by God.

A person just cannot hope or expect to be right with God if he is not right with his brother (1 Jn.4:20-21). He must forgive and be reconciled if he expects to be forgiven and reconciled to God.

"Forgive us, as we forgive our debtors" (Mt.6:12; Lk.11:4).

"If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you...." (Mt.6:14-15; Mk.11:25-26).

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:20-21).

b. A person is to worship, for worship is essential to life and eternity. But worship is unacceptable to God unless a person is reconciled with all his brothers.

c. Bad feelings between believers hinder worship. Worship is meaningless unless a person is right with his brother. Reconciliation must always precede worship.

d. Worship is a time for a person to reflect and to examine his heart and life to see if there is "any wicked way" within him (Ps.139:24). It is essential that he search his heart. Worship is not acceptable if bad or wicked feelings against others are within the human heart.

Thought 1. How deceitful the human heart is!

1) Some persons try to worship while there are bad feelings between themselves and other persons (Mt.5:23-24).
2) Some persons try to pray with wrath in their heart (1 Tim.2:8; Is.1:15).
3) Some persons say, "I love God" while they hate their brother (1 Jn.4:20).

And each person thinks he is acceptable to God!

Thought 2. Some persons say they stay away from worship because they have something against a brother. The point of Christ is clear: get right with your brother and *get in worship*. One sin heaped upon another is twice as dangerous and shall bring forth double judgment.

2. The time for reconciliation is while some openness still exists between the two parties. Reconciliation should be attempted immediately...

- while a person is still in a brother's presence: "While thou art in the way with him" (v.25).
- before the sun goes down on a person's wrath.

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph.4:26).

- because a person cannot truly worship with barriers existing in the heart.
- because a person cannot offer acceptable prayers with barriers existing in his heart.
- because a person *could die* before reconciliation takes place and be forced to face judgment with some unconfessed sin.

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mk.11:25).

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk.17:4).

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:31-32).

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:13).

6 (5:25) **Anger—Judgment**: the danger or damage of holding anger. The danger is twofold.

1. There is an earthly danger. Barriers can lead to serious action ranging from legal suits to imprisonment. Such action is tragic to God and among God's people. It is even forbidden among true Christian brothers (see outline and notes—1 Cor.6:1-8). The damage of anger is manyfold:
   - ⇒ It leads to increased barriers and bitterness.
   - ⇒ It hurts families.
   - ⇒ It is costly.
   - ⇒ It damages the name of Christ and one's own testimony.
   - ⇒ It says to unbelievers that Christianity is a sham—no better than any other belief.
   - ⇒ It takes advantage of another person—always.
   - ⇒ It can cause an injustice to be done. The law is not always right.
   - ⇒ It can cause a weak brother to turn away—forever.
   - ⇒ It can cause fights, wars, suffering, and death.
2. There is an eternal danger. Life does not last, and the day of final judgment is coming. A person's judgment for holding a grudge against a brother will be severe (see notes—Mt.5:22; 5:25).

7 (5:26) **Anger—Judgment**: the terrible end of anger—judgment is sure. Christ made three strong points.

1. Judgment is sure. "The uttermost farthing," the last cent must be paid.
2. There will be no escape. "Thou shall *by no means* come out." There will be nothing and no one to deliver a person from the judgment (2 Cor.5:10).

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt.23:33).

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" (Ro.2:3).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

"Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them" (Jer.11:11).

"Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him" (Amos 5:18-19).

3. Reconciliation should be sought *quickly*: right now—before judgment, for Christ has borne all punishment for every believer (v.25).

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us....and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:13-14, 16).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:17; cp. 2 Cor.5:18-21).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

	F. The Real Meaning of Adultery,[DS1] **5:27-30** (cp.Mt.19:3-11; Mk.10: 2-12; cp.Lk.16:18; 1 Cor.7:1-16)	already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.
1 The law	27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:	30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.
2 The real meaning a. A deliberate look b. A desire: lust, passion[DS2] c. An act of adultery	28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her	**3 The two guilty culprits: The eyes and hands** **4 The danger** a. Offending or stumbling b. Being condemned to hell **5 The answer** a. Surgery: Cut out the offending bodymember b. Death: Let the offending body member perish c. Repentance: Turn from being cast into hell

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

F. The Real Meaning of Adultery, 5:27-30

(5:27-30) **Introduction—Immorality—Adultery**: immorality and adultery cause great destruction and hurt and pain—both within and without a person. There are at least three reasons why a person commits an immoral act.

1. The ego: the sense of conquering, taking, capturing, controlling, knowing, seeing, experiencing, enjoying, and on and on—a person's ego is boosted and inflated.
2. The inner need for attention and sharing.
3. The raw lust of the flesh.

Immorality is so common that it is often thought excusable and acceptable if it is agreed to by the partners and if other lives are not directly affected.

Man has always tended to glorify the body and the flesh: exposing the body, dressing the body for sexual attraction, looking at and observing the body and its movements—all are often acceptable practices of society. Inward desire (lust) and the act of sexual pleasure itself are often thought to be so much a part of nature and normality that to restrict them is considered abnormal and straight-laced.

Christ is strong, insistent in His demand for purity—so strong that He insists on radical surgery rather than allowing the hand or eye to sin. "An immoral eye and hand will carry the whole body into hell," Christ says: "so pluck out the eye; cut off the hand." But what do we say? "He doesn't mean this literally." And we use this fact as a way to water down the sharpness and the strictness of His point. However, we ignore and neglect His words to our doom. This is His very point. We may...

- fantasize and lust as a result of reading immoral magazines and books.
- lustfully look at the movements of a person walking (and call it recognizing beauty).
- dress to sexually attract.
- take pleasure in the stimulation and sensation of sex.

But Christ clearly warns: lustful looking, touching, and behavior will cause the whole body to be cast into hell. The matter is so serious that radical surgery is called for. No diluting, no evading, no explaining of His words and what He means can change the severe judgment that awaits the immoral person.

1. The law (v.27).
2. The real meaning (v.28).
3. The two guilty culprits: the eyes and hands (v.29).
4. The danger (v.29).
5. The answer (v.29-30).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:27-30) **Adultery—Sex**: the Bible does not teach that sex is wrong. But the Bible does teach that sex can be used wrongly, and the wrong use of sex is sin. Sex has been given by God for at least three reasons.

1. Sex causes a person to be attracted to another person. Therefore, sexual attraction is one of the major tools that brings about marriage (Gen.2:18, 21-25).
2. Sex is a tool with which to love. Sex, properly rooted and expressed in God, is one of the deepest and richest involvements and expressions of love (Eph.5:28-32).
3. Sex creates life. God has given man the privilege of being a sub-creator of life—under Him (Gen.1:29).

1 (5:27) **Adultery—Immorality**: the law against immorality is the seventh commandment (Ex.20:14; Dt.5:18). Note that God's law is given for three reasons.

1. To assure the respect and protection of all families and neighbors. God will take vengeance upon those who destroy families through adultery.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex.20:14; cp. Dt.5:18).

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's" (Ex.20:17).

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: that no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified" (1 Th.4:3-6).

2. To protect a man from judgment, the judgment of perishing in hell (v.30).
3. To protect a man from sinning against his own body (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.6:18).

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor.6:18).

2 (5:28) **Adultery—Eyes—Hands**: the real meaning of adultery. Adultery (moicheia) is often said to be sexual unfaithfulness by a married person. This is true, but it is much more. Man's idea of adultery is shattered by Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.19:9). Christ says adultery is not only the actual act, but adultery is committed by any one of five acts:

⇒ A deliberate look.
⇒ Passion within the heart: desiring and lusting.
⇒ The actual act of sex with someone other than one's own spouse.
⇒ Divorce relationships (Mt.5:32; 19:9-11; Mk.10:11-12; Lk.16:18).
⇒ Spiritual unfaithfulness toward God or apostasy from God (Mt.12:39; 16:4; Mk.8:38; Jas.4:4; cp. Ezk.16:15f; 23:43f).

Simply stated, Christ says there is eye adultery, heart adultery (lust), and body adultery. This is a shattering revelation that strikes at the experience of every young person and adult. There is no question: many dream and imagine, and if they had the opportunity, they would commit the act. All they lack is the chance and a boost to their courage to sin. (Cp. Jas.1:14-15.) The eyes can lead to lust by looking upon persons or pictures or stimulating objects. The eyes can be used sinfully in several ways.

⇒ To look and search for another person in order to lust.
⇒ To let another person know that one is available.
⇒ To attract, suggest, and entice.
⇒ To gratify lust where an experience is not possible.

There are two other matters that need to be thought about at this point.

1. Suggestive communication. This can arise from (a) unclean talk such as jokes, foul words, and suggestive statements made in passing; (b) luring talk that arises when sharing with the opposite sex. This tends to lead a person to let down his guard or to play loose with his conviction and moral commitment. Such sharing often dallies with enticing phrases and suggestive propositions that arouse pleasure. Suggestive conversation can occur anywhere: at work, at school, at parties, over the phone, or just standing around talking.
2. Dress. This arises from exposing parts of the body or from following the latest fad in dress that might be designed to display or attract. (See note—1 Tim.2:9-10; cp. Mk.12:38.)

There is real danger in using one's eyes sinfully. Peter warns that a person can lose control: "Having eyes full of adultery...that cannot cease from sin" (2 Pet.2:14). A person can actually become enslaved and bound by sex.

The seriousness of adultery is seen by the drastic action suggested by Christ in vs. 29-30. Adultery is a work of the flesh that will not inherit the Kingdom of God (Gal.5:19-21). It is a serious sin, very serious. There is the possibility of the whole body's being cast into hell (Mt.5:29-30). The believer can conquer the eyes and lust and can keep from committing adultery by doing a few simple things.

1. In relation to others...
   a. Stay away from places that *lend* themselves to suggestive lust.
   b. Stay away from persons who *might* be suggestive and enticing—no matter how enjoyable and pleasing.
   c. Refuse invitations to functions or socials that *might* lead to suggestive conversation or enticement.
2. In relation to self:
   a. Dress decently: dress to please the Lord (1 Tim.2:9).
   b. Behave at all times as a genuine Christian believer.
   c. Build a testimony by conversation and behavior as a Christian believer.
3. In relation to the eyes and mind.
   a. Make a covenant not to look at or think about immoral persons, places, or things; and don't. Job said of himself: "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maiden" (Job 31:1).
   b. Keep the eyes and mind upon things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Ph.4:8). Start immediately: begin to think upon the positive and the moral day by day. Keep the mind upon the positive for the rest of your life.
   c. Learn to captivate every thought (2 Cor.10:3-5, esp. v.5).
   d. Resist the first thought—turn the mind and body immediately to other matters. Get busy at something else without hesitating, and stay there—stay busy.

4. In the presence of others.
   a. Guard one's self at all times.
   b. Flee when suggestive statements are made: excuse yourself—show displeasure by statements or force if necessary. Get away immediately, not allowing the pleasing words to stimulate and gratify your flesh. The flesh revels in expressions of pleasure and appreciation over the way one looks, dresses, works, serves, performs, and on and on. A person must simply appreciate such and then move on—immediately. Lingering to enjoy and revel in appreciative remarks *will* lead to attracton. Everyone is human.

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt.15:19).

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5).

"The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words" (Pr.15:26).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(5:28) **Lust**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:1-3; note—4:2.

3 (5:29) **Adultery**: the two guilty culprits in adultery—the eyes and hands. Why did Christ use the eyes and hands to illustrate His point? Probably because a man is moved primarily by thoughts that arise from sight, and a woman is moved primarily by touch. It is the eye and hand that are the culprits in adultery (cp. Mk.9:43-48).

4 (5:29) **Adultery**: the danger is twofold.

1. Offending or stumbling. The word "offend" (skandalon) means to stumble; to be baited; to be lured; to be tripped up. The eyes and hands are stumbling blocks.
2. Being condemned to hell. The sin is serious, extremely serious. Unless the sin is dealt with, it will cause a person to be cast into hell (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:9-10).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness....they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19, 21).

Thought 1. The sin of immorality ruins the body as well as the soul. This is a terrible fact, yet it is a fact that is seldom considered (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.6:18).

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor.6:18).

5 (5:29-30) **Adultery**: the answer to solving the problem of adultery is threefold.

1. Surgery: cut out the offending body member. The lustful look and the lustful touch should be cut out of one's life—completely.

"The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward [suggestive] tongue shall be cut out" (Pr.10:31).

"And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Mt.5:30).

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (Col.2:11).

"Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

2. Death: let the offending body members perish. What feels good and pleases the flesh is not always good. Self-denial is sometimes called for (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph.6:13).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Pr.1:10).

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Pr.4:14).

3. Repentance: turning from being cast into hell. Note an important fact: Christ does not *appeal* for a man to forsake adultery; He *warns* man of the consequences of adultery. Some sins have to be restrained by warning, not by appeal. A man has to be warned about the lust of the flesh (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:1-3; note—4:2). Adultery is a sin that feels so good and seems so natural that it can be easily rationalized. The warning given to adulterers is "thy whole body shall be cast into hell" (Mt.5:30).

Thought 1. "Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal.5:16).

Thought 2. The members of the body are not to be yielded to sin. The members of the body are to be *counted dead* with Christ (see outline—Ro.6:11-13).

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:11-13).

Thought 3. A man must repent, that is, *turn from* adultery to God. (See note *Repentance*—Mt.4:17.)

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

	G. The Real Meaning of Divorce, 5:31-32
1 The law	31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:
2 The real meaning: Divorce disallowed	32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.
3 Exception: Fornication	
4 The guilty parties	
a. The instigator	
b. The divorced who remarries	
c. The one who marries the divorced	

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

G. The Real Meaning of Divorce, 5:31-32

(5:31-32) **Introduction—Divorce**: throughout history there have always been two schools of thought when interpreting the laws of society—the strict, conservative interpreters and the broad, liberal interpreters. In Jesus' day, the strict interpreters were known as the school of Shammai; the broad interpreters were known as the school of Hillel. In dealing with the subject of divorce, Shammai said the words "some uncleanness" found in Dt.24:1 allowed for divorce, but the words meant adultery and adultery only. Hillel said "some uncleanness" meant that anything that destroyed unity was a justified reason for divorce; that perfect unity had to be maintained in the marriage state. Such allowance had disintegrated into the position that anything displeasing to a man was reason enough for divorce. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12.)

A person can easily see which school human nature and most societies followed. Divorce had become so common that society itself was threatened. All a man had to do to divorce his wife was to have a Rabbi write out a bill of divorcement and hand it to his wife in the presence of two witnesses. The divorce was immediate and final (Dt.24:1-4).

1. The law (v.31).
2. The real meaning: divorce disallowed (v.32).
3. Exception: fornication (v.32).
4. The guilty parties (v.32).

1 (5:31) **Divorce**: the law against divorce was given for three reasons.

1. To protect the family.

> **"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk.10:6-9).**
>
> **"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph.5:31).**

2. To protect the land or nation, preventing national disintegration (cp. Dt.24:4. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12; notes—Eph.5:22-33; 1 Cor.7:12-16.)

> **"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (Pr.11:11).**
>
> **"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr.14:34).**

3. To prevent a person from becoming an adulterer (see outline and notes—Mt.5:27-30).

> **"And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Mt.19:9; cp. Lk.16:18).**
>
> **"And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery" (Mk.10:12).**
>
> **"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph.5:22).**

2 (5:32) **Divorce**: the real meaning of the law is that divorce is disallowed. Enormous protection is seen in this pronouncement. There is protection of the family, including the wife, husband, and children. There is emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual protection—protection against a family's being ripped apart and having to undergo all the strain and disruption that follows. Divorce is one of the most traumatic experiences of human life. For many, it is the most traumatic experience.

Divorce *touches* so many. It *touches*...

- husband
- wife
- children
- parents
- friends
- employer and employees

Divorce *affects* each person it touches, affects them ever so deeply. It *affects*...

- mind
- spirit
- behavior
- joy
- security
- hopes
- plans
- peace
- faith
- emotions
- love
- possessions
- control
- purpose
- estates

Divorce drastically *changes* each person's life. It *changes*...

- personal life
- private life
- home life
- parental life
- recreational life
- social life
- dream life

Because divorce affects human life so much, it is of critical concern to Christ. When anyone hurts, Christ hurts. And because divorce hurts so much and hurts so many, Christ sets out to correct man's corrupt concept of marriage and easy divorce. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12; notes—1 Cor.7:12-16; Eph.5:22-33 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Teaching, preaching, and living by strict principles takes enormous courage. Christ demonstrated enormous courage by going against the grain of society and demanding strictness in marriage.

Thought 2. There are at least four attitudes toward marriage, three of which are *loose attitudes* that often lead to divorce.

1) *A back-door marriage*: "If it works, OK; if it doesn't work, OK."
2) *A cheap, sensual marriage*: based upon some reason other than love, some reason such as attractiveness, sex, or finances. "If it feels good, do it."
3) *An adventuresome marriage*: the marriage is entered into for the experience and the adventure of being married. "It's the thing to do."
4) *A marriage of commitment*: the full conviction of both spouses that they should fulfill the solemn vows taken—a conviction before God.

Thought 3. There is only one basis for marriage that can absolutely prevent divorce: a true union, both a spiritual and physical union (see outline and notes—Mt.19:5; Eph.5:22-33; 1 Cor.7:12-16).

> **"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk.10:9).**
> **"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord....Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:22, 29).**
> **"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph.5:31).**

3 (5:32) **Adultery—Fornication**: the exception for divorce is the sin of fornication being committed by one of the spouses. The great tragedy of fornication or adultery is that it breaks the union and attachment between husband and wife. The union and attachment and all that goes with it—faith, hope, love, trust, assurance, confidence, and strength—are broken. If the husband and wife are not believers, then the physical union and the mental union of the marriage are broken. If they are believers, then all three unions are broken: the physical, mental, *and spiritual*. (See notes—Mt.19:5-6.) Two facts should be noted in the brief words of Christ here and elsewhere in the gospels. (See outlines, Introduction, notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12; 1 Cor.7:12-16 for a longer discussion of marriage and divorce.)

1. Christ does not stand with either the conservative or the liberal school discussed in note one. He does not mention either school or either position.
2. Christ says two things about divorce.
   a. Divorce is not the purpose of God. This is silent, but clearly understood.
   b. Divorce is allowed only if one of the spouses has committed adultery.

What Christ is trying to prevent is what history shows. Societies have tragically ignored the command of God. They have planted the seed of national disintegration, that is, broken homes (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12; Eph.5:22-33; cp. Mt.19:9; Mk.10:12; Lk.16:18; 1 Cor.7:12-16). This brief statement on divorce shows the great need to protect men, women, children, and the home. It points to the immense value of all three (see note—Mt.5:32; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12, the school of Hillel).

Thought 1. See notes—Mt.5:32; Mt.19:8; note 6 and DEEPER STUDY # 5—19:9; DEEPER STUDY # 6—19:11; 1 Cor.7:12-16. There are two exceptions pointed out in the note on 1 Cor.7:12. Some of the sins that cause divorce are also discussed in 1 Cor.7:12-16.

> **"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor.6:18; cp. 1 Cor.7:2).**
> **"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph.5:3).**
> **"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5; cp. 1 Th.4:3).**

Thought 2. It should always be remembered that adultery is not the only sin that can break the union of a marriage. Faith, hope, love, trust, assurance, confidence, strength—all can be dashed upon the rocks of selfishness and meanness (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.19:9 for discussion).

4 (5:32) **Divorce**: the guilty parties in divorce (see notes—Mt.19:5; 19:8; DEEPER STUDY # 5—19:9; DEEPER STUDY # 6—19:11 for discussion. Applications are easily seen in these footnotes. Also see 1 Cor.7:12-16 for additional applications.)

	H. The Real Meaning of Oaths & Swearing,[DS1] **5:33-37**	35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.	sacred
1 The law a. Do not swear falsely & deceivingly: Committing perjury b. Keep all oaths	33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:	36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.	b. Because all power belongs to God
2 The real meaning: Do not swear[DS2,3,4] a. Because all things are	34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:	37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.	**3 The ideal oath or guarantee** a. One's word—character b. The reason: Swearing has its source in evil[DS5]

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

H. The Real Meaning of Oaths and Swearing, 5:33-37

(5:33-37) **Introduction—Swearing—Profanity**: Christ said, "Swear not at all" (v.34). He was enlarging the law governing oaths to include all swearing and profanity (cp. Mt.5:17f; Jas.5:12). All conversation should be straight to the point and factual, not injected with oaths or profanity (Mt.5:34, 37). A man is to be righteous. His word and character are to be his guarantee, the only oath he needs.

1. The law (v.33).
2. The real meaning: do not swear (v.34-36).
3. The ideal oath or guarantee (v.37).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:33-37) **Swearing—Profanity—Oaths**: there are at least six types of swearing.

1. There is *swearing by oaths*. Jesus was put upon His oath (Mt.26:63), and Paul swore by taking an oath (2 Cor.1:23; Gal.1:20). What then does Christ mean by saying, "Swear not at all"? Simply that a man's word should be trustworthy in his day-to-day speech, so trustworthy that no oath is ever necessary. His character should be his guarantee, the only guarantee he needs.

A second explanation is also possible. Men are evil, so untrustworthy in their day-to-day dealings that worldly men require oaths. Thus, Paul and Christ were required to take oaths. However, as stated above, the believer's word and character should be his bond.

2. There is *habitual, frivolous swearing*. The unrighteous are said to have "mouths *full* of cursing and bitterness" (Ro.3:10, 14).
3. There is *hypocritical swearing*. There are some who "bless God" in one breath and turn around and "curse men" in the next breath. "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing" (Jas.3:9-10).
4. There is *silent, universal swearing*. Every man is charged with secretly cursing others within his heart. "Thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself...hast cursed others" (Eccl.7:22).
5. There is *evasive swearing*. Some do not use words that are foul, dirty, ugly, harsh, or binding. They would never use God's name in vain. Rather, they choose substitute words—words that are commonly used in everyday conversation, words that would never be considered swearing. Others choose what are thought to be milder curse words. By evading harsh swearing, they feel their word is not so binding. They count themselves less guilty.
6. There is *ego swearing*. Many swear to boost their ego, their manliness around others. They feel an identity with the crowd by crossing over to the forbidden.

1 (5:33) **Oaths—Swearing—Profanity**: the law was based on the third commandment (Ex.20:7; Lev.19:12; Dt.23:23; cp. Num.30:2). The law had been interpreted to say, "Do not make false vows"; "Do not swear falsely"; "Do not swear to a lie." But the law was much too narrow. Man had interpreted it to his own liking which allowed him to swear and curse as much as he wished. Note two signifcant points about the law:

1. God gave the law to men for several reasons.
   a. To keep man from dishonoring God by falsely calling upon His name or by cursing Him.
   b. To keep man from perjuring himself, showing himself to be a liar and an unjust and unstable person.
   c. To keep man from treating others unjustly.
2. The law was given to govern several things.
   a. Lying and then swearing that one is telling the truth. This is perjury. How often men perjure themselves—stretching the truth, exaggerating, or lying outrightly—and then swear that they are telling the truth!
   b. Making a false vow to God. How many vows have been made to God but never kept!
   c. Making a false vow to another person, promising something and not doing it.
   d. Using God's name in vain. So many use God's name as a *slang* or *curse word*. This person will stand especially guilty before God (Ex.20:7).

Scripture says that it is better not to vow than to vow and not pay (Eccl.5:4-5). The reason is clearly understood: a vow makes a person a debtor. The person is in debt to fulfill his vow or promise.

1. A vow to God puts the man in debt to God. To break a vow is an act of lying to God (Acts 5:4).
2. A vow to man puts the man in debt to man. To break his vow is an act of injustice to man.

"If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth" (Num.30:2).

"When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee" (Dt.23:21).

"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed" (Eccl.5:4).

"Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows" (Job 22:27).

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High" (Ps.50:14).

"Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared" (Ps.76:11).

2 (5:34-36) **Swearing—Profanity**: the real meaning of the law is this: swear not *at all*; curse not *at all*. Do not swear or curse by anything.

1. Swear not, because all things are sacred.
   a. Heaven is God's throne: the place where His glory is manifested (Is.66:1). To swear by heaven or to curse heaven is to swear by God and to curse God.
   b. The earth is God's footstool: the place He governs and looks over (Is.66:1; Ps.24:1). To swear by earth or to curse earth is to swear by God and to curse God.
   c. Jerusalem is the city of the great King (Ps.48:2; Ps.46:4). He cares deeply for Jerusalem. There is a sense in which God cares deeply for every city and place on earth. He cares about how a place is treated and how it is spoken about (cp. Mt.10:15; 11:24; Mk.6:11; Lk.10:12).

2. Swear not, because all power belongs to God. In reality, no man has any power to do anything; for example, he cannot change his stature. What power he has is given by God. In fact, the power man thinks he has can be taken away at any moment. Therefore, he really does not have the power to keep oaths. He can be disabled or snatched away at any moment. The recognition of this reality should cause a man to live so honestly and straightforwardly that his word alone is acceptable. Oaths and vows should not be necessary.

Note this: all power belongs to God; therefore, a man should stand in awe of God, not curse Him. But observe what it is that is usually cursed: God and the things of God, the very things that should not be cursed. This says much about the selfish, depraved nature of man. Cursing God is a terrible sin, so terrible that it is one of the ten commandments. A special judgment is even pronounced upon the curser (Ex.20:7). Cursing is meaningless, thoughtless, and irreverent.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Ex.20:7).

"And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:12).

"But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne" (Mt.5:34).

"[Men] whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" (Ro.3:14).

"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude [likeness] of God" (Jas.3:8-9).

"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation" (Jas.5:12).

"[The wicked person] His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity" (Ps.10:7).

"For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak" (Ps.59:12).

"As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him" (Ps.109:17).

"For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others" (Eccl.7:22).

Thought 1. Cursing has no mask; it cannot be hidden. It is spoken and heard. The problem is that it is often acceptable conversation, and cursing is a problem, for it reveals several things:

- ⇒ a graceless heart
- ⇒ a problem with self-image
- ⇒ a thoughtless mind
- ⇒ an inadequate vocabulary
- ⇒ an inconsiderate and selfish spirit
- ⇒ a lack of individuality and/or independence
- ⇒ a hardness or enmity toward God
- ⇒ a foolish regard for judgment and eternity

Thought 2. There are differences of opinion about legal oaths. Some believe they should never take an oath even for the sake of justice (for example, the Quakers). Others feel they can be called upon to swear for the sake of justice; but they should never swear of themselves, that is, take the initiative in verifying their word. (Cp. Gen.22:16; 26:31; 31:53; 47:31; 50:25; Ex.22:11; Num.5:9; Dt.6:13; Josh.9:15, 19; 1 Ki.8:31; 2 Ki.11:4; Ps.89:35; 95:11; Is.14:24; 62:8; Jer.12:16; 38:16; Ezk.17:13; Mk.6:23; Lk.1:73; Acts 23:21; Heb.3:11; 6:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(5:34) **Swearing—Profanity**: some passages dealing with swearing are Dt.6:13; 10:20; Is.45:23; Jer.4:2; Mt.26:63; 2 Cor.1:23; Gal.1:20; Jas.5:12.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(5:34) **Swearing—Profanity**: profanity is accepted in most societies. People who curse and use foul words seldom think about the seriousness of profanity. It *is* serious, a very serious offense. No matter how little the "cursing" is considered, God says He "will not hold him guiltless" (Ex.20:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(5:34) **Swearing**: there were two kinds of swearing to the Jews.

1. *Bound swearing*. These were oaths using God's name. When God's name was used, He was considered a partner; therefore, the oath could never be broken.
2. *Unbound swearing*. These were oaths which omitted God's name but used such sacred phrases as "by heaven," "by earth," "by Jerusalem," "by my head," or some other statement to emphasize one's intention or truthfulness. Such oaths were not necessarily binding because God was not considered to be a partner in the oath.

What man so often fails to see is that God is always present. He sees and is concerned with all that a man says and does, whether by word or action, by statement or oath, by swearing or profanity (see DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—Mt.5:34).

3 (5:37) **Swearing—Oaths—Conversation**: there is *only one* ideal oath and guarantee for man: his word. His word should arise from his character. It should be the only oath and guarantee he needs. He should not say more than, "Yes, I will...." or "No, I will not." His life should be so honest and straight that no one would ever question his word. When he speaks, everyone should know that it will be done. The reason is simply stated: swearing has its source in evil (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:37). Something that is often overlooked is this fact: swearing and cursing do not make a matter more believable; they really make a matter more suspicious. A person swears something because his character or the matter is questionable. What an indictment of depravity! Yet swearing and cursing are the acceptable habits of men.

> **"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Mt.5:13).**
>
> **"But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Mt.5:37).**
>
> **"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col.4:6).**
>
> **"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.1:13).**
>
> **"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Tit.2:7-8).**

Thought 1. Oaths are required for one reason: men know the deceitfulness of the human heart. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer.17:9). All men are liars (Ps.116:11). Just think about how often a person leads others on in order to get what he wants.

> **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).**
>
> **"I said in my haste, All men are liars" (Ps.116:11).**

Thought 2. Oaths would not be necessary in a perfect world. Everyone would be perfectly honest and righteous. A man's life would speak loudly and clearly. Whatever a man said would be absolutely dependable. Therefore, believers should work to change the world by changing the hearts of men.

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(5:37) **Swearing—Depravity**: at least two things are meant here. First, man has to take oaths because the world is evil. Second, man swears because he is evil and knows that he is evil. Therefore, he swears to emphasize the truth in the point he makes. The need for oaths and man's need for swearing to the truth are clear evidence of man's depravity.

	I. The Real Meaning of the Law Governing Injury, 5:38-42 (Lk.6:29-30)	other also. 40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.	a. Accept physical injury b. Accept property injury
1 The law	38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:	41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.	c. Accept any forced burden
2 The real meaning: Do not retaliate **3 The ideal behavior**	39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the	42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.	**4 The great Christian ethic: Give**

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

I. The Real Meaning of the Law Governing Injury, 5:38-42

(5:38-42) **Introduction**: this law has been used and misused, excused and abused down through the centuries. Man has often used the law to treat others as he wished. But Christ has changed the law. He says that the Christian is not to render evil for evil; he is not to bear a grudge or seek revenge. He must go beyond and forgive. However, the Christian has the right to avoid and resist evil for security's sake (see note—Ro.12:18 for more discussion).

1. The law (v.38).
2. The real meaning: do not retaliate (v.39).
3. The ideal behavior (v.39-41).
4. The great Christian ethic: give (v.42).

1 (5:38) **Retaliation—Resistance**: this law is often thought to be justification for retaliation (cp Ex.21:24; Lev.24:20; Dt.19:21). It has been misused and abused. However, God's purpose for the law was to show mercy and to limit vengeance. In antiquity, men killed for the most minor of offenses. For example, if a person were injured accidently, a whole family or village was subject to be killed in retaliation. Thus, this law was the beginning of mercy in a merciless society. It limited retaliation to an equivalent injury. Several facts show the merciful aspect of the law.

1. The law was not a command that had to be executed. It was a law that *allowed* a person some justice *if he wished*. He did not have to insist upon it.
2. The law was given to the courts to guide the judges in the execution of justice. It was not given to individuals to take vengeance on others.
3. The law could be satisfied with money or some other ransom or payment deemed just (Num.35:31). However, no ransom was to "be taken for the life of a murderer." The murderer was to pay with his life.

> **Thought 1.** The law was given to control the irresponsible and unregulated passions of men: to control evil and to limit retaliation and revenge. The law was given as a restraint, as a deterent (1) to the criminal or person who would do evil; and (2) to the victim, lest he inflict a more terrible vengeance than what the crime deserved.
>
> **"Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Ex.21:24).**
>
> **"Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again" (Lev.24:20).**
>
> **"And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Dt.19:21).**

2 (5:39) **Resistance—Revenge—Retaliation**: Christ says this: the law really means that a person is not to retaliate. However, a person must understand what Christ is saying.

1. Christ is not saying "resist not evil"—ever. Christ Himself resisted evil. (1) He drove out the money changers from the temple (Mt.21:12; Mk.11:15), and (2) He resisted the punishment of the High Priest (Jn.18:22-23). Paul, the apostle, also resisted evil (cp. Acts 16:35f; 22:25; 23:3; 25:9-10).

The point is this: Jesus and Paul followed the new law, "resist not evil." They observed the spirit of the new law, but they were not enslaved by it. There are times when evil should be resisted. (See note—Ro.12:18 for more discussion.)

2. Christ is saying "resist not evil," that is, do not seek evil for evil; do not bear a grudge or resent those who have mistreated you. Do not seek revenge or look for a chance to retaliate. But forgive, go out of your way to help those who do evil against you. Such an attitude is the only way to ever reach them for the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt.4:17; 5:3, 10, 19, 21. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24. Cp. Prov.20:22; 24:29; 25:21-22.)

> **Thought 1.** A Christian is not to be a revengeful person. He is not to be known as a person who holds a grudge.
>
> **Thought 2.** Revenge consumes. It can *eat up* a person's inner being.
>
> 1) It can consume a person's mind—be the focus of all his thoughts. A person can be so intent upon revenge that he does nothing but think about retaliation.

2) It can consume a person's emotions—cause all kinds of emotional problems. A person can be so engrossed in revenge that he becomes...
   - self-centered (harbors how great a wrong has been done to him)
   - withdrawn
   - self-pitying
   - paranoid
   - destructive (strikes out at other persons and other things)

> **"But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Mt.5:39).**
>
> **"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Ro.12:17).**
>
> **"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Th.5:15).**
>
> **"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim.2:24).**
>
> **"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Pt.3:9).**
>
> **"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord" (Lev.19:18).**
>
> **"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee" (Pr.20:22).**
>
> **"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work" (Pr.24:29).**

3 (5:39-41) **Resistance—Revenge—Retaliation**: the ideal behavior. Christ shared three very practical illustrations, teaching the Christian how to treat those who do him wrong.

1. Accept physical injury. It is the right cheek that is slapped. This says something that is often overlooked. The person who slaps with his right hand has to strike with the back of his hand in order to hit someone's right cheek. Hitting someone with the back of the hand has always been considered more insulting. Throughout history it has been used to symbolize a challenge to duel. It showed contempt and bitterness. Christ is clearly making His point: the believer is not to retaliate against the most terrible insults or bitter contempt—not even against threats of bodily harm.

Turning the other cheek is difficult. It means a person does not challenge, resent, avenge, retaliate, or enter a legal action against an attacker; but he prepares for another slap and bears it patiently. He lets it pass and accepts it. He forgives and trusts the matter to God. There is the knowledge that God will work all things out for good as the person goes about his life and service for God.

Thought 1. Many a person has his cheek slapped. A "slap in the face" can come by insult, slight, criticism, rumor, abuse, threat, or physical attack (cp.2 Cor.11:20).

Thought 2. Submission is sometimes the way to overcome (Pr.25:21-22).

Thought 3. The believer who endures shameful treatment shall reap eternal glory. (See outline and notes—Mt.5:10-12.)

> **"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also" (Lk.6:29).**
>
> **"[Love] beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Cor.13:7).**
>
> **"[Walk] with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph.4:2).**
>
> **"And, ye masters [employers], do the same things unto them [employees, workers], forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (Eph.6:9).**
>
> **"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another; if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:13).**
>
> **"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim.2:25).**

2. Accept property injury. The coat referred to was the tunic (chiton), the inner garment. The cloak was the long robe-like outer garment. William Barclay says that Jewish law allowed a man's tunic to be given as a pledge, but the cloak could never be taken. The reason was simply that a man would have a number of tunics (under clothing), but he might have only one cloak (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.165) (cp. Ex.22:26-27).

Christ's point strikes at the heart of the matter. A Christian is not to be consumed with fighting over property and disputing rights. He is not to retaliate just because he has the right. The believer forgets self and forgets property and rights, and he lives for God and for the salvation of others. (See outline & notes—1 Cor.6:1-8 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Giving one's cloak, one's good coat, is difficult. It means that a believer does not defend, stand up for, nor dispute the taking of his property. He forgives, and then he gives to the person who is taking. He even

gives his coat (tunic) if necessary. A believer does not get tied up and preoccupied with his rights and privileges in or out of court. He has time only to go about his own duties and responsibilities. He is to be tied up and intent on living life to the fullest for Christ, reaching out to a world lost and consumed with *disputes,* a world that *needs the peace* which only God can bring.

Thought 2. The world is full of division and disputes, bitterness and hatred, quarrels and wars. It is a divided world because individuals are self-centered. The Christian must be a person of peace, a person who keeps his mind upon God, not upon self. He must deny the world and the things of the world (see note, *Self-denial*—Lk.9:23. Cp. Ro.8:5-6.)

Thought 3. Sometimes recovering or fighting for one's property costs more than giving it up and purchasing more.

Thought 4. When does a person fight for his rights? There are some factors to consider:
- ⇒ the damage being done to himself;
- ⇒ the damage being done to his family;
- ⇒ the factors discussed in Romans Chapter 12 (see note—Ro.12:18).

> **"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison" (Mt.5:25).**
>
> **"And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also" (Mt.5:40).**
>
> **"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters" (1 Cor.6:1-2).**
>
> **"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Tim.2:23-26).**
>
> **"Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame" (Pr.25:8).**

Thought 5. Some steal property and some even use the law to do the greatest injustices. They twist the facts, stretch the truth, exaggerate, slander, lie—do anything to justify themselves to get what they want. They injure and take, and their conscience bothers them little. Their word and oath matter little.

Thought 6. A believer is not to be tied up and consumed with disputes over property, that is, rights and privileges and possessions. Disputes paint a person as divisive, as a disputer who is worldly-minded.

3. Accept any forced burden. In antiquity, the citizens of a conquered country could be enlisted into *forced service* (aggarevein) by the conquerers in any way deemed necessary. A citizen could be compelled to carry water, supplies, anything (cp. Simeon of Cyrene, Mt.27:32).

Christ is saying that if a believer is forced to go a mile, he should go twice as far. Again, rights—even the rights of liberty—are not the primary concern of the believer. The believer's primary concern is people and their burdens—reaching and relieving their burdens in obedience to God.

Going a second mile is difficult. It means a person does not become bitter and resentful, grumbling and griping, complaining and criticizing, self-pitying and begrudging. It means a person forgives and serves and offers more service. He sets his mind and heart on reaching out to the offender by helping more and more. Such action will more likely reach the offender for the Kingdom of Heaven. It will certainly help bring the Kingdom of Heaven closer to this earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

Thought 1. Some go well beyond reason in insisting and impressing, in compelling and enforcing their will. Others even enslave. Such exists within families, friendships, businesses, nations—everywhere.

Thought 2. There are times, of course, when a person is not to submit to the will of another. There are definite commands governing morality and injustice in the Bible. (See notes—Mt. 5:39; Ro.12:18.)

Thought 3. The believer's concern is people and their burdens (Gal.6:2). The believer is to bear the burdens of people, serving them and helping all he can. His purpose is to fulfill the law of Christ which is the law of love, and thereby to help bring the Kingdom of God to this earth through their conversion.

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**

"Charity [love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" (1 Cor.13:4).

"Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col.1:11).

"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" (Tit.3:2).

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (Jas.3:17).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

4 (5:42) **Borrowing—Lending**: the great Christian ethic is to give. Christ is pointedly clear: a Christian is to help those who have need, and he is to readily help. Christ allows no excuse. The picture is simple: when someone asks, the Christian *gives* and does not *turn away*. However, the Bible does not say to give without discretion. "A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with *discretion*" (Ps.112:5). Giving is always to be done with discretion (Ps.112:5). Two things should be looked at and studied to see if a person should or should not give

First, the effect upon the receiver must be studied. Will it encourage laziness and shiftlessness, idleness and license?

Second, the ability of a person to give must also be studied. He must give and give and learn to give more and more—ever learning to trust God. It is not by chance that people come to the believer for help. They are either aware of the believer's interest and compassion or are brought by God. When brought by God, they are brought both for the growth of the believer and for the benefit of the needful. However, the believer must realistically know his ability to give and how much God wants him to give, and if the person requesting help has a real need.

The point is this: the believer is to live in readiness—a readiness to give and to lend (cp. 2 Cor.8:11-15 esp. 11). He does not live for this earth and world. He lives for God and for heaven. His citizenship is in heaven, from where he looks for the Savior (Ph.3:20). Any concern he has for this world and its possessions is only for meeting the necessities of life and for helping others. He exists for ministry, helping and giving to those who have need. In fact, Scripture is clear; the believer is to work for two reasons: to meet his own necessities and to secure the means to help those in need.

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

Thought 1. A cheerful giver is loved by God in a very special way.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:7-8).

Thought 2. Giving should be done personally. Jesus Christ is a Person; He is related to persons. Therefore, He expects every believer to be personally involved in the lives of others just as He Himself is. Too many feel their obligation to give is over when they have given through official channels. But this is not the case with Christ. He demonstrated that the believer is to get personally involved in helping others.

Thought 3. Giving should be handled in such a way that the dignity of the receiver is restored. The humiliation experienced by the needful is often unbearable.

Thought 4. Lending can help the person who borrows. It can teach him (1) to trust God more, and (2) to learn how to be more industrious. The borrower has to *get to it* in order to pay back what is loaned.

Thought 5. It is better to be misled by a *professional beggar* than to miss helping a truly needful person.

"And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (Lk.3:10-11).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:18).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Pr.25:21).

	J. The Real Meaning of Human Relationships, 5:43-48 (Lk.6:27-36)	dren of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.	a. Makes you a child of God b. Makes you like God
1 The law	43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.	46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?	c. Makes you distinctive from other men
2 The real meaning a. Love your enemies[DS1] b. Bless those who curse you c. Do good to those who hate you[DS2] d. Pray for persecutors	44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;	47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?	
3 The incentive	45 That ye may be the chil-	48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.	**4 The charge: Be perfect**

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

J. The Real Meaning of Human Relationships, 5:43-48

(5:43-48) **Introduction**: no subject is more important than the subject of human relationships. God is creating a family of believers who are to live together eternally. Therefore, He wants that family to live together as a family, loving each other and loving their neighbors as they should. God's family must never allow hate to enter their hearts. God's family is to treat no person as an enemy. Every person is to be loved as a true neighbor.

1. The law (v.43).
2. The real meaning (v.44).
3. The incentive (v.45-47).
4. The charge: be perfect (v.48).

1 (5:43) **Love—Hate**: the law said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev.19:18). Israel made two fatal mistakes in interpreting this law.

1. They said "neighbor" meant only the people of their own community, religion, and nation. They did not include anyone else. In fact, they shut out and cut off everyone else (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:5; notes—Mk.7:25; Lk.7:4-5).

2. They inferred they were to *hate their enemies*. God said, "Love thy neighbor"; therefore, they reasoned and added, "Hate thine enemy." Human reason actually leads a person to think that he should oppose and hate his enemy. But such is just *deduced* or *inferred* from depraved human reason. It is the natural reason of man at work. It is not God, and it is not what God knows to be the best for the world: love, joy, peace.... (Gal.5:22-23).

Thought 1. Many fall into the same mistake as Israel. They interpret "neighbors" to be only their friends and those who live close by. They never think of enemies nor of the world as a whole as their neighbors.

2 (5:44) **Love—Enemies**: the real meaning of the law "to love" involves four very practical acts (cp. 1 Cor.13:4-7).

1. Love your enemies. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Love*—Mt.5:44 for verses.) Believers are to love *all* men, even enemies. They are to respect and honor all men (1 Pt.2:17). Every human being has something that is commendable, even if it is nothing but the fact that he is a fellow human being with a soul to be reached for God. Note two facts.
   a. Loving our enemies is against human nature. The behavior of human nature is to react, strike back, hate, and wish hurt. At best human nature treats an enemy with a cold shoulder and keeps its distance. The root of human reaction against enemies is self and bitterness. (Self-preservation is not evil of itself. See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Love*—Mt.5:44. The section on agape love points out that love is not complacent acceptance of wickedness and license.)
   b. There is one thing a believer can have for his enemy: mercy or compassion. If he does not have compassion for those who hate him, he has gained nothing of the spirit of Christ (Lk.6:36).

Thought 1. Believers are often criticized for coming so far short of this command.

Thought 2. Note two facts. First, all are not to be loved equally (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.5:44). Second, love is not license; it is not complacent in dealing with wickedness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.5:44).

2. Bless those who curse you. "To bless" means that a person has to speak. Christ is saying to speak softly to the curser (Pr.15:1). Use kind, friendly words. When face to face, be courteous; when behind his back, commend his strengths. Do not render "railing for railing," that is, do not condemn or attack him in bitter or abusive language (1 Pet.3:9).

A fact that is often forgotten is this: if we react with sharp, harsh words, it will only stir up more anger and hate in the curser.

"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Pt.3:9).

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Pr.15:1).

Thought 1. Cursing is a serious sin to God (see notes—Mt.5:33-37; Jas.5:12).

3. Do good to those who hate you. "Doing good" goes beyond words. It does things for the person who hates. It reaches out to him through his family or friends, employment or business. It searches for ways to do good to him, realizing that he needs to be reached for God. If no immediate way is found, then the Christian patiently waits for the day when he will face one of the crises that comes to every human being (for example, sickness, accident, death). And then the believer goes and does good, ministering to him as Christ Himself ministered.

Thought 1. The greatest proof of love is "doing good to those who hate you."

"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you" (Lk.6:27; cp. Lk.6:28).

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:20).

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Th.5:15).

"If thou see the ass [donkey] of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him" (Ex.23:5).

"If thine enemy be hungry give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee" (Pr.25:21-22).

4. Pray for those who persecute you. Three things in particular need to be prayed about: (a) for God to forgive the persecutor (Lk.23:34; Acts 7:60), (b) for peace between one's self and the persecutor, and (c) for the persecutor's salvation or correction.

Prayer for the persecutor will greatly benefit the believer. It will keep the believer from becoming bitter, hostile, or reactionary.

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mt.5:44).

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (Lk.23:34).

"And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:60).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:44) **Love**: when Christ said "Love your enemies," He could have used any one of four words. The Greek language is very descriptive and detailed in its expressions. Its words are precise and full of meaning. In speaking of love, the Greek language describes exactly what is meant. It separates the various types of love, and uses four different words for love. Thus, it is always important to know which word is used in the New Testament and what that word means.

1. There is "eros" love. This is love that arises from passion, infatuation, and sexual attraction. It is the love (passion) of a man for a woman. The word is never used in the New Testament.
2. There is "storge" love. This is love that arises from affection, a natural born affection, the affection of family love. It is the love and natural affection between parent and child.
3. There is "phileo" love. This is love that arises from affection also, but from a different kind. It is a deep, intense, and warm affection. It is an affection that fills a person's heart with warmth, tenderness, preciousness, and a deep consciousness of really loving and really being loved. It is the love of precious affection and feelings toward those who are very near and very dear to one's heart (see notes—Jn.21:15-17).
4. There is "agape" love. This is the love that wishes well. It is a love that demonstrates kindness, benevolence, and esteem. It is the love of the mind, reason, and choice. It is a sacrificial love, that is, a love that cares, gives, and works for another person's good—no matter how the person may respond or treat one (see notes—Jn.21:15-17).

The word Christ uses in saying "Love your enemies" is agape: the love that must be willed. The Christian must use his mind and reason, deliberately choosing to love his enemy.

Note four things:

1. The Christian's love for his enemy is different from the love he holds for his family. It would be impossible to love an enemy with affection. Christ knew this.
2. The Christian sacrifices himself, bears all in order to work for his enemy's good. Whether Christian minister or layman, the Christian chooses deliberately to love a world of antagonistic men for their own good (their salvation and hope of eternity).
3. The Christian's love (agape love) is not complacent acceptance of open wickedness and license. It is not sitting back and allowing a person to do as he pleases. It is not allowing selfishness and deception and a wallowing around in license. Agape love is putting a stop to sin and license as much as possible. It is restraint, control, discipline, and even punishment when it protects the offender from himself and protects those whom he hurts. Very simply pictured, it is a parent controlling a child for his own good and for the good of those who love him.

4. Agape love is God's love. A Christian can have agape love only as he allows God to love through him (see note—Jn.21:15-17). The believer deliberately wills to love as God loves, and God empowers him to do so (Ro.5:5).

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies" (Mt.5:44).

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:20).

"If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again" (Ex.23:4).

"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth" (Pr.24:17).

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee" (Pr.25:21-22).

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 Jn.4:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:44) **Curser**: the curser has two major problems. (See notes—Mt.5:33-37.)

1. The curser has a weak self-image. He has to play *the big boy* or *the big man*. He feels the need to assert himself, to come across as strong and forceful, to fit in as *one of the boys or men*. It should be noted that society itself can take on a weak image; that is, a whole generation can reflect a weak self image. One of the first signs of a weak self image is the acceptance of cursing as a normal part of conversation. What an indictment against so many societies!
2. The curser either does not know the Lord or else is very immature and weak in the Lord. Thus, he desperately needs the blessing and the help of the believer.

3 (5:45-47) **Love**: the incentive to love everyone as a true neighbor is threefold.

1. Love makes a person a child of God. Love is unmistakable proof that a person truly loves and truly knows God. A believer cannot hate another person—not a true believer. If a person says he loves God and hates some person, whether former friend or foe, he needs to search his heart. He lacks the genuineness demanded by God (1 Jn.4:19-21; 1 Jn.3:23; cp. Jn.13:33-34).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).

2. Love makes a person like God. God loves His enemies. He causes the sun to shine and the rain to fall on His enemies as well as on those who love Him. The Christian is to be just like God: he is to love his enemies. In loving his enemies, the Christian becomes more and more like God. He becomes godly.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen.1:27).

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt.5:48).

"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness" (1 Tim.4:7).

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Tim.6:11).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:12).

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pt.1:15-16).

Thought 1. Man was created "in the image, after the likeness of God" (Gen.1:27). Man's very purpose for *being* is to glorify God and to be like God (cp.Mt.5:48).

Thought 2. No man can look at God's nature and learn hatred. God's sunshine and rain bless all. There is no indication of favoritism in the sunshine and the rain. Therefore, the learning of reaction and hatred does not come from *without man*, but from *within man* (Mt.15:18-20; Mk.7:21; cp. Mt.12:34-35; Lk.6:45).

3. Love makes a person distinctive from other men. A believer must do more than others. He must go beyond what others do. Everyone loves his friends, so *doing more and going beyond* means that the believer will love his enemies. Everyone is friendly to those who salute him; therefore, doing more and going beyond means that the believer salutes his enemies.

Thought 1. Motives have to be watched. Too many are nice and kind out of self-interest. They hope to gain something (a vote, money, inheritance, support) from those to whom they are friendly. The believer is to be different and distinctive. His motive must be to reach out to the unfriendly, even the enemies of Christ.

Thought 2. If people loved and cared only for those who loved them, think how divided the world would be. Someone has to reach out to bring all together. All must be reached: the bitter, the cold-hearted, the withdrawn, the angry, the murderer, the attacker, the thief, the enemy, the curser, the hater, the spiteful, the persecutor.

Thought 3. It is the task of the believer to *do more and go beyond*. The believer is to reach all, for he knows the true love of God.

Thought 4. God has *done more and gone beyond* by sending His Son into the world (Jn.3:16; cp. Eph.2:11-18). The believer knows this; therefore, it is his calling to *do more and go beyond* (2 Cor.5:18-20).

> **"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Mt.5:42).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).**
>
> **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).**

4 (5:48) **Perfect** (teleios): the charge is "Be ye therefore perfect." The idea is perfection of purpose. It has to do with an end, an aim, a goal, a purpose. It means fit, mature, fully grown at a particular stage of growth. For example, a fully grown child is a perfect child; he has reached his childhood and achieved the purpose of childhood. It does not mean perfection of character, that is, being without sin. It is fitness, maturity for task and purpose. It is full development, maturity of godliness. (See notes—Eph.4:12-16; cp. Ph.3:12-16; 1 Jn.1:8-10.)

The Bible reveals three stages of perfection.

1. Saving perfection. Christ's death has guaranteed forever the perfection or redemption of those set apart for God.

> **"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb.10:14).**

2. Progressive or maturing perfection. God reveals anything that is contrary to His purpose, and the believer is expected to clean it up (Ph.3:13-15, esp. 15). The believer's "perfect holiness" (2 Cor.7:1) is "now being made perfect" (Gal.3:3). As a member of the church, the believer is experiencing "the perfecting of the saints" (Eph.4:12; Col.4:12; Heb.13:21; Jas.1:4; 1 Jn.4:17-18).

> **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph.4:11-12).**

3. Redemptive or resurrected perfection. The believer's purpose and aim is to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead...[to be] perfect" (Ph.3:11-12).

> **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Ph.3:10-12).**

The Lord's point is this: the mature believer will do good and show kindness to all men, both good and bad men. He is *mature* in heart when he shows love to his enemies as well as to his friends. God Himself is the believer's example in this (see notes—Jn.13:33-35; 21:15-17).

Thought 1. God is love, perfect love (1 Jn.4:8, 16). He loves all; therefore, He wants a world of love from creatures who will freely choose to love. He challenges everyone to be like Himself: to love all, even his enemies.

Thought 2. Think about the challenge! The true Christian...
...has his enemies, yet he is to love them.
...has his cursers, yet he is to bless them.
...has his haters, yet he is to do good to them.
...has his spiters, yet he is to pray for them.
...has his persecutors, yet he is to pray for them.

If a person will work to mature in this challenge, he will be marching ever forward to be like his "Father who is in heaven" (cp. Ph.3:12-16).

Thought 3. No man will ever gain perfection, particularly in the area of human relationships. Just consider how short each person comes in relating to spouse, children, friends, fellow workers, and enemies. Yet he is to "follow after...forget the past...reach forth...press." He is to walk as he has learned to walk—more and more like Christ (Ph.3:12-16; 1 Pt.1:14-16).

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt.5:48).

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Cor.13:11).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13).

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:28).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim.3:16-17).

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God" (Heb.6:1).

"[God] make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever" (Heb.13:21).

"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas.1:4).

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pt.5:10).

	CHAPTER 6		
	K. The Right Motive for Giving,[psi] **6:1-4**		
1 Alms—doing good & giving a. Warning: Do not seek recognition b. The reason: God will not reward	Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.	3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.	hypocrites c. Reward: Recognition by men only **3 The right motive** a. Giving unconsciously b. Giving quietly—privately—secretly **4 The reasons** a. Father sees in secret b. Father rewards openly
2 The wrong motive a. Giving for recognition b. Characteristic of	2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the		

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

K. The Right Motive for Giving, 6:1-4

(6:1-4) **Introduction—Motive**: what a man does matters greatly to God. God expects men to be kind and to do good in the world: to help others both through personal involvement and through giving generously and sacrificially.

But there is something else that God expects, something of critical importance: God expects a man to have *the right motive*. Just why a man does good and shows kindness matters greatly to God. It matters so much that a person's eternal fate is determined by his motive. Because of this, Christ warns us about right and wrong motives.

1. Alms—doing good and giving (v.1).
2. The wrong motive (v.2).
3. The right motive (v.3-4).
4. The reason (v.4).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:1-18) **Christian, Duty**: Christ discussed the three great duties of religion to a Jew—the giving of alms (Mt.6:1-4), prayer (Mt.6:5-15), and fasting (Mt.6:16-18). His concern was threefold.

1. That men give, pray, and fast.
2. That men do these works with the *right motive* and *guard against hypocrisy* when doing them.
3. That men receive their *reward* from God the Father.

1 (6:1) **Alms—Service—Giving**: there is the giving of alms—doing good and giving to others. The word "alms" means righteous acts; giving in order to meet the needs of the poor. To the Jew, giving alms and righteousness meant the same thing. Giving alms was the greatest thing a Jew could do; it was the first act of religion. It was considered to be the very embodiment of righteousness, so much so that the two words began to be used synonymously. Giving alms merited and assured one of righteousness and salvation. (See note 5—Mt.5:6.) Christ warned there is great danger in giving and doing alms. Take heed and guard yourself. Do not give for recognition, or you will lose your reward.

Thought 1. There are two important lessons in this verse.

1) Man must guard and be alert to the deception of giving and doing good before men. A person's heart can be deceived. The sin creeps up on man; it is insidious and subtle. It will keep a person from receiving anything from God.
2) A person must give alms and do good. It is a duty of the Christian. In this passage alone Christ says four times, "Do alms."

2 (6:2) **Motive**: there is the wrong motive for doing good. Christ takes for granted that the believer gives and does good. What Christ strikes at is the motive of the human heart for giving and doing good.

1. Giving for recognition is the wrong motive for giving. Recognition is said to be sought by blowing one's own horn in two places: (1) in the synagogue before religious people, and (2) in the streets before the public.

Thought 1. There are several wrong motives for giving and doing good.

1) A person may give for recognition and prestige: to be praised by men during life and to be remembered by men in death. A person may desire the applause of men: their thanks and appreciation, honor and praise, esteem and glory.
2) A person may give for self-applause, self-satisfaction, and self-admiration: to feel comfortable with what he has done and to see himself at his very best. He may wish to boost his ego and to glory in himself.
3) A person may give out of obligation: to fulfill his sense of duty.
4) A person may give to secure the recognition of God: to feel that God is pleased and favors him because he has done good.

Thought 2. It is not always wrong to give alms when men see us. This cannot always be helped. It is wrong to give alms *so that* men may see us.

Thought 3. The point is not that a person should hold back from doing good, but he should guard against how he gives and does good.

> **"But all their works they do for to be seen of men" (Mt.23:5).**
>
> **"Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts" (Lk.20:46).**

2. Giving for recognition is characteristic of hypocrites. Giving out of the wrong motive is hypocritical. The word "hypocrite" (hupokrites) means an actor who puts on a show, who plays a part on stage; a mask, a fake picture; appearing to be something one is not.

a. It is "sounding a trumpet" *before oneself* (v.2): blowing one's own horn for self praise.
b. It is "sounding a trumpet" *in the synagogue*: blowing one's own horn in the church and before the religious; it is seeking the praise of the religious (v.2).
c. It is "sounding a trumpet" *in the streets*: blowing one's own horn before the public, seeking the praise of the public (v.2).

> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"He that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction" (Pr.17:19).**
>
> **"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory" (Pr.25:27).**
>
> **"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord" (Obad.4).**

3. Giving for recognition is rewarded on this earth only. A person receives the recognition of men only. There are two rewards for a wrong motive: the recognition of men and temporary self-satisfaction. Note the words, "they have their reward." This is an accounting statement: it means just what it says—payment has been made in full. One has received his payment and reward; he has received all he will ever receive. There is to be no reward—no reward whatsoever—from God (see note—Mt.6:4).

Thought 1. The person who gives out of a wrong motive fails at several points.

1) He fails to give "of himself." He gives money and he gives things, but calculates exactly what he can give in order to meet the need; but he never becomes personally involved. He never gives of himself.
2) He seldom puts the need or the needy person first. Satisfying his own motive and having his own need met is put first.
3) He is always hurt, disappointed, unhappy, and sometimes even angry if his giving is not recognized and praised.
4) He is never permanently satisfied with what has been done. Why? Because Christ and the genuine giving of himself is the only permanent satisfaction for the human heart.
5) He has accepted the recognition that lasts only briefly. The prestige and honor, thanks and praise of men are only temporary.
   a) The man who gives in this life soon fades in the memory of men. His giving fades into the background. Men move on to other things.
   b) Once gone, the man who gave in this life knows nothing of the thoughts and words spoken in his behalf. He stands only before God, accountable to Him alone.

Thought 2. Three things can be said about the person who chooses man's reward over God's reward: (1) he has chosen the poorest reward; (2) he has cheated himself; and (3) he can expect no more. What a terrible fate! To have no more reward than what this world offers. Imagine! No hope and no expectation of a better future—nothing beyond this world.

> **"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**
>
> **"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).**
>
> **"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Is.5:14).**
>
> **"As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos.4:7).**

3 (6:3-4) **Motive**: What is the right motive for doing good and for giving? "Let not thy left hand know what thy right doeth." What a descriptive way to say it!

1. Give unconsciously. Pay no attention to what you are giving and doing. Do it out of an inner compulsion to give and help, out of intense love, out of genuine concern. Keep your mind on the need, not on what you are doing and the benefits you may receive. Do not harbor such self-centered thoughts. Just love and care and be concerned as you give and do good.
2. Give secretly, quietly, privately. Do not let others know what you are giving and doing. Keep it quiet—say nothing. Keep a low profile; stay out of the center ring of applause; avoid recognition if possible. Fleeing recognition is critical. The other members of a person's body—his hand, that is, his family—must not even know.

What is so desperately needed is a realistic view of the world. The world is a place of pain and suffering and sin and death—a world that needs to be saved and brought somehow to a state of incorruption. When a person faces the real truth of the world, he forgets himself and sets out to meet the needs of the world through the power of Christ. There is just no time for becoming entangled in the affairs of this world and seeking the applause of men. There is only time to minister. Taking time to applaud one another means there is another need that is going to be unmet.

There is only one right motive for giving and doing alms: to help those in need.

⇒ A person knows and lives with an awareness of the misery, misfortune, and desperate plight of the world.
⇒ A person loves and cares so much that he *wishes* to help those who need help.
⇒ A person literally *throws himself* into meeting the needs of the world and helping all he can.

Thought 1. There are three forceful lessons in this point.

1) A person is to be immersed in God and in the needs of the world. There is no time for centering attention upon himself if he wishes his life to be focused on God and to be spent saving his world.
2) There is only one way the needs of the world will be met: we must all get out into the world where the needs are. There is no time for the right hand to be explaining and receiving applause from the left hand.
3) The servant of God is to be obsessed with his call and ministry to the world. He does not become entangled with the affairs of this world and the applause of men (2 Tim.2:4). He quietly and diligently goes about pouring himself into helping others.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Lk.18:22).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that ye may live with thee" (Lev.25:35).

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother" (Dt.15:7).

"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee" (Dt.16:17).

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Pr.31:20).

4 (6:4) **Alms—Giving**: there are two reasons for doing good quietly and secretly.

1. God sees in secret. God sees secret giving and secret alms or deeds. Nothing passes His attention. He knows the motive and the acts of every man, every single motive and every single act.

"I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jer.23:24).

"The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nah.1:7).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor.8:3).

Thought 1. Note the words "Thy Father." If God is truly a person's Father, then the person must give and do good just as his Father dictates. *Anything less is disobedience and displeasing.*

2. God rewards openly. Note the words, "[God] Himself shall reward thee openly."
   a. It is God Himself who shall reward a person.
   b. It is to be an open reward—a reward seen by all. A person is to have a personal moment before God when he shall receive his reward. This is the picture painted by Christ (see note 2 Cor.5:10; cp. Mt.10:32; 1 Cor.4:5; Heb.11:6).

Thought 1. The faithful person will be rewarded as a son, not as a servant. *His Father*, not *his Master*, will reward him.

> **"For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (1 Cor.9:17).**
>
> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**
>
> **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).**
>
> **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing [demonstrated by serving Christ]" (2 Tim.4:7-8).**
>
> **"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 Jn.8).**
>
> **"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev.22:12).**
>
> **"The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether....Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Ps.19:9, 11).**
>
> **"So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Ps.58:11).**
>
> **"Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Is.40:10).**
>
> **"Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Is.62:11).**
>
> **"I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).**
>
> **"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jer.23:24).**

	L. The Right Motive for Prayer[DSI,2,3] (Part I), 6:5-6
1 The wrong motive: Praying to be seen by men a. Place: In public 1) Only in the synagogue 2) Only in the streets b. Reason: For recognition c. Reward: Man's esteem	5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
2 The right motive: Praying to be heard by God a. Place: In one's own closet or private place b. Reason: God is in one's secret or private place[DS4] c. Reward: Will receive open blessings	6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

L. The Right Motive for Prayer (Part I), 6:5-6

(6:5-6) **Introduction—Prayer—Motive**: this passage is speaking to *those who pray*—people who take prayer seriously. Prayer is one of the greatest acts of the Christian believer. Talking to God, whether by thought or tongue, is the way a believer fellowships with God; and the one thing God desires is fellowship with man (Is.43:10). Thus, it is essential that we pray and pray often, sharing all day long.

However, that we *do* pray is not the concern of Christ in this point. His concern is *how* we pray. It is possible to pray amiss, with the wrong motive and in the wrong way. It is possible to pray and never be heard by God. It is possible to pray and to be speaking only to ourselves, to have our prayer go no higher than our own ears. Therefore, Christ sets out to teach us the right and wrong motives for praying.

1. The wrong motive: praying to be seen by men (v.5).
2. The right motive: praying to be heard by God (v.6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:5-8) **Prayer**: there are dangers surrounding prayer, some negative factors that must be guarded against.

1. Prayer can become hypocritical (v.5). A person can pray for the wrong reasons, with the wrong motives.
2. Prayer can become habit-forming (v.5). Prayer is a wonderful experience, very rewarding emotionally and mentally and in having our needs met as God answers our prayer. We can begin to *love praying* and still be praying amiss.
3. Prayer can become connected with certain places (v.5). A believer has places that mean much to him in his prayer life, but he must guard against limiting God's presence only to those places, even if it is the church.
4. Prayer can become empty repetition (v.7). A person can take any phrase or form of prayer and make it a meaningful experience, or make it a formal and meaningless occasion. (Note how often the Lord's Prayer is repeated by rote memory with the mind focused elsewhere.)
5. Prayer can become too long (v.7). A believer can begin to feel he is heard because of "much speaking" (cp. Eccl.5:1-2).
6. Prayer can become self-glorifying (v.8). A person can begin to feel he must inform and convince God of his *great* need. When the answer comes (out of the mercy of God, despite praying amiss), the believer begins to *glory in his spirituality*—that he has what it takes to get things from God.
7. Prayer can become self-deceptive (v.7-8). A person can begin to think he is heard (1) because of "much speaking" and (2) because he convinces God of his need.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:5-6) **Prayer**: note several things.

1. Christ says "When thou prayest." He is referring to personal prayer (cp. v.6).
2. Christ assumes that the believer does pray, and the idea conveyed is that the believer prays often.
3. Christ says there is a right way and a wrong way to pray. "When thou prayest, thou shalt not...." vs. "But thou, when thou prayest...."
4. Christ says that some "love to pray," and they are the very ones who commit this fault. They pray amiss, with the wrong motive.
5. Christ pictures two men praying. One man prays to men (v.5); the other man prays to the Father (v.6). The first man is a hypocrite; the second man is a true son of the Father.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(6:5-6) **Prayer**: believers are expected to pray. Prayer is God's appointed medium through which He acts for man. *Sharing and talking* together is the way all persons communicate, fellowship, and commune together. This is true both with men and God. Prayer requires our presence, sharing, and talking; and God wants to fellowship and commune with us. Few persons heed this fact; few persons take prayer seriously. Therefore, if we want the blessings of God upon our lives and ministries—if we want the work of God going forth in power and bearing fruit—we must pray and we must intercede in prayer.

"Pray to thy Father" (Mt.6:6; cp. Mt.6:7).

"After this manner pray ye" (Mt.6:9).

"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest" (Mt.9:38; Lk.10:2).

"Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Mt.26:41; Mk.13:33; 14:38; Lk. 21:36; 22:40, 46).

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Pray without ceasing" (I Th.5:17).

"I will that men pray everywhere" (I Tim.2:8).

1 (6:5) **Prayer—Motive**: the wrong motive for prayer is praying to be seen by men. Two preliminary things need to be looked at before discussing this point.

1. Praying—even loving to pray—is not a sign that a person really knows God.
2. The fact that a person really knows God means that he does pray. No matter what a man may think in his mind, if he really knows God and really believes in God, he talks to God. There is nothing that could keep him from praying. He knows God personally—knows Him as his Father who loves and cares for him ever so deeply. Therefore, just as any child who truly loves his father, the believer talks, converses, and shares with his Father.

This says something to the person who prays primarily in public and prays little, if any, in private. He must search the genuineness of his heart and profession.

Christ says that a man who prays to be seen by men *loves to pray, but he is a hypocrite*.

1. The places where he *loves* to pray are *out in public*, in the synagogue (church), and in the streets (restaurants and other public places).

Thought 1. Note five lessons.

1) Some love to pray publicly. They love representing the group and vocalizing their praise and needs to God. Some have become very charismatic and fluent at public prayer, yet they lack that essential love for private praying. Christ says, "hypocrite" (v.5).
2) Some pray only in public. They pray before their family (at meals and family prayers, usually with children); in church (when called upon); and in public (when eating in restaurants). They seldom, if ever, pray in private. How destitute is the prayer life of so many!
3) Prayer is to be offered to God both in church and in public. But public prayer is to be public, not private. Too often a person has his *personal devotions* when called upon to pray publicly. He has neglected his *private prayers* and his inner need has not been met. Thus when he begins to pray publicly, he slips into praying his own *private prayer* instead of representing the group.
4) Some hypocrites pray, and they pray much. There are some *religious people* who pray little, if any. These can learn from the hypocrites.
5) Note the posture of this hypocrite. He stood praying. This is an acceptable posture for prayer (Mk.11:25); but the picture is that of pride, arrogance, and self-confidence. Kneeling is a picture of humility, reverence, and dependence upon God (Lk.22:41; Eph.3:14).

"Be of the same mind one toward another, Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith" (Hab.2:4).

2. The man who prays only in public prays for only one reason: not because he loves to pray but because he loves recognition.

Thought 1. Note two lessons.

1) The sin is not failing to pray. The sin is praying *only* in church and in public. A person who prays publicly but seldom prays privately fools himself. Christ says real prayer (prayer to the Father) matters nothing to that person. He prays only for recognition—to be heard by men.

2) Praying publicly should be done. There is a great danger, however, in public prayer: having one's pride stroked. It is so easy to be praying publicly and have self-centered thoughts run across one's mind....
   - that one is really praying a good prayer. Such prayer is nothing but waxing eloquent with words.
   - that one's prayer will surely be admired
   - that one's prayer is really demonstrating a close walk with God (a deep spirituality)

> **"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Mt.15:7-8).**
>
> **"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).**
>
> **"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" (Pr.11:2).**
>
> **"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).**
>
> **"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).**

3. The man who prays only in public receives his reward: public recognition. Three things need to be clearly seen about this man.
   a. He will experience good feelings and satisfying thoughts about his spiritual state and religious piety. He will possess a good self-image and some confidence in his standing with God. The esteem and praise of men and feeling good about what he has done gives him a good self image. *But* in this case it is a false self-image.
   b. He has cheated himself, really missed out on the most intimate presence and greatest future in the universe. He has lost his soul. He shall never hear, "Well done thou good and faithful servant" (Mt.25:21).
   c. He gets just what he deserves: public recognition. If he places so little value upon sharing with God Himself, he deserves no more than what man can give him—human recognition.

Thought 1. Man's esteem fails at several points.
1) Man's esteem is temporary. Everything passes—ever so quickly. Man soon forgets and moves on to other things.
2) Man's esteem becomes commonplace. Even the greatest skills that elicit praise become routine and commonplace to man when performed day by day. Soon man no longer acknowledges his uniqueness. Such abilities are merely expected and accepted; he no longer elicits praise and recognition.
3) Man's esteem is powerless. It cannot answer prayer; it can only recognize man's ability to put words together and to see man's expression, fervency, and emotion. Its power is limited to the things of this world, and that power is even limited and short lived. Man's esteem can do absolutely nothing about the spiritual needs of his heart.
4) Man's esteem is not to be the judge of his life—God is. No man is any greater than any other man; men are mere men. All men have the same need: to turn to God in prayer, praying for His acceptance and recognition. Therefore, the esteem of man *by men* is meaningless in light of judgment and eternity.

> **"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**
>
> **"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).**
>
> **"As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos.4:7).**

2 (6:6) **Prayer—Motive**: the right motive for prayer is praying to be heard by God. Three preliminary things need to be looked at in this point.

1. The willingness to take time to pray: "When thou prayest." There has to be the will to pray. The believer must take time to get alone to pray. Too few ever take time to pray, and even fewer spend more than a few minutes in prayer. Too many stay all wrapped up in the world and its day-to-day affairs, some of which are necessary, but how much more necessary is prayer!
2. A closet is a necessity. The believer must have a private place deliberately chosen for prayer.
3. A personal relationship with God: a *Father-son* relationship is absolutely essential. God is our *Father*; He is available as fathers are available to their children. We are to go to Him in prayer, sharing and communing with Him. We are to allow Him to shower us with His care and protection, meeting our every need (Ps.91:1).

Note: Christ says that a man who is genuine prays to be heard by God and not by men.

1. The place he chooses for prayer is in his private closet. Christ says: "Get alone"; "Enter your closet...shut your door." Be unobserved, undisturbed, and unheard. (Cp. 2 Ki.4:33; Is.26:20.)
   a. *Get alone*: unobserved—out of everyone's sight.
   b. *Get alone*: undisturbed—avoid interruptions and disturbances.
   c. *Get alone*: unheard—concentrate and meditate to allow God the freedom to work in your heart as He wishes.

"On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour" (Acts 10:9).

"And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing" (Acts 10:30).

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Mt.6:6).

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).

"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land" (Mk.6:46-47).

"And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (Lk.6:12).

"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed. Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk.22:41-42).

2. The reason the believer prays in his private closet is because God is in secret (see note—Mt.6:4). Note two significant facts.

a. God "is in secret"; therefore, a person can meet God only in *secret*. Even in the midst of a worshipping crowd, a person must concentrate and focus his attention upon God who is unseen. There must be a secret heart-to-heart meeting and communion if a person wishes to pray and truly share with God.

b. God "is in secret"; therefore, He is not interested in show, but in substance. Show is before men. Substance is found in the secret, quiet, meditative place. Remember: everything that exists began with an idea, and the development of the idea came from *private and quiet thought and meditation*, not out in the public before people—at least not often. The same is true of spiritual matters. Spiritual show takes place before people, but spiritual substances or qualities that really matter take place in secret. When the believer pours out his heart, he receives his greatest encouragement and strength in the secret place of the Most High, not in the public places of mere man.

Thought 1. Many pray on the run; few pray in secret. Why do so few have a quiet time, a daily worship and devotional time? Why do so few keep their daily appointment with God? This is one of the most difficult things in the world to understand in light of who God is and in light of man's desperate plight and need. No man would ever fail to keep his appointment with the state leader of his nation.

1) Many say they do not have the time, so they do not take the time. But in all honesty, it takes only a little effort to get up a while earlier in the morning—if they are really all that pressed for time. All they need to do is to rearrange their schedule to allow for a quiet time just as they arrange for any other important meeting. However, few do this; therefore, they are without excuse. Many believers are faithful in meeting God daily. It is just a matter of discipline and priority.
2) Most have the time; they just do not take the time. They neglect getting alone with God consistently.
3) Many have not been taught the importance and benefit of a quiet time with God every day. This is a justified accusation against Christian parents, preachers, and teachers. So few have practiced and stressed what they have always heard about the importance of prayer. The silence of believers and their failure to reach the world in sound doctrine is unbelievable, especially after two thousand years.
4) Some have not yet learned to discipline themselves and to be consistent in their spiritual lives. There is no better area to learn discipline and consistency than in a daily quiet time. A person should just begin and do it. When a day is missed, a person should flee discouragement, "forgetting those things which are behind" and reach forth to a new day and begin again. Eventually, consistency and discipline will be learned, and the person's soul will be fed with the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8, 20; cp. Ph.3:13).

3. The reward of the genuine prayer warrior is open blessings. The praying believer will be rewarded in two very special ways.

a. The strength and presence of God will be upon his life (Ezra 8:22; 1 Pt.5:6). God's presence is unmistakable. There is a difference between a person who walks in God's presence and a person who walks only in this world (Mt.6:25-34, esp.33).

God rewards the praying believer with His presence and blessings. The believer's needs, material and spiritual, are met day by day.

b. The believer's prayers will also be answered (Mt.21:22; Jn.16:24; 1 Jn.5:14-15). The answers to prayer are clearly seen by a thinking and honest observer. God has promised to answer the true prayer of a genuine believer. God takes care of the genuine believer with a very special care. Sometimes the answer is seen...

- in a renewed strength.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

- in a provision of some necessity.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

- in a conquest of some great temptation or trial.

> **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**

- in a peace that passes all human understanding.

> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).**

- in a soundness of mind that is incomprehensible.

> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).**

Thought 1. The praying believer, the believer who becomes a true intercessor, will be rewarded openly on that special day of redemption.

1) God "wonders that there [is] no man, and...no intercessor" (Is.59:16).
2) Christ, the Great Intercessor, "ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).
3) The interceding believer shall stand openly in a very special relationship with Jesus, the Great Intercessor Himself, before God the Father.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk.11:9).**
>
> **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).**
>
> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(6:6) **Prayer**: "Your Father is in secret...." *Secret* means three things.

1. Concentration: meditation, contemplation, thinking deeply upon God and sharing accordingly.
2. Apart from all: secluded, alone, private, out of view from all.
3. Unseen: invisible, yet there; believing and having faith that God is there; spiritual, but still hearing and responding. Every believer should have a secret, quiet place that is dear to his heart, dear because it is the place where he draws near to God and God draws near to him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:48.)

	M. The Three Great Rules for Prayer, (Part II) 6:7-8
1 **Rule 1: Do not use empty repetition**[DSI]	7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
2 **Rule 2: Do not speak much**	
3 **Rule 3: Trust God**	8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
a. He knows your needs	
b. He desires to hear your prayer	

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

M. The Three Great Rules for Prayer (Part II), 6:7-8

(6:7-8) **Introduction**: among the religious there is often a tendency toward long prayers, particularly in public. Too often people measure prayer by its fluency and length, thinking that length means devotion. "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few" (Eccl.5:2). Christ puts the matter very simply, yet strongly: "When ye pray," follow three great rules.

1. Rule 1: do not use empty repetition (v.7).
2. Rule 2: do not speak much (v.7).
3. Rule 3: trust God (v.8).

1 (6:7) **Prayer—Repetition**: the first great rule of prayer is striking—do not use empty repetition (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.6:7). There are several things that lend themselves to empty repetition.

1. Memorized prayer: just saying the words of a form prayer, for example, the Lord's prayer. There is nothing wrong with praying a memorized prayer, but it should be prayed through and not just repeated with no thought behind the words.
2. Written, well-worded prayers: thinking that what we say is so expressive and so well worded that it is bound to carry weight with God. The words may be descriptive and beautifully arranged, but the heart must be offering the prayer, not the mind and ego. Such prayer is empty repetition.
3. Ritual prayer: saying the same prayer at the same time on the same occasion—over and over again. This can soon become empty repetition.
4. Formal worship: praying in the same way on a rigid schedule can lead to praying by habit (repeated practice) with little or no meaning to it.
5. Thoughtless prayer: speaking words while our minds are wandering. Being tired is no excuse. It is better not to pray than to pray insincerely.
6. Religious words and phrases: using certain words or phrases over and over in prayer (just because they are religious sounding). (Compare using such words over and over as *mercy*, *grace*, *I thank thee O God*, *in Jesus' name*.)
7. Habitual references to God: using such empty repetition as "Lord this," and "Lord that," and "Lord here," and "Lord there," and "Lord...," "Lord...," "Lord...." How little thought is really given to approaching Him whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Is.9:6).

There are several things that will keep us from using empty repetition in prayer.

1. A genuine heart: really knowing God personally and having a moment-by-moment fellowship with Him all day long.
2. Thought and concentration: really focusing upon what we are saying.
3. Desire for fellowship with God: praying sincerely, really meaning it.
4. Preparation: preparing ourselves for prayer by first meditating in God's Word.

Note something of extreme importance in discussing "vain repetition." Christ does not say repetition in prayer is wrong. It is not wrong. What is wrong is vain, empty, meaningless, foolish repetition. Christ Himself used repetition in prayer (Mt.26:44), so did Daniel (Dan.9:18-19), and so did the Psalmist (Ps.136:1f).

Thought 1. Note six lessons.

1) There is one major problem with the praying of believers: they do not pray enough. They do not take enough time to pray and to pray in earnest.

There is one major problem *when believers do pray*: prayer is often vain, empty, thoughtless, meaningless, and repetitive. Too often a believer prays and does not concentrate. His mind wanders off somewhere else; he only mouths the words. Such thoughtless and meaningless prayer is clearly seen in public prayer and in the powerlessness of believers today.

2) There is one sure way to prepare our hearts for prayer: meditating in God's Word.

> **"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**

It is in the Scripture that the believer learns about God, himself, and the world—the nature and truth of all things. It is the Spirit of God who takes the Word of God and moves upon the believer's heart revealing that for which the believer should pray. Therefore, the believer is stirred to pray for whatever the Word of God and the Spirit of God has shown him (Ro.8:26; cp. Jn.14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor.2:12-13).

3) Vain repetition in prayer, whether formal or thoughtless, is *desensitizing*.
   ⇒ It discourages the sincere and the newly converted.
   ⇒ It cools the willing and the gifted.
   ⇒ It stifles the committed and the mature.
   ⇒ It turns away the seeking and the lost.
4) Repetition in prayer *is* dull. Empty repetition affects worship, interest, and attendance at services.
5) Vain repetition is tragic. Prayer should be one of the most meaningful experiences in life. God is certainly willing to meet the believer in a very special way—anytime, anyplace. So many hearts are just...
   - barren
   - dull
   - complacent
   - dry
   - hard
   - lethargic
   - desert-like
   - rusted
   - still

   So much praying is merely going over and over the same things ranging from "bless Mom and Dad" to "give us a good day tomorrow."
6) Empty repetition turns God away and cuts the heart of the committed.

> **"Having a form of godliness [long prayers], but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).**
>
> **"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Mt.15:7-8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:7) **Prayer—Repetition, Vain** (battologesete): to babble much; to use many phrases; to say idle things; to say meaningless things. Vain repetition means at least two things.
1. It means saying the same words over and over again without putting one's heart and thought into what is being said.
2. It means using certain religious words or phrases (sometimes over and over again) and thinking God hears because one is using such religious talk.

2 (6:7) **Prayer, Long**: the second great rule of prayer is an eye-opener—do not speak much. Too many think that length equals devotion; that is, the longer they pray the more God will listen to them (they are showing God their sincerity), and the more spiritual they will become.

God does not hear a person's prayer because it is long, but because his heart is genuinely poured out to God. Length has nothing to do with devotion, but a sincere heart does.

Long prayers are not forbidden. What is forbidden is the idea that long prayers are automatically heard by God. Christ prayed all night (Lk.6:12). The early disciples prayed and fasted, and sought God for ten days and nights waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1f). A believer should sense the needs of the world so much that he is driven to seek God and His intervention for long periods of time, and the seeking should be often (Eph. 6:18).

Why do some pray long prayers?
1. Some feel long prayers convince God. They feel God has to be moved, nudged, and stirred to hear and answer.
2. Some feel they need long prayers to explain the situation. They feel God needs to be informed and made to understand a particular situation and how it has affected them.
3. Some feel long prayers make them more spiritual, more mature, and more devoted.
4. Some feel long prayers are just demanded of believers. It is expected; it is the religious and godly thing to do.
5. Some feel long prayers show God their sincerity. They secure God's approval by long prayers.
6. Some feel long prayers impress people. They show people just how deeply spiritual they really are.

What are ways to prevent the sins that arise from long prayers?

> **"Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few" (Eccl.5:2).**

1. "Be not rash with thy mouth." Control your mouth. Do not let your mouth rattle on and on without thought. It will often rush and hurry with every thought that crosses your mind.
2. Be not "hasty to utter anything before God": sit still, be quiet, without saying a word for awhile. Do not rush forward to speak.
3. Think about who God is. Picture a man: his mouth is quiet; he has been still for some time. He has been preparing, gaining control of his mind and thoughts so he can appear before the Sovereign Majesty of the universe. He focuses his thoughts upon God, the One who is in heaven far above the earth. He meditates upon God's sovereignty and majesty. God is the center of his thoughts (Ps.46:10).

4. "Let thy words be few." Speak—but make your words deliberate—just as deliberate as the words of any interviewer before a sovereign ruler. Request—just as any obedient son would request of a revered father. The person who approaches God like this speaks with respect and thought, with care and love. He speaks few words and straight to the point—all from a prepared heart and mind.

When should the believer spend a long time in prayer? There *are* special times when an extended prayer time is necessary. Some of the times are clearly seen in Scripture.

1. Sometimes a special pull to praise and adore God is felt within. When the believer feels this pull, he should get alone, spending a long time praising and worshipping God (cp. Acts 16:25).
2. Sometimes a special need arises. This may be the believer's own need or a friend's need. He should intercede until God gives the assurance that the need will be met (Eph.6:18; cp. Acts 12:1-5, esp. v.5).
3. Sometimes an unusual experience or event has taken place or is about to take place in the believer's life or ministry. He should get alone and share the event with God. And he should stay before God until the experience has taken place (courage, confidence, power, faith, love). (See Introduction—Mt.4:1-11.)
4. Sometimes a great trial or temptation is faced. A long session of prayer may be needed to gain strength and to keep the believer away from the trial or temptation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.4:1-11.)
5. Sometimes a matter needs to be worked through or a major decision needs to be made. Help and direction should be sought from God. God should be acknowledged in all of the believer's ways. He should remain before God until the answer is given. (Cp. Acts 13:1-3, esp. 2.)

Thought 1. Prayer is a matter of the heart, not a matter of words and length. Praying is sharing; it is sharing with God just like a person shares with any other person. Just as he shares thoughts, feelings, praise, and requests with others, so he shares with God.

Thought 2. Prayer is a personal relationship. Prayer is not speaking into thin air. God may be "in secret" (v.6); He may be invisible, but He is there. He is there more than any other person who may be in our presence. He is the One whom all men are to know and to whom all men are to be vitally related. Too often, the awareness and consciousness of His presence are allowed to fade, and we just go through our long prayer with a wandering mind leaping from thought to thought. Long prayers lend themselves to this danger. How insincere! How irreverent! How often the heart of God must be cut and hurt!

Thought 3. There are prayers of believers and prayers of the heathen. A distinction is made by Christ Himself. He says that both pray.

1) The heathen pray using vain repetition and speaking empty words.
2) The believer is vitally related to God; therefore, he prays to God who is his Father. He prays to God just as a son shares with his revered father.

> **"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Mt.6:7).**
>
> **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation" (Mt.23:14).**
>
> **"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (Eccl.6:7).**

3 (6:8) **Prayer**: the third great rule of prayer is forceful—trust God.

1. God knows the believer's need even before the believer asks. Why then should the believer pray?

Prayer demonstrates our need for God and our dependence upon God. Prayer gives time for concentrated sharing and communion between the believer and God. It is not enough for man to carry a knowledge of God in his mind as he walks through life. Man needs to have times when he is in the presence of God and can concentrate his thoughts and fellowship upon God. He needs such time with God just as he needs such time with his family and friends. Man is not meant to live in isolation from people nor from God. He must have times when he is in the presence of both man and God and can concentrate his thoughts and attention upon both.

The believer, therefore, does not pray only to have his needs met but to share and fellowship and to enrich his life with God.

Thought 1. God knows the believer's needs. The believer does not have to worry about God's knowing or meeting his needs. The believer's concern should be living in the presence of God, taking enough time to share and to fellowship with God. The more he shares and fellowships with God, the more he will know God and learn to trust and to depend upon God's care and promises.

Thought 2. God is the believer's Father. The believer is God's son. The believer can, therefore, *rest* in God and His promises. He does not have to strain and pray long in order for his Father to hear him. His Father already knows and cares. He is to get with His Father for long periods of time sharing and fellowshipping, learning and getting to know his Father intimately.

2. God desires to hear. God knows the believer's need even before the believer asks (cp. 2 Chron.16:9; Is.65:24). God desires to hear and answer the believer's prayer, to meet the believer's needs. God desires to work for the believer's deliverance and salvation (see outline and notes—Ro.8:23-27; 8:28-39. This is one of the great passages on assurance and confidence.)

3. God has ordained prayer as the medium through which He blesses and moves among men. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Prayer*—Mt.6:5-6; pt.2—1 Th.5:15-22).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about" (Ps.32:10).

"The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever" (Ps.125:1).

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Pr.3:5-6).

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Pr.29:25).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green" (Jer.17:7-8).

	N. The Model Prayer[DS1] (Part III), 6:9-13 (Lk.11:2-4)	in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts,	b. For God's will[DS6] c. For daily bread[DS7] d. For forgiveness[DS8]
1 There is surrender a. To our Father[DS2] in heaven[DS3] b. To God's holy name[DS4]	9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.	as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us	e. For deliverance[DS9]
2 There is request & plea a. For God's kingdom[DS5]	10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is	from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.	**3 There is praise & commitment[DS10]**

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

N. The Model Prayer (Part III), 6:9-13

(6:9-13) **Introduction—Prayer—Lord's Prayer**: What is the Lord's prayer? Is it a prayer to be recited as it so often is—just by memory, or just as a form prayer?

Note the words "After this manner...pray ye." Note also Luke's account where the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Lk.11:1-2). The prayer was given to show the disciples *how to pray*—how they should go about praying, not the *words* they should pray. The very context of what Christ had just taught shows this clearly (cp. Mt.6:5-8).

The Lord's prayer is a model prayer that is to be *prayed through*. It is "after this manner," *in this way*, *like this*, that a person is to pray. Christ was teaching the disciples how to pray. He was giving words, phrases, thoughts that are to be the points of the believer's prayer. The believer is to develop the points as he prays. An example would be something like this:

⇒ "Our Father...": "Thank you, Father, that you are our Father—that you have adopted us as children of God, sons and daughters of yours. Thank you for the believers of the world who make up the family of God. Thank you for the church, the body of Christ that gives us the family of God. Thank you for loving us that much." And on and on the believer is to pray.

⇒ "...which art in heaven": "Thank you for heaven—that you are in heaven—that you have chosen us to be with you in heaven. Thank you, Father, for the hope and anticipation of heaven." And on and on the believer prays.

Christ taught His disciples to pray "after this manner." When the believer prays through the Lord's prayer, he finds he has covered the scope of what God wants him to pray. How much pain the Lord's heart must bear because of the way man has abused and misused His prayer! How desperately believers need to pray through the Lord's prayer! How desperately the *prophets and teachers* of the world need to pray as Christ taught! How much you and all of us as ministers of God need to preach and teach that the Lord's prayer is to be *prayed through* and not just recited.

1. There is surrender and acknowledgment (v.9).
2. There is request and plea (v.10-13).
3. There is praise and commitment (v.13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:9-13) **Prayer**: What is prayer?

1. Prayer is sharing and fellowshipping with God (Mt.6:9). It is not enough for a person to have a knowledge of God as he walks through life. He needs to have times when he can get alone with God to concentrate his thoughts and attention upon God. He needs such times with God just as he needs such times with his family and friends. Man was not made to live in isolation from people nor from God. He must have times when he is in the presence of both man and God and can concentrate his thoughts and attention upon both (see note—Mt.6:8).
2. Prayer is surrendering to God (Mt.6:9). The believer surrenders himself and his time to God. There is no such thing as prayer without a person and time. A person must submit himself to God before he wills to pray, and even then he must take the time to pray. A person who has surrendered himself to God and is surrendering or taking his time to talk with God is praying (see note 1—Mt.6:9).
3. Prayer is requesting and pleading with God (Mt.6:10). It is demonstrating one's need and dependence upon God. It is pouring out one's heart in need and trusting God to meet one's need.
4. Prayer is acknowledging and praising God (Mt.6:9-10, 13). It is acknowledging God as the Sovereign and Majestic Lord to whom belongs the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever.

1 (6:9) **Prayer—Surrender**: the believer's prayer is to be a surrender.

1. There is the surrender of the believer to God and to God's family.
   a. When a person genuinely says "Father," he is surrendering to God. He is...
      - denying humanism, self-sufficiency, and all other gods.
      - surrendering himself to the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.
      - acknowledging the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ to be his own Father.
   b. When a person prays "*our* Father," a person is surrendering his independency and accepting God's family. He is assuming his responsibility in the family of God.

2. There is the surrender of the believer to *heaven*, the spiritual world or dimension of being. The believer surrenders and sets his mind and heart upon the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. His whole being is surrendered and committed to seeking the things of the spiritual world. (See outline and notes—Eph.1:3.)

3. There is the surrender of the believer to the holy name of God. The believer just bows in total and abject poverty, in nothingness before the holy name of God. He is swallowed up in the knowledge of the "hallowedness," the sovereignty and majesty of God's being. God is all and man is nothing! He is totally dependent upon God.

Note: when a person reaches this point of surrender, then he is ready to present his needs to God. He is ever so conscious that only God can meet his needs.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:9) **God—Father**: God is addressed as "Our Father." Father denotes a family relationship and shows three things.

1. It shows that "God [who is]...in heaven" is the believer's Father. Thus, a relationship with the unseen heavenly world and the seen earthly world is established. God represents the unseen world and the believer represents the seen world. In the believer, a whole new being is created (a new creature) and a whole new world is recognized and established: a world of the spirit and the physical, of the unseen and the seen, of heaven and earth (2 Cor.5:17; Eph.4:23-24; Col.4:10. Especially see notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4—2:14-15; 4:17.)

2. The word "Father" establishes a relationship between a believer and all other believers. All believers belong to the same family; they all have common interests, cares, and responsibilities within the family.

3. The word "Father" pinpoints God as the believer's source. God, as Father, is the Person who loves and provides and cares for the believer's needs, even as an earthly father looks after his child (Mt.6:25-34, esp.33; Lk.11:11-13; Ps.103:13; Mal.3:17; cp. Heb.2:18; 4:15-16).

Thought 1. "Our Father" is the first point to pray. The believer is to pray "after this manner."

⇒ "Father, thank you *for yourself* that you are *our Father*...."

⇒ "Thank you for adopting us as children of God: that you have chosen us...."

⇒ "Thank you for 'the household of faith,' for the 'family of God'...."

Thought 2. The phrase "Our Father" says three things about prayer.

1) The believer is not to pray alone—not always. The word "our" shows this. Christ has just taught that a person should pray alone. He now says there are times when a person should pray with others. God is "our Father."
2) The believer is taught to whom to pray: to God and to Him alone.
3) The believer is taught to address God as "Father." He is taught what his relationship to God is to be, that of a child to a Father.

> **"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Mt.7:11).**
>
> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).**

Thought 3. God is "*our* Father." God has no favorites: "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

1) God is "our Father" by creation; that is, He is the Father of all men everywhere because He is the Creator of all men (Gen.1:1; Mal.2:10; Is.64:8; Acts 27:28).
2) God is "our Father" by re-creation (2 Cor.5:17) and adoption (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.4:5-6; cp. Eph.1:5). He is "our Father" to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and the redemption that is in Him (Eph.2:19).

> **"For ye have not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Ro.8:15).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

Thought 4. There is one time in particular when the believer must approach God as Father: when returning to God and repenting of sin (cp. the prodigal son, Lk.15:18).

Thought 5. "Our Father" settles all the relationships in the world.

1) It settles a person's relationship with himself. Every person fails and comes short, and sometimes he gets down on himself. He feels like a failure—hopeless, helpless, worthless, useless. "Our Father" says that such a person matters; he always matters to God. He can come to the Father and share his concerns.
2) It settles a person's relationship with others (see Thought 3).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(6:9) **Heaven**: the word is plural in the Greek, heavens. The New Testament speaks of at least three heavens:

⇒ the atmosphere surrounding the earth (cp. Mt.6:26, "the birds of the heaven").

⇒ the outer space of heavenly bodies (cp. Mt.24:29; Rev.6:13).

⇒ the place above and beyond the physical dimension of being where God's presence is fully manifested. In modern language "the above and beyond" is another dimension of being entirely; it is *the spiritual world,*

another dimension of being. It is a spiritual world where God's presence is fully manifested and where Christ and His followers live awaiting the glorious day of redemption. That glorious day of redemption is the day when God shall take the imperfect heavens and earth (the physical dimension) and transform them into the new heavens and earth (the spiritual and eternal dimension). (See note—2 Pt.3:8-10, esp. 3:11-14 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. "Our Father...in Heaven" is the second point to be prayed. The believer is to pray "after this manner":

⇒ "Father, thank you for heaven: the hope, the anticipation of heaven...."

⇒ "Thank you that you are in heaven...."

⇒ "Thank you for your promise that we shall be where you are...." (Jn.17:24).

Thought 2. Note several lessons.

1) The believer must direct his prayers to heaven. God's throne is in heaven (Ps.103:19), and it is before the throne of God that Christ is appearing as the Advocate or Mediator for the believer.

> **"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55-56).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).**
>
> **"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb.8:1).**
>
> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).**
>
> **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).**

2) How should we approach God? The words "Our Father...in heaven" tell us.
   a. "Father" says that we can approach Him boldly to "find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:16).
   b. "In heaven" says that we are to approach respectfully, in reverence and fear and awe (Ps.111:9; cp. Eccl.5:2).

3) The heavens reveal the power and glory of God. Space shows His handiwork (Ps.19:1; 150:1). When connected together, the words "Our Father" and the words "in heaven" put two great things together: the love of God and the power of God. God through love has become "our Father," and "God in heaven" has shown His glorious power which is at the disposal of His child. The believer's Father has the power to do anything, even to hang the world in space (Eph.3:20; Ps.121:1-8).

4) The believer's true citizenship is in heaven (Ph.3:20). God is there; the Lord Jesus is also there (Heb.8:1; cp. Ps.103:19). Therefore, the longing of the mature believer's heart is to be in heaven where His Father and His Lord are. He directs his attention, prayers, energy, and life toward heaven.

> **"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Lk.10:20).**
>
> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn.14:2).**
>
> **"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor.5:1).**
>
> **"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Ph.3:20).**
>
> **"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col.1:5).**
>
> **"For he [Abraham] looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb.11:10).**

5) God sees all from heaven (Ps.33:13-19).
   ⇒ He sees all the sons of men.
   ⇒ He looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth.
   ⇒ He considers all their works.

   However, there is one thing in particular that God sees: the person who fears Him and hopes in His mercy. He sees this person in order to deliver his soul from death (Ps.33:18-19). This is one of the prime reasons the believer keeps his eyes upon heaven.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(6:9) **Hallowed be** (hagiastheto): to be counted holy; to be treated holy; to be counted and treated as different. The prayer is for men to count and treat the name of God differently, to set His name apart from all other names (see note—1 Pt.1:15-16).

Thought 1. "Hallowed be thy name" is the third point to be prayed. The believer is to pray "after this manner":
⇒ "Father, hallowed is your name. Your name is holy, set apart, different from all other names.
⇒ There is none but you...you and you alone. You are above, before, over all...."

Thought 2. Note several lessons.

1) God's name is holy, righteous, pure. It is above, before, and over all names. Therefore, the believer's prayer is for God's name to be adored and honored by all men. (See outline and notes—Mt.5:33-37 for a contrast in how some men treat the name of God.)
2) The first thing prayer should do is praise and glorify God. That is the point Christ is making in the words...
   - "Our Father...
   - which art in heaven...
   - hallowed be thy name."

   God has done everything; He has made the world and given life to it. Man owes his very life to God. Therefore, the first thing man should do is praise God.

   "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" (Jas.1:17).

3) The first purpose of man is to glorify God by his life: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pt.1:15-16). Life includes speech; therefore, man should be praising God's holiness by word as well as by life. In fact, since the primary purpose of man is to be holy, then it follows that the first words spoken to God should be praising His holiness. All prayer should be centered around praising God for who He is—in all His holiness and fulness. His name is "hallowed," different, set apart form all other names. And thank God that His name is set apart, for imagine what life would be if His name should be no more than a man's name.

   "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor.15:19).

4) God's glory is the very reason Christ came to earth (Jn.17:1-26, esp. vs.1, 4-6, 22-26). God says He shall be exalted in the earth even among the heathen (Ps.46:10; cp. Ps.2:1-5, esp. vs.4-5). How much man needs to fix his mind upon the holiness and glory of God's name!

   "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

   "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his" (Dan.2:20).

   "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).

5) Men praise and honor each other among themselves. Men glorify men, even make idols of them (see note—Mt.6:2). Some are more loyal to the names of the famous (athletes, stars, politicians) than they are to the name of God. They are more disturbed when the name of their idol is spoken of disrespectfully than they are when the name of God is cursed. How differently Scripture presents God's name: "Hallowed be thy name." God says that the man who curses His name is to be judged severely (Ex.20:7).

2 (6:10-13) **Prayer:** the believer is to request and plea for several things (see DEEPER STUDIES # 5-9—Mt.6:10, 6:11; 6:12; 6:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(6:10) **Kingdom of God**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.

Thought 1. "Thy kingdom come" is the first request to be prayed. The believer is to pray "after this manner":
⇒ "Father, let your kingdom come right here on this earth. Let Christ rule and reign in the hearts and the lives of all. Send Him, His kingdom, His sovereignty right now. God, I pray, even so come Lord Jesus, come...."

Thought 2. The Kingdom of God is to be the focus of the believer's requests, the very first thing for which he asks. There are three reasons for this.

1) It is the very message that Jesus Christ and the early apostles preached and taught and prayed (Mt.3:2; 4:17; 5:3, 10, 19-20).
2) It is the very thing for which God longs. He longs for the day when He will rule and reign in the hearts of all men, perfectly—the day when all men will willingly submit and serve Him—the day when all thoughts, all words, all behavior will be exactly what they should be.
3) It is the very substance of the believer's life, or at least it should be. The believer should be living and loving and having his being for God and God alone. His whole focus and attention, energy and effort should be centered on the rule and reign of God on earth.

"And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.4:17).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:3).

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:10).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

Thought 3. "Thy kingdom come" is future. It is a request for something that is not now existing on earth. It is a request for the rule and reign of God and of His kingdom. The believer is to pray "thy kingdom come."

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt.25:34).

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas.2:5).

"Even so, come Lord Jesus, come" (Rev.22:20).

Thought 4. God's kingdom *is* available. God's kingdom is desperately needed on earth right now. So much just eats and gnaws away at man—so much rebellion, wickedness, evil, enmity, bitterness, hatred, murder, injustice, deprivation, and hunger. God's rule and reign are needed now. The believer needs to see the urgency to pray and to pray consistently "Thy kingdom come," and to live as if God's kingdom had already come.

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(6:10) **God, Will of**: "Thy will be done" says three critical things to God.

1. That we will work to please God in all we do. We will do our part to see that God's will is done on earth.
2. That God can do with us as He pleases. No matter what He chooses for us, we put ourselves at His disposal, for His use—even if it requires the sacrifice of all we are and have.
3. That we will not be displeased with what God does. We may not understand; it may not make sense; there may be question after question; but we know that God's will is best, and He will work all things out for good.

Thought 1. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" is the second request to be prayed. The believer is to pray "after this manner":

⇒ "Father, your will be done: your will and your will alone. There is no will but your will. Let it be done right here on earth...."

Thought 2. There are four wills that struggle for man's obedience.

1) Man's own will (Ro.12:1-2; cp. Ro.7:15f; Gal.5:17).
2) Other men's wills (1 Pt.4:2).
3) Satan's will (Jn.8:44).
4) God's will (Eph.5:15-17, esp. vs.17; Ph.2:13; 1 Jn.2:17).

Thought 3. Note three significant lessons.

1) Many call God King, but they do not honor Him as a King. They do not do His will. Their profession is false, and tragically it creates an image of a false and meaningless King to the world.
2) We *must know God's will* if God's will is to be done. This requires study: "Study to show thyself approved unto God" (2 Tim.2:15). The only way God's will can be done is for us to study His Word and ask for the wisdom and strength to apply it to our lives (2 Tim.3:16).
3) We are to ask for God's will to be done *on earth*. The earth is the place where God's will is so desperately needed. It is the place...
   - where there is so much sin and corruption
   - where there is so much suffering and pain
   - where there is so much struggling and death
   - where the believer faces his trials

"And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her" (Lk.1:38).

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas.4:7).

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps.40:8).
"Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness" (Ps.143:10).

4) "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The believer is praying for *heaven (heaven's rule) to come to earth*. He is making a commitment to make earth more like heaven.
   a. By yielding himself "to God, as those that are alive from the dead...." (Ro.6:13).
   b. By going and teaching "all nations...teaching them all things whatsoever I [Christ] have commanded you" (Mt.28:19-20).

DEEPER STUDY # 7

(6:11) **Bread**: bread is the basic necessity of life, the symbol of all that is necessary for survival and for a full life. There is much meaning in this simple request.

1. "Give *us*...*our* bread." The words *our* and *us* overcome selfishness and show concern for others. Any person who goes to bed hungry should be of concern to the believer.
2. "*This day*." This eliminates worry and anxiety about tomorrow and the distant future. It also teaches and helps us to trust God day by day. "The just shall live by faith...." day by day.
3. "Our *daily* bread." Every believer has a portion of daily bread which is his. He does not ask for someone else's bread but for his own. He seeks and works for his own bread; he does not think of stealing or of eating from another man's table (2 Th.3:10).
4. "Give us...*bread*." We ask for the necessities, not the desserts of this world.
5. "*Give us*...bread." The believer confesses his inadequacy and dependency upon God. He is dependent upon God even for the basics of life.
6. "Give...this day our *daily bread*." This teaches the believer to come to God daily in prayer and trust Him to meet his needs.

Thought 1. "Give us this day our daily bread" is the third request to be prayed. The believer should pray "after this manner":
- ⇒ "Father give us our bread this day, spiritually as well as physically. Feed our souls and our bodies.
- ⇒ Make this a glorious day in You. And, O God, the world is starving for You, and many are starving from hunger...."

Thought 2. God cares for man and his welfare.

1) He cares for man's physical well-being (Mt.6:11; Mt.6:25-34).

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:31-33).

2) He cares for man's mental and emotional well-being.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).
"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).
"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pt.5:10).

3) He cares for man's spiritual well-being.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Cor.3:16-17).
"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

Thought 3. God cares for the human body. Several things show this.

1) He said to ask for the necessities of life, daily (Mt.6:11).
2) He sent His only Son into the world in a human body.
3) He raised up Christ in His body, a resurrected body.
4) He promises to give a new resurrected body to the believer. The believer will dwell in "the resurrected body" forever.

5) He has chosen the believer's body to be "the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

Thought 4. This simple request is a great lesson for both the rich and the poor.

1) The rich man feels self-sufficient, as though what he possesses came from his own hands. Therefore, he thinks, "Who is the Lord?"
2) The poor man has nothing and is often forced to steal. Thus, he raises his fist in anger and curses God for his state of life.

> **"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient [that I need] for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain" (Pr.30:8-9).**

The believer is to trust God for the necessities of life and praise God for what he receives. He has learned, "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Ph.4:11; cp. 4:12-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 8

(6:12) **Forgiveness, Spiritual**: the word "debts" (opheilema) means dues, duties, that which is owed, that which is legally due. In relation to sin, it means a failure to pay one's debts, one's dues; a failure to do one's duty; to keep one's responsibilities.

God has given man certain responsibilities, certain things to do and not to do. Every man has failed at some point to do what he should. Certainly no man would ever claim he has fulfilled his duty perfectly—without any failure, without any shortcoming. Sin is universal. Everyone fails in his duty at some point to some degree. Everyone needs to pray "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

This prayer is asking God to do three things.

1. To forgive *the debt of sin*. One has failed God in his duty; therefore, he needs God to forgive his debt.
2. To forgive *the debt of guilt or punishment*. One who has failed to pay his debts is guilty; therefore, he is to pay the consequences; he is to be punished. This is the reason he must pray "Father, forgive my debts...."
3. To forgive *his debts just as he has forgiven* his debtors. This is asking God to forgive one exactly as he forgives others. If one forgives, God forgives. If one does not forgive, God does not forgive. Therefore, any person who holds anything against another person is not forgiven his sins, no matter what he may think or has been told by another person. (Cp. Mt.6:14-15).

Thought 1. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" is the fourth request to be prayed. The believer should pray "after this manner."

1) "Father, forgive me—have mercy upon me, the sinner, the nothing. O' God, You are all—have mercy...."
2) "Father, forgive others—all others. I hold nothing within. O' God, if there is anything within my heart against anyone, help me to forgive...."

Thought 2. In seeking forgiveness we have a duty both to God and to man.

1) Our duty to God is to ask forgiveness when we fail to do His will.

> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (Jer.33:8).**

2) Our duty to man is to forgive his sins against us.

> **"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mk.11:25).**
>
> **"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk.17:4).**
>
> **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:32).**
>
> **"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:13).**

If we wish to be forgiven ourselves, both duties have to be performed. We must forgive those who sin against us (Mt.6:12), and we must ask forgiveness for our sins (1 Jn.1:9).

Thought 3. There are those who do us much evil. In this world, many say and do all manner of evil against us. Bad news and evil purposes run wild, and it is not always *outside* the church, nor *outside* the family. Sometimes terrible evil is committed by word and act both within the church and within a person's family (Eph.4:30-32; cp.

Mt.10:21; Mk.13:12-13). Christ says we must not react nor be harsh toward those who sin severely against us, but we must forgive. We must forgive if we wish to be forgiven.

⇒ Some smite us (Mt.5:39).
⇒ Some sue us (Mt.5:40).
⇒ Some despitefully use us (Mt.5:44).
⇒ Some curse us (Mt.5:44)
⇒ Some hate us (Mt.5:44).
⇒ Some persecute us (Mt.5:44)
⇒ Some compel us against our will (Mt.5:41).
⇒ Some spread rumors about us (Mt.5:11).

Thought 4. There are four things a believer must do when sinned against.

1) The believer must understand (Pr.11:12; 15:21; 17:27-28; cp. Eph.1:8). There is always a reason why a person sins against a believer. Too often we forget this.
   a. A person may be mistreated by someone who is close to him. He may be withdrawn from, neglected, and ignored. Therefore, he may react against a believer, and the reaction may range from self-pity to bitterness and hostility.
   b. A person may be tired, aggravated, and worried. Therefore, he may become too direct or cutting or harsh toward the believer.
   c. A person may be of a shy nature or sense inferiority; therefore, he may act unfriendly and unconcerned toward the believer.
   d. A person may have rumor and gossip and wild imaginations shared with him, especially by a person who has been hurt; he may be lied to and misinformed. Therefore, he may act suspicious and have nothing to do with the believer.
   e. A person may have a great need for attention and for emotional support. Therefore, the person may imagine, exaggerate, blame, or accuse a believer in order to rally the support of friends and to gain the attention needed.
2) The believer must forbear (Eph.4:2; Col.3:13).
3) The believer must forgive (Eph.4:31-32).
4) The believer must forget, that is, not harbor the wrong done to him (Ph.3:13; cp. 2 Cor.10:5).

Thought 5. Note four additional lessons that need to be noted.

1) An unforgiving spirit causes pain and hurt and tragedy—both to oneself and others. It can ruin lives, especially the lives of those closest and dearest to oneself.
2) We can curse ourselves by praying the Lord's prayer. We are in trouble when praying the Lord's prayer if we are angry and do not forgive those who sin against us: "Father...forgive us...*as we forgive* our debtors." We pronounce the very same judgment upon ourselves that we hold for others.
3) Forgiveness is conditional. The reason is simply explained. We have sinned against God, and others have sinned against us. If we want God to forgive us, we must forgive those who have sinned against us. How can we expect God to forgive us if we do not forgive those who have sinned against us? We can expect no better treatment than we give.
4) Forgiving others is evidence that God has forgiven our sins.

DEEPER STUDY # 9

(6:13) **Temptation—Deliverance**: God does not lead a man to sin; He tempts no man (Jas.1:13). What Christ is saying is two things.

1. Pray—pray that God will keep you from the awful pull of temptation. The believer is to have a sense of his personal weakness against temptation.
2. Pray—pray that God will deliver you from evil. The Greek says "from the evil one," that is, Satan. The request is for God to rescue, preserve, and guard us. He, the evil one, is so deceptive and powerful; he is as powerful as a roaring lion (1 Pt.5:8).

The plea and the cry is for God to deliver us from (1) temptation and (2) from the evil one. (Cp. Ro.8:31; 1 Jn.4:4; cp. 1 Cor.10:13. Also see outlines—Jas.4:7-10; see note 1 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.4:1-2.)

Thought 1. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" is the fifth request to be prayed. The believer should pray "after this manner":

⇒ "Father, lead us not into temptation. Temptation comes so often; its pull is so strong. We get in the way so much. We seek our own way and react at every turn. O' God do not leave us to ourselves....
⇒ "And, dear Father, deliver us from the evil one. He is the master of deceit and paints such a beautiful picture. If you leave us to ourselves, we will fall. And, O' God, he is capable of being 'a roaring lion' seeking to devour us. Deliver us—rescue us—preserve us—guard us...."

Thought 2. Once we have been forgiven our sins (v.12), we must ask God to keep us from sinning again. Two things are essential to keep us from sin: (1) deliverance from temptation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.4:1-2) and (2) deliverance from "the evil one" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9).

Thought 3. This request is a necessity for every believer. Why? There are two reasons.

1) All believers are tempted and tempted often, not by strange things, but by things that are common to all. Temptations do come and will come to all—the same temptations (1 Cor.10:13.)
2) No believer stands above falling:

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor.10:12).

Thought 4. Temptation is to be prayed against for two reasons.
1) Because sin causes God great hurt and pain (Ps.15:4).
2) Because sin causes great trouble, guilt, and grief for both oneself and others (Lk.19:41-44; cp. Mt.23:37; Lk.13:34).

Thought 5. The believer must have help in overcoming "the evil one." The *evil one* attacks (1) by deception (2 Cor.11:3, 14-15; Rev.12:9) and (2) by direct assault, seeking to devour (1 Pt.5:8).

Thought 6. In dealing with "the evil one," the believer needs to remember two things.
1) "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).
2) "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Ro.8:31; cp. Ro.8:31-39).

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (Jas.1:2-3).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24-25).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

3 (6:13) **Doxology—The kingdom and the power and the glory**: there is praise and commitment. These words are not in the best and oldest manuscripts of the Greek. Many scholars believe the doxology was added at a later date to be used in public worship. However, there is a similar doxology by David (1 Chr.29:11). The point of the doxology is to stress that everything belongs to God.
1. He is *the Source* of the kingdom and the power and the glory.
2. He is *the Possessor* of the kingdom and the power and the glory.
3. He is *the Recipient* of the kingdom and the power and the glory.

The believer belongs to the kingdom and the power and the glory of God.
1. The believer belongs to God's kingdom: God has accepted the believer into the Kingdom of God and promises to transport him into the kingdom and its glory either at death or at the Lord's return.
2. The believer belongs to God's power: God has delivered him from sin and death and continues to deliver him daily.
3. The believer belongs to God's glory: God has done all for the believer that "in the ages to come He [God] might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7).

Thought 1. "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen" is the third major point to pray.
1) "Father, yours is the kingdom, the right to rule and reign...."
2) "Yours is the power, the only power that can really rule and govern...."
3) "Yours is the glory. O' God, all glory belongs to you...."

Thought 2. Note three significant points.
1) "Thine is the kingdom" says two things.
   a. The right to rule and reign throughout the universe is God's. The only perfect and eternal government is God's. The only government that possesses utopia, the very best of all, and that lasts forever is God's.
   b. The right to rule and reign belongs to no one else but God. Only God's government can bring utopia: love, joy, peace, and the very best of life.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:24-25).

"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else" (Dt.4:39).

"Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" (1 Chron.29:12).

"That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth" (Ps.83:18).

"The LORD reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved" (Ps.93:1).

"Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding" (Dan.2:20-21).

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan.4:35).

2) "Thine is the power" says two things.
   a. God alone has the power to create and sustain perfect government. He alone has the power to support and bring perfect government to man and his earth.
   b. God alone has the power to change men so that they can escape death and live forever within a perfect government. He alone has the power to stir men to live in love, joy, and peace and to serve completely and unselfishly so that all may have the very best.
3) "Thine is the glory" says that God alone deserves all the honor and praise and glory. For what? For all. He is all in all.

Thought 3. The one subject that is to dominate prayer is "praising God." The fact that the Lord's prayer begins with praise (surrender, v.9) and ends with praise (v.13b) shows this.

⇒ God *does not need* praise. He has the praise of multitudes of angels, but He *deserves* our praise.
⇒ God created us with the ability to praise Him. He must *want* our praise.
⇒ A genuine believer is always praising God's name before all.

DEEPER STUDY # 10

(6:13) **Amen**: so be it; it is and shall be so. When spoken by God, "Amen" means it is and shall be so, unequivocally. When spoken by man it is a petition meaning, "Let it be." Here, in the Lord's Prayer, the word *Amen* is a word of commitment. When a man prays the Lord's prayer and closes by saying "Amen" (let it be), he is committing himself to do his part for the things which have been prayed.

	O. The Basic Principle of Prayer (Part IV): Forgiveness[DSI,2] **6:14-15** (Mk.11:25-26)
1 The promise: Forgive others & be forgiven	14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
2 The warning: Refuse to forgive others & be unforgiven	15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

O. The Basic Principle of Prayer (Part IV): Forgiveness, 6:14-15

(6:14-15) **Introduction—Forgiveness**: note the first word, "for." This connects these verses to the Lord's Prayer. Immediately after closing the Lord's Prayer, Jesus explained why He had said that forgiveness is conditional (Mt.6:12). This was a necessary explanation for two reasons.

1. The very idea that a person must forgive others in order for God to forgive him was totally new. It was a shocking concept, an eye-opener. It had to be explained.
2. The very idea of forgiveness is just what it says: it is forgiving. God knows that He cannot forgive an unforgiving heart. His nature of love and justice will not permit Him to indulge in sin and give license to the passions of a man's unforgiving spirit. He can forgive only where the mercy and tenderness of forgiveness are found. Therefore, Christ had to teach the basic principle of prayer—forgiveness (Mt.18:21-35; Mk.11:25-26; Lk.6:37; 17:3-4; Eph.4:32). (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28.)

1. The promise: forgive others and be forgiven (v.14).
2. The warning: refuse to forgive others and be unforgiven (v.15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:14-15) **Forgiveness**: there are several prerequisites to forgiveness. For a man to be forgiven, he must do several things.

1. He must confess his sins (1 Jn.1:9; cp. 1 Jn.1:8-10).
2. He must have faith in God: a belief that God will actually forgive (Heb.11:6).
3. He must repent (turn away from and forsake his sins) and turn to God in a renewed commitment (see note—Acts 3:19; note 7 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:29-30; note—Lk.17:3-4).
4. He must forgive those who have wronged him (Mt.6:14-15). Hard feelings or anger against a person is sin. It is evidence that a person has not truly turned from his sins and that he is *not really* sincere in seeking forgiveness.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:14-15) **Forgiveness**: there are four different attitudes toward forgiveness.

1. The attitude of the agnostic or doubter. God may be; He may not be. Therefore forgiveness from God is immaterial. It does not matter. All that matters is for men to forgive each other and relate properly. Forgiveness from an invisible, personal God is a far-fetched idea.
2. The attitude of the guilt or conscience-stricken person. This is a person who knows little, if anything, about a personal God, yet he is deeply conscious of guilt and the need for forgiveness. He prays for forgiveness over and over, but he never comes to know forgiveness.
3. The attitude of the social religionist. This is a person who is sometimes mentally aware of the need for forgiveness; therefore, he makes an occasional confession. He feels forgiven, arises and goes about his affairs with no more thought about the matter. The problem with this is that it is a false forgiveness, a mental forgiveness. The person views God as a *patsy - grandfather* who allows a person to live like he wishes as long as he occasionally confesses. He ignores and denies the righteousness and justice of a loving God.
4. The attitude of the mature believer. This is a believer who truly knows his own sinful self and his great need for God's forgiveness. Therefore, he lives in a spirit of confession and repentance, by which he comes to know God's forgiveness and the assurance of it (see note—Ro.8:2-4).

1 (6:14) **Forgiveness of Others**: there is the promise to forgive and thereby to be forgiven. The word "trespass" (paraptoma) means to stumble; to fall; to slip; to blunder; to deviate from righteousness and truth. Note three things.

1. Christ takes for granted that we know that we need forgiveness. This is seen in His words, "your heavenly Father will also *forgive* you." We are sinners; we have transgressed God's law and we need forgiveness. Even the most mature among us fails to keep God's law perfectly. We all stumble, fall, blunder, and slip; and we do it much too often.
   a. We are seldom doing to the fullest degree what we should do. We come short.
   b. We are *always crossing over* from the path we should be following. We deviate over into *the forbidden* area. Thus, we desperately need forgiveness. God promises that He will forgive our trespasses if we will do one simple thing: forgive men their trespasses.

2. The greatest thing in all the world is to be forgiven our sins: to be absolved and released from all guilt and condemnation, to be accepted and restored by God and assured of seeing Christ face to face. Forgiveness of sins means that we are freed: set at liberty in this life to live abundantly, and set at liberty in the next life to live eternally in perfection.

3. The only way we can be forgiven our sins is to forgive others their trespasses. Christ makes the promise: "Forgive men their trespasses [and] your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Forgiving men their trespasses means several very practical things.
   ⇒ We are not judgmental or censorious.
   ⇒ We do not become bitter or hostile.
   ⇒ We do not plan to take revenge.
   ⇒ We do not hold hard feelings against another person.
   ⇒ We do not talk about, gossip, or join in rumor; on the contrary, we correct the rumor.
   ⇒ We do not rejoice in trouble and trials that fall upon another person.
   ⇒ We love and pray for the person.

Thought 1. Note two facts.
1) Bad feelings against another person is sin. It is holding sin within our heart. Forgiving a person who has done us evil is proof that we wish to have a clean heart. We really wish God to forgive us.
2) Forgiving men their trespasses does not refer only to the trespasses against us, but all trespasses.

> **"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt.5:7).**
>
> **"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trepasses" (Mk.11:25).**
>
> **"And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us" (Lk.11:4).**
>
> **"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk.17:4).**
>
> **"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:13).**

2 (6:15) **Forgiveness of Others**: there is the warning—refuse to forgive and be unforgiven. The believer who prays for forgiveness and holds feelings against another person is hypocritical. He is asking God to do something he himself is unwilling to do. He is asking God to forgive his trespasses when he himself is unwilling to forgive the trespasses of others. Bad feelings against a person are clear proof that a person is not right with God.

1. Bad feelings show that a person does not know the true nature of man nor of God. He does not know the true exalted perfection of God nor the real depth of man's sinful nature—how far short he is of perfect righteousness.

2. Bad feelings show that a person walks and lives in self-righteousness (that is, that he thinks that he is acceptable to God by deeds of righteousness). He feels better than others, and judges himself able to talk about and look askance at the sins of others.

3. Bad feelings show that a person has not taken the steps he must take in order to be forgiven his own sins (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, 2—Mt.6:14-15).

4. Bad feelings show that a person is living by the standards of society and not by God's Word. God's Word is clear: "there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ro.3:12; cp. Mt.19:17). Therefore, we are to help and love one another, to care for and restore one another when we stumble, slip, fall, blunder, and deviate.

> **"There is none righteous, no, not one" (Ro.3:10; cp. Ro.3:9-19).**
>
> **"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).**
>
> **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor [yelling, loud talk, loud threats], and evil speaking [talking about, rumor, gossip] be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:31-32).**
>
> **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one anothers's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:1-3).**

Christ is explicitly clear in His warning about forgiving others.

> **"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Lk.6:36-37).**

The warning is severe when the opposite statement is seen: "Judge, and ye shall be judged: condemn, and ye shall be condemned: be unforgiving and ye shall be unforgiven" (cp. Lk.6:36-37).

Thought 1. Note three significant lessons in this point.

1) The man who holds bad feelings against others has not looked at himself and his own sins. He does not know himself, not his real self, not the inner selfishness and motives that plague the depravity of man.
2) Feelings against others cause inward disturbance. They eat away at a person's mind and emotions to varying degrees. Deep feelings against others can cause deep emotional and mental problems as well as serious physical problems.
3) Three things are necessary for God to hear our prayer for forgiveness of sins. (1) Lifting up holy hands, (2) being without wrath, and (3) not doubting.

> **"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim.2:8).**

Thought 2. The answer to peace is Christ Jesus. "He is our peace"—the only possible peace between two persons (see outline and notes—Eph.2:14-18. Review the Scriptures below verse by verse in light of the following facts.)

1) He can make both one (Eph.2:14).
2) He can break down the wall between both (Eph.2:14).
3) He can abolish the enmity—in His own flesh (Eph.2:15).
4) He can make the two into one new man (Eph.2:15).
5) He can reconcile both to God—in one body—by the cross (Eph.2:15).
6) He can give peace to both and bring peace between both (Eph.2:17).
7) He can give both access to God the Father (Eph.2:18).

1 The wrong way to fast a. Fasting as a hypocrite b. Fasting for recognition c. Reward: To receive only human recognition & esteem	**P. The Right Motive for Fasting, 6:16-18** 16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They	have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.	**2 The right way to fast**[DSI,2] a. Fasting as a duty b. Fasting without notice c. Fasting to God alone d. Reward: God shall reward openly

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

P. The Right Motive for Fasting, 6:16-18

(6:16-18) **Introduction—Fasting**: fasting means to abstain from food for some religious or spiritual purpose. A study of the fasting practiced by Jesus and by the great leaders of the Bible reveals what God means by fasting. Very simply, fasting means being so consumed with a matter that it becomes more important than food. Therefore, the believer sets food aside *in order to concentrate on seeking God about the matter*. Biblical fasting means more than just abstaining from food; it means to abstain from food in order to concentrate upon God and His answer to a particular matter. Biblical fasting involves prayer, intense supplication before God. Note the words "when ye fast" (v.16, 17). Jesus assumed believers fasted; He expected them to fast. He fasted and He taught fasting (Mt.4:2), and the early believers fasted (Mt.17:21; Lk.2:37; Acts 10:30; 13:3; 14:23; 1 Cor.7:5; 2 Cor.6:5; 11:27). Yet so few have continued such intense seeking of the Lord: so few fast, truly fast.

The benefits of fasting are enormous, but there are also dangers. We can fast for the wrong reasons. This is the point of the present passage. Christ counsels us on the wrong and the right motives for fasting.

1. The wrong way to fast (v.16).
2. The right way to fast (v.17-18).

1 (6:16) **Fasting**: the wrong way to fast.

1. Fasting as a hypocrite is wrong. Being hypocritical is a real danger when fasting. There are four reasons men fast, and all but one are false and hypocritical.
   a. Men fast to gain a sense of God's approval and of self-approval.
   b. Men fast to fulfill a religious act.
   c. Men fast to gain religious recognition.
   d. Men fast to genuinely meet God for some special purpose.

   Thought 1. Fasting is not condemned by Christ. Fasting for any purpose other than to meet God is condemned: when you fast "appear...unto thy Father" (v.18).

   > **"Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Mt.6:2).**
   >
   > **"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Mt.15:8).**
   >
   > **"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Lk.18:12).**
   >
   > **"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).**
   >
   > **"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Is.29:13).**
   >
   > **"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).**

2. Fasting for recognition is wrong. It poses several serious dangers that must be guarded against with all diligence.
   a. The danger of feeling super-spiritual. Few believers follow a true fast. Therefore when they really fast, they have to guard against a sense of super-spirituality and pride.
   b. The danger of over-confidence. The believer's confidence is to be in God, not in self. After a genuine fast a believer usually feels spiritually confident, ready to go forth. He must go forth depending upon the strength of Christ and not upon his own energy and effort.
   c. The danger of sharing one's fasting experience. The believer has usually learned so much from being in God's presence that he is anxious to share it, especially with those closest to him. The best advice is to hush: share nothing, not even with one's dearest friend.
   d. The danger of changing one's appearance and the way one acts and behaves. Any change whatsoever from one's normal behavior and routine attracts attention and ruins the whole benefit of the fast. As Christ says, "they disfigure their face" (act super-spiritual) (v.16).

"But all their works they do for to be seen of men" (Mt.23:5).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Mt.23:27).

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (Jn.7:24).

"Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?" (2 Cor.10:7).

3. Fasting the wrong way has its reward. A person will receive human recognition and esteem, but the recognition of men is all he will ever receive.

Thought 1. Some gain the control and discipline of their bodies through fasting, but they ruin themselves and their ministry through pride. They lose their reward.

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).

"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Is.5:14).

"As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos.4:7).

2 (6:17-18) **Fasting**: the right way to fast. As stated in the introduction, fasting means being so consumed with a matter that it becomes more important than food. Therefore, the believer sets food aside *in order to concentrate on seeking* God about the matter. Biblical fasting means more than just abstaining from food; it means to abstain from food in order to concentrate upon God and His answer to a particular matter. Biblical fasting involves prayer, intense supplication before God.

1. Fasting is a duty. Every believer is expected to fast. Christ said "When ye fast." He expects us to fast.

⇒ Jesus Himself fasted.

"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred" (Mt.4:2).

⇒ The apostles were to fast.

"Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Mt.17:21; cp. Mt.9:15; Mk.2:20; Lk.5:35).

⇒ Anna fasted.

"And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day" (Lk.2:37).

⇒ Cornelius fasted.

"And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing" (Acts 10:30).

⇒ Church leaders fasted.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

"And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).

⇒ Husbands and wives are expected to fast.

"Defraud ye not [do not deprive] one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to *fasting* and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (1 Cor.7:5).

⇒ Paul fasted often.

"In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned" (2 Cor.6:5).

"In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor.11:27).

2. Fasting is to be done without notice. The believer is to fast before God, not before men. There is to be no change in appearance or behavior to indicate that he is fasting. Think about it. Why should there be? Why should anyone know that a person is seeking God in a very special way? The matter is God's affair, not man's affair. It is between the person and God, not the person and other people.

Thought 1. What is fasting? It is to "appear not unto men...but unto thy Father" (v.18). It is to come into God's presence for a very, very special session of prayer.

3. Fasting is to be to God alone. The believer is to fast to God alone. God is the object of his fast. He needs to meet God in a very, very special way. In meeting God all alone, the believer is demonstrating his dependency upon God and His provision. (See note—Mt.6:16-18.)

Thought 1. A religionist fasts before men. A genuine believer fasts before God.

Thought 2. God does not say when nor how often we should fast, but He does tell us how to fast. We must take every precaution to fast exactly as He says: before God, in secret, without any ostentation or show whatsoever. No one is to see or know.

4. Fasting the right way has its reward: God shall reward us openly. How much greater is His reward than the recognition of men! God's acceptance and eternal reward is enough for genuine believers.

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly" (Mt.6:3-4).

"For we must all [publicly, before all believers] appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 Jn.8).

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev.22:12).

"The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether....Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Ps.19:9, 11).

"So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Ps.58:11).

"Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Is.40:10).

"Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Is.62:11).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer.23:24).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:17-18) **Fasting**: there are at least four times when the believer should fast.

1. There are times when the believer feels a special pull, an urge, a call within his heart to get alone with God. This is God's Spirit moving within his heart. When this happens, nothing—not food, not responsibility—should keep him from getting all alone with God. He should fast as soon as possible.
2. There are times when special needs arise. The needs may concern the believer's own life or the life of friends, society, the world, or some ministry or mission. Again, nothing should keep the believer from spending a very special time in God's presence when facing such dire needs.
3. There are times when the believer needs to humble his soul before God. At such times he learns not only humility but dependence upon God (Ps.35:13).
4. There are times when the believer needs a very special power from God. The Lord promised such power if the believer prayed and fasted (Mt.17:21; Mk.9:29).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:17-18) **Fasting**: Why are believers to fast? There are excellent benefits to fasting, and God wants His people to reap these benefits.

1. Fasting keeps the believer in the presence of God. He is fasting in order to seek God's presence for a very special purpose; he remains in God's presence until he feels God has or is going to meet his need.
2. Fasting humbles the believer's soul before God. It says that God is the most important thing in all the world to him (Ps.35:13).
3. Fasting teaches the believer his dependency upon God. He is seeking God, and in so doing he is demonstrating his conviction that he is dependent upon God.
4. Fasting demonstrates to God (by action) a real seriousness. It shows by act that the matter being considered is a priority.
5. Fasting teaches the believer to control and discipline his life. He does without in order to gain a greater substance.
6. Fasting keeps the believer from being enslaved by habit. He lays aside all substances; in so doing, he breaks the hold of anything that might have him chained.
7. Fasting helps the believer to stay physically fit. It helps keep him from becoming overweight and soft.

1 A contrast: About two kinds of riches a. Earthly riches 1) Are not to be laid up 2) Are corruptible[DS1] 3) Are insecure b. Heavenly riches 1) Are to be laid up 2) Are incorruptible 3) Are secure **2 A warning: About two kinds of hearts**	**Q. The Warning About Wealth & Materialism, 6:19-24** 19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.	22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.	a. A good heart: Like a good eye 1) Focuses & sees 2) Focuses on heaven (v.20) b. A bad heart: Like a bad eye 1) Blind and dark 2) Focuses on the earth (v.19) **3 A choice: About two kinds of Masters** a. Either hate or love b. Either cleave or despise c. The choice: Serve God or material things[DS2]

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

Q. The Warning about Wealth and Materialism, 6:19-24

(6:19-24) **Introduction**: Where are our thoughts? What do we think about? Are our thoughts on earth or on heaven? Is our mind on earthly things or on God? What are we seeking, the things of the earth or the things of heaven? Where is our heart, focused on earth or focused on heaven? The concern of Christ in this passage is money, possessions, and material things. His concern is that we guard against centering our lives around houses, furnishings, cars, lands, buildings, stocks—all the things that make up security and wealth on this earth. The reason is simply understood: nothing on this earth is secure and lasting. It is aging, decaying, and wasting away. It is all corruptible and temporal. What Christ wants is for us to center our lives around Him and heaven, for everything about Himself and heaven is life and security. It is all permanent and eternal. To stir our thinking He gives us a lesson on wealth and materialism. (Also see outline and DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.13:7, 22.)

1. A contrast: about two kinds of riches (v.19-20).
2. A warning: about two kinds of hearts (v.21-23).
3. A choice: about two kinds of masters (v.24).

1 (6:19-20) **Materialism—Wealth**: Christ gives a contrast about two kinds of riches.

1. There are earthly riches. There are things on earth that men desire. Christ calls these earthly riches and treasures. Earthly riches would be such things as clothes, cars, jewelry, toys, houses, buildings, furnishings, pleasure, fame, power, profession, property, money—anything that dominates a person's life and holds it fast to this earth.

A treasure is that which has value and is worth something to someone. Men take things and ascribe value to them: it may be stones (diamonds); or rocks and dust (gold); or money (paper and metal); or land (property); or wood, metal, dirt, chemical, and fabric (buildings); or influence (power); or the attention of people (fame).

Christ says three things about earthly riches that are of critical importance to both the believer and the unbeliever.

a. Do not lay up for yourselves earthly riches (material possessions). Christ says that a person is not to focus his life on earthly things, not to set his eyes and mind and energy and effort on such passing treasures.

Thought 1. Riches do exist. And their *locality* is clearly stated. There is wealth both on *earth* and in *heaven*.

Thought 2. It is easier to covet earthly things than heavenly things for four reasons.
1) They are seen and can be handled.
2) They are sought by most people, and other people influence us. A person is either worldly minded or heavenly minded (Ro.8:5-7).
3) They are to varying degrees necessary for life.
4) They are present, ever before us, and can be possessed right now.

b. Earthly riches are corruptible (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.6:19). Something terrible happens to everything on earth. Everything ages, dies, deteriorates, and decays. Things are on the earth only for a brief time, and then they are no more. Everything has the seed of corruption within it.

c. Earthly riches are insecure. The things on earth are insecure for three reasons.
⇒ They can be stolen or eaten up.
⇒ They do not last; they waste away.
⇒ A person cannot take a single thing with him when he passes from this world.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath" (Job 20:28).

"Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10).

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Pr.23:5).

"For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" (Pr.27:24).

"Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me" (Eccl.2:18).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

"With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches" (Ezk.28:4-5).

Thought 1. Note four striking lessons.

1) Wealth is sought, and it is sought by many. What is often forgotten is this: every bit of wealth is held by someone. Therefore, many are always figuring how to get some of what someone else has. Things of the world are very insecure.
2) A man can be snatched away from this earth as quickly as the twinkling of an eye. Everything for which he has worked so hard on this earth can be gone immediately (cp. Lk.12:16-21).
3) A man can lose much of what he has in this world and lose it quickly. He can lose it through financial difficulties, accident, marital problems, illness, death, and a myriad of other ways.
4) A person is a fool to seek an abundance of things—to grasp after more and more. Why? Because tonight or tomorrow or some day soon God will say, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:20).

   Christ says, "He that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God"—is going to hear the above (Lk.12:21).

2. There are heavenly riches. There are things in heaven that believers desire. Christ calls these heavenly riches (see outline and notes—Eph.1:3 for the list of God's heavenly blessings). Heavenly riches would be such things as...

- a blameless life
- becoming a true child of God
- the forgiveness of sins
- wisdom
- understanding the will of God (purpose, meaning, and significance in life)
- an enormous inheritance that is eternal
- a constant Comforter and Helper, the Holy Spirit of God Himself
- life that is abundant and overflowing (Jn.10:10)

Christ says three things about heavenly riches that are of critical importance to the believer and the unbeliever.

a. Lay up for yourselves heavenly riches. A person is foolish to seek and set his mind on perishable things. Why? Because he can seek after that which gives all the meaning, purpose, and significance to life that one can imagine. To have meaning and purpose and significance in life is what life is all about.

   Think about it. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15). How much meaning is there in something that passes and perishes? Even while a person seeks after something on this earth, there is an inner awareness that it will not last. There is an end to whatever meaning he finds in it. The earthly treasure may be a car, a job, a trip, a relationship, clothing, position, power, fame, or fortune. The fact is, no matter what the treasure is, it will end and pass away and be no more. A worldly man's meaning for living, his purpose and significance in life, is temporary, unfulfilling and incomplete. (See note 4 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Eph.1:7; note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Pt.1:4; cp. Eph.1:3.)

b. Heavenly riches are incorruptible. Corruption can be escaped (2 Pt.1:4). There is an "inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, *reserved in heaven for you*" (1 Pt.1:4). Everyone should lay claim and set his heart on *his* heavenly inheritance.

c. Heavenly riches are secure (see notes—Eph.1:3). Thieves cannot break through heaven; they cannot penetrate the spiritual dimension. No one nor anything can take away a person's heavenly riches. The love of God assures this (cp. Ro.8:32-39).

Thought 1. Christ does not stop a man from seeking treasure; contrariwise, He guides the man's search to real treasure. Heaven is worth more than all the wealth in the world.

⇒ "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

⇒ "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).

⇒ "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:25).

Thought 2. A man must leave all to follow Christ or else he cannot be the Lord's disciple.

> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**

Thought 3. Christ says a man is to lay up treasures in heaven for himself, not lay up treasures on earth for his family. A pointed and disturbing message to many!

> **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him. If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**
>
> **"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not" (Lk.12:33).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**
>
> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**
>
> **"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:19) **Corruption—Incorruption**: there is a seed of corruption within the world—a principle or nature of corruption within everything on earth. Everything is imperfectly born and formed; it ages, dies, deteriorates, decays, and wastes away. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:17; notes—1 Cor.15:50; 2 Cor.5:1-4; Col.2:8; note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Pt.1:4.)

> **"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Mt.8:17).**
>
> **"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).**
>
> **"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens....If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked" (2 Cor.5:1, 3).**
>
> **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).**

There is also a seed of incorruption, a principle of incorruption, an eternal nature of incorruption in heaven (1 Pt.1:4, 23; cp. 1:18-23; 2 Pt.1:4; cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58. See note—Eph.1:3.)

> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).**
>
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**
>
> **"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44; cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58).**

2 (6:21-23) **Heart—Mind**: Christ warns about two kinds of hearts.

1. There is the good heart. It is just like a good eye. Note that the eye is a gate that *gives entrance* to the mind of man. What man looks at is what he thinks about, and what he thinks about is what he actually becomes (cp. Pr.23:7). If a man focuses upon Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world (Jn.8:12), then his mind and heart will be *full of light*. Therefore, the deeds of his body will be deeds of light. Singleness of the eye and heart means that a person sets his attention upon the Lord Jesus for the purpose of doing His will (cp. Acts 2:46; Eph.6:5; Col.3:22). An evil eye is one that focuses upon anything that is not of God.

A man's heart is precisely where his treasure is. If his treasure is on earth, his heart is on earth. If his treasure is in heaven, his heart is in heaven. The eye illustrates the truth. If a man's eye is *good and healthy*, then he is able to focus upon the treasure and grasp the truth. But if the eye is *unhealthy*, he is not able to focus upon the treasure. He is blind and in darkness. A *healthy heart* is like a healthy eye. It grasps the true treasure, the treasure in heaven. But an *unhealthy heart* is like an unhealthy eye. It is in darkness, unable to see the treasure in heaven.

Note that the believer fixes his eyes upon heaven for two primary reasons.

a. His citizenship is in heaven:

> **"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Ph.3:20-21).**

b. He seeks the treasures which are eternal:

> **"For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor.4:18).**

⇒ They are incorruptible (v.20).
⇒ They are secure (v.20).
⇒ They cause his "whole body to be full of light" (v.22).
⇒ They consume his whole being in all the meaning and purpose and significance of life (v.24).
⇒ They cause him to love and to serve God (v.24).
⇒ They draw him near to God (v.24).

> **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Mt.5:8).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also" (Jn.14:19).**
>
> **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).**
>
> **"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb.11:27).**

Thought 1. The believer has a clear cut charge: "Set your affection on things above, not in things on the earth" (Col.3:2).

> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).**
>
> **"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph.1:18).**
>
> **"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph.3:8).**
>
> **"[Moses] esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb.11:26).**
>
> **"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas.2:5).**

2. There is the bad heart. It is just like a bad eye. A bad eye is not able to focus upon the treasure, not able to focus upon the things of God. A bad eye is blind and in darkness. So it is with the heart. Christ says that a person is not to set his heart upon earthly treasures. Why? Such a person focuses his eyes (attention, mind, thoughts, energy, effort) on evil. What does Christ mean? Earthly things are evil because they are deceiving.

⇒ They are corruptible; they age, die, waste away, deteriorate, and decay.
⇒ They are insecure; they will be stolen or taken away or left behind.
⇒ They cause a person's heart to be full of darkness (v.23).
⇒ They will consume a person (v.24).
⇒ They cause a person to hate, despise, and reject God (v.24).
⇒ They alienate a person from God (v.24).

Thought 1. Several things happen to a man who sets his eye upon earthly things. The shadows of darkness set in upon him. He becomes deceived (cp. Mt.13:7, 22). He is deceived in that he becomes...

- covetous and consuming (to get more and more).
- complaining and grudging.
- apprehensive and fearful (of losing it).
- hard and close-minded (to giving much). (Cp. Jas.5:9.)

> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
>
> **"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:5).**
>
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**
>
> **"In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).**
>
> **"Having the understanding darknened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**

3 (6:24) **Decision**: Christ warns that a choice has to be made between two kinds of masters. There are two critical reasons why a choice has to be made.

1. A man hates one master and loves the other. When both masters call upon the man at the same time, he has to make a choice. He favors, serves, helps, and loves one; and while he is doing so, he is disfavoring, rejecting, and showing disrespect and hate for the other. A man cannot serve two masters.
2. A man either cleaves to or despises one of the masters. He has to choose which master to favor and serve. He has to cleave to one. In cleaving to one, he reveals disrespect and spite for the other. A man cannot serve two masters.

The choice is clear. A man either serves God or material things.

⇒ There are only two treasures: the earth and its treasures or God and His treasures, physical and material
⇒ things or spiritual and eternal things.
⇒ Every man without exception has committed his life to one of two treasures: mammon or God. He is
⇒ focusing his heart, eyes, mind, attention, thoughts, hands, and energy upon earthly things or upon heavenly
⇒ things. He cannot "serve God *and* mammon."

Thought 1. So many look at wealth as a blessing of God, a sign that one is godly. But the Bible says differently.

> **"[Some] suppose that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Tim.6:5-11).**

Thought 2. Mammon, earthly treasures, can be many things (see Mt.6:19-20).

1) Riches and wealth.

> **"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain" (Jas.4:13).**
>
> **"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you" (Jas.5:1).**

2) Food, the filling of one's belly.

> **"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:19).**

3) An evil, lusting eye.

> **"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:28).**
>
> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
>
> **"Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mk.7:22).**

4) A lusting of the flesh.

> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

5) Unproductive activity, relaxation, recreation, wasteful pastimes, sluggish feelings.

> **"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (Pr.6:6-11).**

Thought 3. God promises several great things to the man who serves Him.

1) All the necessities of life.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**

2) Freedom from anxiety.

> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).**

3) Joy and contentment.

> **"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).**
>
> **"Let your conversation [behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).**

4) Abundant and eternal life.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and beliveth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(6:24) **Wealth**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:16-22; notes—19:23-26; 19:27-30; pt.2 Jas.1:9-11.

	R. The Counsel on Worry & Anxiety, 6:25-34	one of these.	b. Trust—believe: You of little faith[DS1]
1 A counsel—do not worry about necessities a. About food & drink b. About body & clothing	25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your	30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?	
2 Do not worry about your life and body	body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?	31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?	**6 Do not worry: Do not be thinking & talking about food, drink, & clothing**
3 Do not worry about food & shelter a. Behold the birds b. You are better than the birds	26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?	32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.	a. You are different from the heathen b. Your heavenly Father knows your needs
4 Do not worry about your stature: Worry is pointless	27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?	33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.	**7 Do not worry: Seek ye first the Kingdom of God & His righteousness[DS2]**
5 Do not worry about clothing a. Consider the lilies 1) They do not toil	28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:	34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.	**8 Do not worry about tomorrow: Live one day at a time**
2) They are more adorned than Solomon	29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like		

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

R. The Counsel on Worry and Anxiety, 6:25-34

(6:25-34) **Introduction**: this counsel meets one of the greatest needs of men, the need to be delivered from worry and anxiety.

1. A counsel—do not worry about necessities (v.25).
2. Do not worry about your life and body (v.25).
3. Do not worry about food and shelter (v.26).
4. Do not worry about your stature (v.27).
5. Do not worry about clothing (v.28-30).
6. Do not worry: do not be thinking about food, drink, clothing (v.31-32).
7. Do not worry: seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (v.33).
8. Do not worry about tomorrow: live one day at a time (v.34).

1 (6:25) **Worry—Anxiety** (merimnate): the believer is not to worry about necessities, about food and drink, about body and clothing. The words "take no thought" mean do not worry; do not be anxious; do not be overly concerned and caring (cp. Ph.4:6). The counsel is so needed it is given three times (v.25, 31, 34).

Jesus is not suggesting that a man not prepare for life—that he be lazy, shiftless, and thoughtless with a no-care attitude. God will not indulge license, that is, slothfulness and lack of initiative, effort, and planning. A person has to look after his responsibilities (Pr.27:23; 2 Cor.11:28; Ph.2:20). He has to work in order to eat (2 Th.3:10). In fact, he is even to work extra in order to have enough to give to others (Eph.4:28). He must be diligent in looking after his affairs and profession and in helping and giving to others.

1. Jesus is talking about being preoccupied with the material possessions of life. Many fall into the trap of centering their mind and thoughts, energy and efforts on the necessities and luxuries of life. A believer is not to be wrapped up and entangled in the affairs of this world (2 Tim.2:4). He is not to be groping for more and more and hoarding more and more. He is *not* to "seek ye first" the things of the world, but he is to "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," then God will see to it that he receives all these things (Mt.6:33).
2. Jesus is talking about being so wrapped up in securing things that we become anxious, disturbed, and sleepless. Being focused upon the things of the world keeps a person from walking in the fulness and enjoyment of life. Worry and anxiety can cause serious health problems ranging from sleepless nights and headaches to ulcers, high blood pressure, and heart attacks.
3. Jesus is talking about being so consumed with *getting* that we think little of God. Fear of not having enough and spending all of our time trying to *get* more and more causes disbelief. A person who works to gain more and more security never knows God. He never knows God's love and care. He never learns that God looks after those who truly trust him.

4. Jesus is talking about being so entangled with the affairs of this earth that we forget eternity. We just forget to take care of our lives and bodies beyond this life (Lk.12:20; cp. Ps.49:10-20; 2 Tim.2:4).

The charge is clear. We are not to worry. We are to be consumed with God and people, not things. We are to seek God first and serve Him and our fellow man first. Then the necessities, and in some cases the luxuries, will be given us (Mt.6:33).

Thought 1. There are two kinds of food, drink, and clothing. There are...
- the necessary items
- the extravagant or luxury items that lead to self-indulgence

Living sumptuously and extravagantly, at ease and in luxury in the midst of a needy and starving world is sin. It is a sin that condemns us to hell (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.16:19-21). The believer is not to be entangled in the affairs of material things (2 Tim.2:4).

Thought 2. Food, clothing, and shelter are necessities of life. It is not wrong to work for these, nor to make them secure for our future. What is wrong is fourfold.
1) Ignoring and neglecting God while we work.
2) Working day and night and then worrying over how to keep what we have and how to make more and more.
3) Never being satisfied with the necessities, coveting to have more and more, to have bigger and better, to have as large and as good as the next person.
4) Neglecting the needs of others who have greater needs than we have (see outline and notes—Mt.6:19-24).

2 (6:25) **Life—Body—Food—Clothing**: do not worry about your life and body. The point is clear and striking: a person's life and body are of more value—much more value—than the food he eats and the clothes he puts on. Why then should a person allow these things, secondary things, to consume and dominate his life? So many are controlled by the necessities and luxuries, the material things of the world.

A person can eat and wear only so much at one time. Enough is enough; more than enough is too much; too much means that a person is consuming it upon his lusts (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:1-3; note—Jas.4:2). His life is being dominated by, instead of dominating, the things of the world.

Thought 1. Note several significant lessons.
1) Do not worry: think about your life and body and learn to trust God for food and clothing. Concentrate your mind and effort upon your life and body, not upon food and clothing.
2) The point is simple and clear. Life means more than just things, even more than food and clothing.

> **"Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).**
>
> **"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Mt.13:22).**
>
> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Mt.16:25-26).**
>
> **"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps.127:2).**

3) Materialism (worldliness and possessions) can enslave a person to such a degree that it dominates his life. In order to get and possess more, spouses argue, men steal, employees crave, employers hoard, children pout and nations war. Life—living and enjoying what God has given—is ignored and neglected in order to get and possess more and more.

> **"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:1-4).**

4) The basic problem of man is setting priorities and determining what is to be first in his life. The first priority of every man should be to take care of his life—eternally. Why should a man be concerned about a few short years when he has the opportunity to sustain life forever? Why seek the things that only sustain and adorn his physical body for a brief time and then fade away? Why would he not seek first that which can sustain and adorn his life forever? Seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness should be the first priority of every man.

> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**

Thought 2. A man will do anything to save his body if it is threatened. Therefore, two critical questions need to be asked.

1) Why does a man allow himself to become enslaved by possessions? If he does not have and possess, he is miserable, sometimes to the point of being physically sick with ulcers, high blood pressure, or migraine headaches. He is driven to seek and pursue and get. He is so enslaved that he misses out on real life.
2) Why does a man allow himself to become so enslaved to possessions that he neglects the eternal care of his life? He seeks and pursues thing after thing...
   - ignoring and neglecting God.
   - failing to lay hold on eternal life.

> **"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Tim.6:8-12).**

3 (6:26) **Necessities—Life, Necessities of**: do not worry about food and shelter. God gives food and shelter to the birds of the air. "Behold": look at them and study them. Use your eyes and learn thoroughly—learn from what you see around you. The providence of God takes care of the birds. Learn that God will likewise take care of the believer who really trusts Him. Note two points.

1. The believer is *better* than the birds.
   a. Man is a higher being, on a much higher level of creation, than animals. He is more noble and excellent, a spiritual being made in the image of God and capable of a personal relationship with God. (See outline and notes—Ro.5:6-11.)

> **"Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?" (Job 35:11).**
>
> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen.1:27).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**

   b. The believer is a child of God. God is *the Creator* of birds, but He is *the Father* of believers.

> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children" (Ro.8:15-16).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

   c. The believer is an heir of God. He is to receive all that God possesses in that glorious day of redemption.

> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**
>
> **"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).**

2. Four things can be said about the person who is preoccupied with material things.
   a. He is covetous.

> **"Let your conversation [behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).**

   b. He is not as wise as the birds.

> **"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the LORD" (Jer.8:7).**

   c. He is a backslider who has forgotten what Christ said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you" (Heb.13:5).
   d. He is not "seeking ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt.6:33).

Thought 1. Do not worry: watch the fowls of the air and learn to trust God for shelter and food.

Thought 2. God knows the needs of His followers. "I know all the fowls of the mountains," God says (Ps.50:11; cp. Job 38:41; Ps.147:9).

> **A sparrow "shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt.10:29-31).**

1) God knows every fowl on the earth, the innumerable number of every sort and size. And He feeds and shelters them all.
2) God knows every believer on the earth, even the most minute details about him (the number of hairs). Therefore the believer need not fear. God will feed and shelter him if the believer will just seek Him first (Mt.6:33).

Thought 3. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt.10:31). The believer can rest assured that God will feed and shelter him. God will not starve him. The believer's responsibility is to simply "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt.6:33).

Thought 4. Nothing dampens a person's spirit and kills his testimony as much as the cares of the world (worldliness). (1 Jn.2:15-16; cp. Ro.12:2.)

Thought 5. God will not indulge license, that is, laziness, slothfulness, and lack of planning and initiative and effort. Jesus planned ahead (Jn.12:6) and preached industriousness (Lk.16:8 cp. 1-10). The Bible is clear about the duty of man to work, even to work extra in order to have enough to give to others (Eph.4:28). (See note—Mt.6:25-34.)

4 (6:27) **Worry—Anxiety—Stature**: do not worry about your stature, for worry is pointless. The word "stature" (helikian) means height, quality or status gained by growth, and sometimes it means age. The word *cubit* (pechus) literally means measure of space or distance (approximately 18 inches); but it can also mean a measure of time or age (Jn.9:21). Therefore, the verse can read either "who can add one cubit to his stature" or *one minute to his life span.*

The point is striking. Worry is senseless—just as senseless as trying to add to one's height or lengthen a minute to one's life span (when it is time for one to die). Everyone does not have a normal body. All bodies are not perfectly formed, not in this world. The world is corruptible and imperfect (see note—Mt.6:19-20), but there is hope, a glorious hope in God—a hope that acknowledges that God loves and cares and has promised a new heavens and earth that will be perfect. In the perfect heavens and earth all bodies will be normal and perfectly formed. God shall "wipe away all tears" (Rev.21:4; cp. 1-7; 2 Pt.3:10-12; cp. 3-18. See note, *Body*—Jn.21:1 for more discussion.)

How does a person receive this hope?

> **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 Jn.5:4-5).**

Thought 1. Do not worry: think about your stature and learn to trust God. Do not concentrate your mind and heart and effort on the world. That is senseless. Concentrate and focus upon God and His righteousness. Such assures a perfect change in your life and body when you enter the next world.

Thought 2. Some things are senseless in this world, extremely senseless.

First, it is senseless for men to seek to add an inch to their stature, and to care for their body in the here and now and ignore the hereafter. Think about it. All men are immortal; they are to exist forever. It is senseless to concentrate on a few short years upon earth.

Second, it is senseless for believers to seek to add an inch to their stature, and to *worry* about their body in the here and now and *neglect* life hereafter. It is senseless for the believer to walk through life ignoring his Father and not trusting His care and love.

Thought 3. Some persons have abnormal and imperfect statures. How do they keep from being anxious and worrying?

1) There is a glorious hope for all.

> **"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).**

2) There is the assuring promise of God to work all things out for good to those who truly love Him.

> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).**

3) There is the strong challenge to be content with one's condition or lot in life.

> **"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called....Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God" (1 Cor.7:20, 24).**
>
> **"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:11-13).**
>
> **"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways" (Jas.1:9-11).**

5 (6:28-30) **Clothing**: do not worry about clothing. Consider the lilies, how they grow.

1. Lilies grow from a deep root. The roots are where they belong, in the soil to receive nourishment. The roots of believers are not to be in the material things of this earth. In order to receive their nourishment and fulfill their purpose on earth, believers are to put their roots where they belong, in God and His righteousness.
2. Lilies do not toil or spin at spinning wheels to adorn themselves with beauty. Their beauty comes naturally as they go about their purpose in the world. Believers are not to be consumed with toiling after material things in order to adorn themselves with the artificial and superficial coverings of appearance. They are to be laboring after God and His righteousness, letting their natural beauty shine forth, trusting God to provide "all these things" (Mt.6:33).
3. Lilies die from the weather. They drop to the ground, decay, pass out of existence, and are gone forever. Clothing fades, wears out, goes out of fashion, and is laid down. Clothing just ceases to exist, but not man. Unlike the lilies and his clothing, man is immortal; he exists forever. Therefore, he is to center his life on God and His righteousness, not on material clothing and physical beauty. God will provide necessary clothing to the person who diligently goes about life putting his priorities in order: seeking God and His righteousness first.

Thought 1. Note seven significant lessons.

1) Do not worry: consider the lilies and trust God for clothing.
2) Clothing is used for protection and covering and adornment. The human body needs to be...
   - protected from the weather.
   - covered from being exposed to the public.
   - adorned for attractiveness.

   Yet, how foolish to place one's heart and fate in material clothing, especially when so many throughout the world have so little. A person's salvation is not found in clothing, nor in any other material thing, but in seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
3) There are three concerns about clothing. (Sometimes the concern becomes so strong it turns into a literal fear.)
   a) The concern of popularity. A person fears not having the clothing necessary to make him popular. Sometimes the concern is so great that a person refuses to go to a particular function without the proper clothing.
   b) The concern of style and fashion. A person is concerned with the very latest in style and fashion. He cannot accept a single piece's being outdated.
   c) The concern of acceptability. Most adults would fall into this category. Clothing is a matter that actually involves inward feelings. The concern over appearance is really there. Time and effort are expended to stay in style, at least enough to be acceptable.

      The point Christ is making is this: do not fret or worry; do not be anxious over clothing. But seek ye first—center your thoughts and efforts upon God and His righteousness—and all these things (clothing) will be added unto you (Mt.6:33).
4) Many judge others by their clothes. How often someone has walked into a place (even into a church) and been looked at askance and thought to be out of place. How often people have felt uncomfortable in welcoming such a person lest they be associated with them. Why? Because the person was wearing old clothes, long out of fashion. The worldly too often worry about clothes, to the point that their judgment of others is affected by clothing. This is often true of youth and young adults.
5) The believer is to labor. He is to work his fingers to the bone seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and he is to trust God all the while to meet his needs. God, who adorns the non-working lily of the field, will certainly adorn the believer who is living and laboring for Him.
6) Man is as the lilies of the field: here today and gone tomorrow. There is so little time; he does not have time to become entangled with worldly affairs. He must be seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt.6:33).
7) It is folly to focus one's life and body on beauty and nice clothing:

> **"This...is their folly...they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them...and their beauty shall consume in the grave" (Ps.49:13-14; cp. v.10-14. This is a descriptive passage covering this whole subject.)**

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim.2:9-10).

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:3-4).

"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Mt.6:28-29).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:30) **Trust—Believe**: the words "O ye of little faith" can mean at least two things.

1. It can be a challenge to strengthen a person's faith. Christ could be saying, "Your faith is small right now. Believe, trust, strengthen, and enlarge your faith. God cares and will provide. You can trust Him. Just believe."
2. It can be a rebuke because a person's faith is terribly weak: "You are worrying, overly anxious; therefore, you are displeasing and disappointing God. God knows you need these things. Quit being distrustful and going through so much anxiety and so many sleepless nights. Turn from the world and trust God."

6 (6:31-32) **Anxiety—Worry**: Christ says, "Do not worry: do not be thinking and talking about food, drink and clothing." There are two reasons why such things are not to occupy our thoughts and conversation.

1. The believer is different from the heathen. "After all these things do the Gentiles [the heathen, the lost] seek." Do not be like them, for the genuine believer is to be different.

The lost are wrapped up in the world and in the things of the world. They know nothing else. All they know is seeking and securing all they can of what the world has to offer. They seek *the good life* that comes from possessions. Life to them is money, houses, furnishings, food, cars, televisions, toys, clothing, recreation, property—all the material things of the world that give comfort, pride, power, fame, and recognition.

There is a reason the Gentiles (the heathen, the lost) live this way. The Scripture states it clearly (Eph.2:12, 19).

a. They are without Christ (Eph.2:12). They are unwilling to accept Christ as the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, whom God sent into the world to save the world.
b. They are aliens from God's people (Eph.2:12). They are not aware that God has a *family of genuine believers* on earth, a body of people who truly trust Him.
c. They are strangers to the promises of God (Eph.2:12). They know little if anything about the promises of God and His care.
d. They have no hope beyond this earth (Eph.2:12). They really know very little about a world beyond this life; therefore, they cling to this earth.
e. They are without God in this world (Eph.2:12). They know nothing about His presence and care, His love and direction, and His correction.

They are strangers and foreigners to the things of God and to the hope of God (v.19). Therefore, they know nothing except to seek the things of the earth—to secure whatever and however much their hearts desire.

2. The believer has a heavenly Father who knows his needs. The believer is different from the Gentiles (the lost) in that he has a heavenly Father and he lives for heaven. He does not live for the earth.

⇒ He knows Christ and he knows God's people.
⇒ He knows the promises of God and the glorious hope of eternal life.
⇒ He has God and His presence in this world.
⇒ He is *not* a stranger and foreigner to God, but a fellow citizen with the saints of God's household.

Therefore, the believer is to seek "first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." He is to leave the cares of this world up to God as he diligently goes about his affairs upon earth. He makes his contribution to life as God has called him to do, and while so doing, he knows that God will take care of all the necessities of life.

Thought 1. The lost and unsaved of the world face two serious problems.

1) They do not personally know the only living and true God. They know little if anything of His day-to-day care. They are left to their own materialistic search for things, both necessities and niceties. Tragically they have no assurance that all will be well.
2) They are strangers to the better hope of an eternal world. Most men have hope, some kind of hope, in this world and in the things of this world. But they know little, if anything, about the eternal hope given by God in Christ. Therefore, their hope is seriously deficient. It is temporary, lasting only for a few short years. Their hope dies; it dies when they die. Therefore, when worldly hope crumbles, they crumble.

What is the answer for the worldly (the unsaved, the lost)? The answer is given in the words, "your heavenly Father." Make sure God is *your* heavenly Father, and get to know Him as "*your* heavenly Father."

What is Christ saying to the believer? Do not be as the lost and unsaved of the world: a stranger to God and to the glorious hope of eternity. But live, actively live in the presence of God now and forever. He knows your needs. Trust Him and His care.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:2).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:12).

Thought 2. The testimony of the mature believer is: "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me" (Ps.40:17).

7 (6:33) **Worry—Anxiety**: do not worry, but "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The word "seek" (zeteo) means to go after; to strive; to pursue; to desire; to aim at; to search for; to endeavor to get. The believer's life is not to be preoccupied with material things, as necessary as some things are. The believer is first of all to be seeking after the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

1. He is to seek to become a citizen of God's kingdom, and he is to seek others, encouraging them to become citizens of God's kingdom. This is to be the first pursuit of his life.
2. He is to seek after God's righteousness for himself and for others.

Thought 1. There are two ways to go about taking care of oneself in this world.

1) Working and seeking in one's own strength: depending upon one's own ability and energy alone; fighting and struggling to make it through life and fretting and worrying about succeeding.
2) Working and seeking in both God's strength and one's own strength: trusting and acknowledging God while doing all one can; putting one's hand to the plow and plowing; working and working and not looking back, and while working, trusting the results to God. God says He will see to it that such a trusting person will always have the necessities of life.

Thought 2. The believer whose work fails in the eyes of the world can know four sure things—if he has really put God first.

1) His failure is temporary. God will help and strengthen and even teach him through the trying times.
2) God will work all things out for good, for he loves God and has been called by God (Ro.8:28f).
3) God will see to it that the necessities of life are given him.
4) God has much better things in store for him—eternally. The believer has been faithful in his work, so God will reward him as a faithful servant, even if his labor has failed in the eyes of the world.

The believer who goes through a failure needs to remember just one thing: be faithful—continue to be faithful. In putting God first, God will lift the believer up now and eternally.

Thought 3. God made man a spiritual being. Therefore, the only way man can ever be satisfied is to seek God and His righteousness first. This world and the things of this world will not satisfy.

Thought 4. Man's major mistake is this: material things can only make a person *comfortable*. The things of the world can only look good, taste good and feel good, but this is all they can do. Think about it! They are external, *outside* man, and this is just the problem. The need that man senses within is not to be *externally comfortable*, but to be *inwardly satisfied and spiritually satisfied* (see note-Eph.1:3).

1) Material things cannot touch the inside of man. They can only make him comfortable outside.
2) Man really knows down deep within that all material things pass away, even himself. He subdues the knowledge, pushes it out of his thoughts, yet he knows it.

Thought 5. Man can have the necessities of life; but he has to do one thing: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...."

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas.2:5).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall" (Is.25:4).

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Is.41:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(6:33) **Kingdom of God**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.

8 (6:34) **Worry—Anxiety**: do not worry—live one day at a time. The believer is not to be preoccupied with tomorrow and its affairs. He is to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness today, leaving tomorrow and its needs in God's hands.

Christ is not forbidding a man to *take care of tomorrow*. He is striking at man's obsession with getting more and more and ignoring and neglecting God and His righteousness.

Thought 1. There are five attitudes about the future.

1) *A no-care, worldly attitude*. A person eats, drinks, and is merry today, letting tomorrow take care of itself. The future is of little concern. It will take care of itself. Earthly pleasure, power, and fame are the major concerns of life. He needs to get all he can now, while he can.
2) *A fretful, anxious attitude*. A person worries all the time, wondering if he is secure and if he will have enough to take care of himself and his family.
3) *A fearful, panicky attitude*. In the face of trial and failure, a person can barely function. Tragedy has hit: his job is lost, cutbacks have to be made, adjustments are needed. The strength and confidence to act and to continue on is lacking.
4) *A self-assured attitude*. A person has complete confidence in himself and his ability. He knows he can make out and take care of himself in this world, and he does it. But there is one thing that this person fails to see, and it is fatal: the confidence that he has in himself will end. He will die, and he will only have taken care of himself for a few short years. He will find out that self-confidence cannot bridge the great gulf between heaven and earth, time and eternity, God and man.
5) *A calm God-centered and trusting attitude*. A person goes about living and working ever so diligently and calmly, trusting God to take care of all. He does all he can about the necessities of life, both for himself and for others, but he seeks God and His righteousness first (Eph.4:28).

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Mt.6:25).

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Mt.13:22).

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkeness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

	CHAPTER 7	not the beam that is in thine own eye?	b. He looks for faults in others—not himself
	S. The Warning About Judging and Criticizing Others,[DSI] **7:1-6** (Lk.6:37-42)	4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?	**4 The criticizer is deceived about himself** a. He speaks, but unthoughtfully b. He is not fit to judge
1 Do not judge; do not criticize	Judge not, that ye be not judged.	5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.	**5 The criticizer is a hypocrite: He must extract his own sin first**
2 The criticizer will be judged a. For the same criticism b. With equal weight	2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.	6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.	**6 The criticizer is undeserving of the gospel** a. He tramples the gospel underfoot b. He turns against & tears people apart
3 The criticizer fails to examine himself a. He looks for faults	3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest		

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

S. The Warning about Judging and Criticizing Others, 7:1-6

(7:1-6) **Introduction**: Christ pulls no punches with the criticizer.

1. Do not judge; do not criticize (v.1).
2. The criticizer will be judged (v.2).
3. The criticizer fails to examine himself (v.3).
4. The criticizer is deceived about himself (v.4).
5. The criticizer is a hypocrite (v.5).
6. The criticizer is undeserving of the gospel (v.6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:1-6) **Criticism—Sins**: note the awful sins committed by the criticizer. Christ says the criticizer will stand in the day of judgment guilty of them all:

⇒ inconsistency, v.2
⇒ self-righteousness, v.3
⇒ spiritual blindness or self-deception, v.3
⇒ uncharitableness or lack of love, v.4
⇒ hypocrisy, v.5
⇒ abuse of the gospel, v.6

What Christ says is strong, so strong that He uses pictures to paint the truth about criticizers. Verse 6 is especially strong. Christ says three things.

1. Criticizers are unworthy of the gospel and the truth. They are subject to trample the gospel under foot and to turn and tear the messenger into pieces. When a believer criticizes, the very gospel he is supposed to represent is reflected in a distasteful light. In fact, the gospel is denied. The changed life of the believer is not seen. The criticizing brother shows himself to be no different than the world. Thus, he is unworthy of the gospel.
2. The preaching of the cross is foolishness to some. Some people are insensitive and censorious, cynical and prideful. Their minds are shut. They ridicule and despise. They are increasingly antagonistic. Every indication is that they are incapable of receiving the truth. Christ is saying the gospel is not to be shared with these lest they tear the believer to pieces.
3. The believer must follow God's Spirit in recognizing the differences between men. In dealing with men, there is something that should always be remembered: we may not be able to talk about Christ with someone, but we can show Christ by our lives.

1 (7:1) **Judging**: do not judge; do not criticize. The word "judge" means to criticize, condemn, censor. It is fault-finding; it is being picky. It is the habit of censorious and carping criticism. It is not the moral judgments that have to be made sometimes (cp.1 Cor.5:3-5, 12-13); not the specific occasions when value judgments have to be made; not the careful discrimination that is sometimes necessary (Mt.7:6). Note that the beam in the criticizer's eye is much larger than the speck in the eye of the one being judged (cp. Mt.2:1-3). (See outline and notes—Ro.2:1-16.)

When a person has come short or done wrong and fallen, he is often judged, condemned and censored. However, such judgment misses a critical point.

1. When a person has slipped, it is time for compassion not censoring. It is time for reaching out with one's hand and offering to pull the person to oneself, not to push him farther away. It is time to speak kindly of him, not negatively and destructively (Eph.30-32).

2. There is never a spirit of criticism in the humble and loving person. There is only a loving compassion for those who have come short (Gal.6:1-3).

There are several reasons why people tend to judge and criticize.

1. Criticism boosts our own self-image. Pointing out someone else's failure and tearing him down makes us seem a little bit better, at least in our own eyes. It adds to our own pride, ego, and self-image.
2. Criticism is simply enjoyed. There is a tendency in human nature to take pleasure in hearing and sharing bad news and shortcomings.
3. Criticism makes us feel that our own lives (morality and behavior) are better than the person who failed.
4. Criticism helps us justify the decisions we have made and the things we have done throughout our lives. We rationalize our decisions and acts by pointing out the failure of others.
5. Criticism points out to our friends how strong we are. Criticism gives good feelings because our *rigid beliefs* and *strong lives* are proven again. Proven how? By our brother's failure.
6. Criticism is an outlet for hurt and revenge. We feel *he deserves it*. Subconsciously, if not consciously, we think, "He hurt me so he deserves to hurt, too." So we criticize the person who failed.

There are several reasons why no person should ever criticize.

1. All the circumstances and all the facts are never known. What happened and why it happened are just not known. There are always many behind-the-scene facts. Children and parents, wife and husband, employer and employee, friend and friend—things happen when they are alone behind closed doors. And, unfortunately, there is something seldom remembered: when people emerge from the closed doors to enter the public, the one who does the talking does not always reveal the true facts. The spirit of talk to others is the spirit of self-justification. The spirit of silence is the spirit of caring and compassion. The spirit of silence is always the spirit which desires no hurt for others, at least no more pain than what has to be borne.
2. All people—religious as well as non-religious—come short, fail, and fall. And we all sin often (1 Jn.1:8, 10). No one is ever exempt from sin. When we criticize and judge, we have a problem: we forget that we are sinners. When we acknowledge our own true condition, we act with care and compassion toward all as they come short. They are failing now; we failed before. Our friend shall fail later. No one is ever exempt from sin. It is a continual cycle that is the downfall of mankind. The believer must always remember that his righteousness is Jesus Christ, and he is *always* dependent upon Christ's righteousness (2 Cor.5:21; Ph.3:8-16). He must always be seeking God's forgiveness and forgetting those things that are behind.... (1 Jn.1:9; Ph.3:13-14).

   Now this does not mean that we have license to sin nor that our sin is excused. We are not to continue in sin, not by criticizing nor by doing any other evil. But we must acknowledge our weakness and remember that the person who really knows God is the person who is ever seeking God. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that *diligently seek* Him" (Heb.11:6).
3. All there is to know about a person is never known. How then can we criticize? Think about childhood for a moment. Eighteen years is a long time. Day by day moves into a week, and week by week stretches into a month, and month by month lasts and lasts until a year has arrived. And year by year is a long, long time for a child to be molded into an adult. What kind of mother, what kind of father, what kind of friends did the *failing person* have to influence and mold him? What kind of genes and temperament has he inherited and developed: fiery, composed, inferior, strict, strong, lovable, shy? So much goes into influencing a human life that only God can know a person, know him well enough to judge him. Certainly we can never know one another well enough to pass judgment.
4. Judging others usurps God's authority. When a person criticizes another, he is saying that he is worthy and has the right to be *the Judge* over other lives. He is claiming the right to be God, which is ridiculous. Yet most lay claim to the right at one time or another, and some claim the right to exercise a judgmental spirit all the time.

   Note what Scripture says, "Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master [God] he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4; cp. Jas.4:11-12).

2 (7:2) **Criticism—Judging**: the criticizer will be judged. Note three things.

1. The criticizer will be judged for the very same thing he criticizes. Whatever he criticizes, it is that for which he shall be condemned. And how frightening! His condemnation shall be by God Himself, not just by another person. Such a thought should cause us to care and to love and to live a life of compassion.
2. The criticizer will be judged by one law only—the law of equal weight. The law can be stated several ways.

⇒ The law of equal judgment	⇒ The law of equal weight
⇒ The law of equal measure	⇒ The law of equal proportion
⇒ The law of equal retributions	⇒ The law of equal retaliation
⇒ The law of reciprocal action	⇒ The law of equal sin

3. Other passages of Scripture say the criticizer will actually receive the greater condemnation.

   "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (Jas.3:1-2).

   a. He shall receive no mercy.

      "For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (Jas.2:13).

b. He shall be judged.

> **"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mt.7:2).**

c. He shall be condemned.

> **"My brethren, be not many masters [judges], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (Jas.3:1).**

d. He shall be unforgiven.

> **"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Lk.6:36-37).**

The believer must make sure his confession is not profession only.

Thought 1. The person who judges and criticizes can *expect* to be judged. He *shall* be.

> **"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Ro.2:1; cp. v.2-16).**

Thought 2. God forgives the humble and repentant *sinner*, but He shall judge the judgmental and critical person. There is to be no mercy whatsoever for the person who shows no mercy (Jas.2:13).

Thought 3. There are two strong reasons for being compassionate and not being judgmental and critical.
1) "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (Jas.2:11-12).
2) "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold the judge standeth at the door" (Jas.5:9).

3 (7:3) **Criticism—Judging**: the criticizer fails to examine himself. He is inconsistent in his judgment. The word "beholdest" has the idea of continuing to look. Too often we continue to look at the failures of others: we continue to gossip, criticize, and revel forever in the bad news.

When we judge and criticize, we reveal a very serious problem: we have a beam in our eye. We are blind to the truth of our own nature. We too fail, and we fail often (see note—Mt.7:1).

> **"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord" (Lam.3:40).**
> **"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Mt.7:5).**
> **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Ro.3:10).**
> **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).**
> **"But let a man examine himself" (1 Cor.11:28).**
> **"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor.13:5).**
> **"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn.1:8).**
> **"...the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn.5:19).**
> **"Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ps.53:3).**
> **"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Pr.20:9).**
> **"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl.7:20).**
> **"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).**
> **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Is.64:6).**

4 (7:4) **Criticism—Judging**: the criticizer is deceived about himself.

1. He speaks unthoughtfully. He has not thought through what he is doing. If he were thinking, he would not criticize or judge. A thinking person knows that he is just as human and sinful as the next person. He has just as many motes in his eye as the next fellow. Therefore, he has no right to criticize.

The person who judges is unthinking and deceived in particular points.
a. Judging others is overlooking (ignoring, denying) our own sin.
b. Judging others is one of the greatest sins because it *is judging and criticizing*.
c. Judging others exalts us as gods. It usurps God's right. It says that we are worthy and have the right to sit upon the *throne* judging a brother (Ro.14:4; Jas.4:11-12).

d. Judging others pushes a brother farther down and tears him up. It does not embrace him in compassion nor pull and build him up.

e. Judging others brings the greater condemnation (Jas.3:1-2).

f. Judging itself becomes the beam in our eye when we judge others. There are degrees of sin. There are not small and large sins, but there are degrees of sin. No sin is small when it is committed against so great a God. All sin is great. But there are beams and specks, splinters and slabs, gnats and camels. Different sins carry different weight in their catastrophic results. Nothing causes any more catastrophic rumblings than judging and criticizing a brother who has failed.

2. The criticizer is not fit to judge.

a. He is as sinful as the next person, yet he is not considering his own sin. He feels free to be critical of those who come short and fail, yet he does not look at himself. He condemns others, yet he justifies himself. Note: God justifies neither the criticizer nor the sinner (2 Cor.5:10).

b. The criticizer is the weaker of the two. It is the weak who judge and criticize the most. They have a great need to boost self over others in order to feel good about themselves (see note—Mt.7:1).

c. The criticizer does not examine himself. Self-examination hurts, so few of us do it. Yet God says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor.11:31).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas.1:22).

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas.1:26).

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes" (Pr.12:15).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).

Thought 1. Many protect their own consciences when judging and criticizing others. They deceive their consciences through several actions.

1) By trying to be sweet and nice, being soft spoken, and using soft words.
2) By always giving some commendable strengths as well as passing along the failing.
3) By prefacing the criticism with a statement that they wish to make constructive judgment or constructive criticism.

5 (7:5) **Criticism—Judging**: the criticizer is a hypocrite. Before a person can pass judgment, he must extract his own sin first. When we judge and criticize, we are hypocrites.

1. We show ourselves to be full of strife and empty glory. We show that we are not *lowly of mind*, nor do we "esteem others better than ourselves" (Ph.2:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

2. We show that we fail to consider ourselves and to exhibit the spirit of meekness. We fail to bear a brother's burden.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:1-2).

3. We show that we are polluted with bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice. We fail to be tenderhearted and forgiving. We forget that God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:31-32).

Many suffer greatly because of the judgment and criticism of others. When a person has done wrong and failed or come short, it is time for compassion not censoring. It is time for reaching out and offering to pull the person up, not to push him down farther. It is time to speak kindly of him, not negatively and destructively. The hypocrite fails to do this.

The only hope for the hypocrite, that is, anyone who judges and criticizes, is the same as for any person who sins. "First cast out the beam out of thine eye" and turn to God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30).

"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Is.1:16).

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor.7:1).

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor.13:5).

Thought 1. When we judge and criticize, we are hypocritical. We too fail, and fail often; so to judge another person's failure is hypocritical. The point is that we have not only failed, we shall fail again. Thus our task is fourfold.

1) We are to know ourselves. We are as human as the next person and stand in just as much need of God's forgiveness. And we shall need God's forgiveness again and again as much as anyone else. We are all sinners saved by grace.
2) We are not to usurp God's position as judge. He and He alone is God. He alone has the right and ability to judge according to all the facts (Jas.4:11-12).
3) We are "first to cast the beam out of [our] own eye." We are first to get rid of the sin in our own lives, the critical and judgmental spirit and whatever else is in us. Then we can see clearly to do what we should be doing: helping those who are failing.
4) We are to reach out in compassion and understanding to the person who has failed, not in judgment and criticism.

6 (7:6) **Criticism—Judging**: the criticizer is undeserving of the gospel. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before the swine" (v.6). What Christ was saying is very simply stated: we are not to be foolish and jeopardize ourselves. When we know that a person will not receive us or the instruction of the gospel, we are not to approach them. Very simply, there are some criticizers and scoffing sinners to whom we must not go. They will hurt us and abuse the glorious message of the gospel.

Thought 1. This was strong language used by Christ. He faced reality. There are some unbelievers so wicked and profane that they can be compared to dogs and swine. They are said to be unworthy of the gospel. Who are they?

⇒ The notorious sinner
⇒ The scoffers and scornful
⇒ The enraged and revilers
⇒ The openly wicked and profane
⇒ The hardened judgers and criticizers
⇒ The haters and despisers
⇒ The persecutors

Can they be saved? Yes. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord *shall be* saved" (Ro.10:13). Any who turn and call upon the Lord shall be saved. But reality must be faced: there are some who have reached such a high level of evil they are unlikely to turn from their wickedness. They take their words and...

- wound
- scoff
- trample
- rend
- scorn
- revile
- rage
- defy

They take their minds and hands and power and...

- trample
- strike
- tear
- persecute
- beat
- kill
- torture

Not everyone does all of the above sins, but many people are guilty of some of them. They destroy the reputation and work of a person, if not his body. What a tragedy that so many believers are often caught up in the criticism and judgment of others. Believers are too often the very ones guilty of taking their words and hands to damage the reputation and work of others.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim.3:1-4).

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption" (2 Pt.2:12).

"But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (Jude 10).

	T. The Key to Prayer: Persevering in Prayer, 7:7-11	9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?	c. God cares much more than an earthly father cares (cp.11).
1 What is persevering prayer?[DS1] a. Ask—until you receive b. Seek—until you find c. Knock—until it is opened	7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:	10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?	
2 Why persevere in prayer? a. Prayer is conditional: Must ask—seek—knock[DS2] b. Everyone is heard[DS3]	8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.	11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?	**3 How does a person persevere in prayer?** a. He must come to God as his Father b. He must come asking for good things[DS4]

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

T. The Key to Prayer: Persevering in Prayer, 7:7-11

(7:7-11) **Introduction**: "Ask...seek...knock": the Lord commands and challenges us to *persevere* in prayer.

1. What is persevering prayer (v.7)?
2. Why persevere in prayer (v.8-10)?
3. How does a person persevere in prayer (v.11)?

1 (7:7) **Persevering Prayer**: What is persevering prayer? It is asking, seeking, and knocking until the answer is received, found, or opened. It is being so obsessed with getting something that a person never gives up until God responds. The words ask, seek, and knock are in the present tense. A person is to keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking. He is to persist in prayer. The words *receive*, *find*, and *open* are also in the present tense (Mt.7:8). This shows that the answer to prayer is more than just a promise for the future. The person who perseveres in prayer possesses the answer now. Perhaps the thing has not yet happened, but by faith the believer knows that God has heard his prayer (cp. 1 Jn.5:14-15). (Cp. Eph.6:18.) Christ taught several important lessons about prayer.

1. True prayer is persevering prayer. God expects all of our prayers to be persevering. When we sense a real need to pray, we not only ask, but we seek and knock. We do not play around and glibly murmer a prayer. We pray, really pray.
2. Prayer is to be often. Christ commanded prayer. He pointedly said: "Ask...seek...knock." And, as pointed out above, He demanded that we pray often and pray with intensity.
3. The answers to our prayers are assured (v.9-10).
   a. God is not reluctant to give. He is not sitting back disinterested and unconcerned about our welfare. He is as a loving father is to his child—loving and caring. He will not refuse the request of His dear child.
   b. God will not mock our requests. He does not give grudgingly (Jas.1:5). He does not even hesitate to give. And what He gives is not of less quality than what an earthly father gives. God does not give ragged substitutes. He gives exactly, or better than, what we ask (v.11; Eph.3:20).
4. The thing wanted must be in God's will. It must not be asked from selfish desires and motives. God gives only what is good and wholesome for us (1 Jn.5:14-15; cp. Jas.1:17; 4:2-3).
5. True prayer, persevering prayer, acknowledges our dependence upon God. When we are genuinely in need, we come to God and ask and seek and knock. This has been the experience of all believers time and again.

The very fact that we are asking, seeking, and knocking demonstrates that we are truly dependent upon God. We are His children and He is our Father. Christ said that true prayer is prayer that really means business: it is sincere and genuine in its requests, and it keeps on asking and asking until God answers.

Thought 1. There is more to prayer than just asking. A person asks, then he seeks and knocks at the door of heaven until God grants the request. Note two things.

1) Seeking contains the idea that we seek to meet the request ourselves. This is especially true if the request can be met by human effort. There certainly is no idea of sluggishness or complacency in the tone of "ask...seek...knock." The thrust is action, a *get-to-it* attitude.
2) Knocking contains two ideas. First, we approach every door that we can until the right door opens. We certainly would not pound and pound away at the same door. We must move about knocking until the right door is opened. Second, we must continue knocking at the door of heaven. We must wrestle with God, not giving Him rest until He opens. Such action shows dependency upon Him. And coming to Him in fellowship and communication is bound to please Him, just as such communication pleases an earthly father.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Lk.21:36).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:7) **Persevering Prayer**: there is a difference between the words ask, seek, and knock.

1. The word "ask" says the following.
   a. We ask when there is a need or want.
   b. We ask when there is someone who has plenty and who can give what we need or want.
2. The word "seek" says the following.
   a. We seek when we need or want something of value.
   b. We seek when we ourselves are responsible for finding what we need or want.
3. The word "knock" says the following.
   a. We knock when we are shut out and need or want entrance.
   b. We knock when there is someone on the other side who can open to us.

Note: Christ says our prayers are answered. We receive and find, and the door is opened to us.

2 (7:8-10) **Prayer**: why persevere in prayer? There are three reasons.

1. Prayer is conditional. Christ is pointed: if we ask, we receive. If we do not ask, we do not receive. If we seek, we find. If we do not seek, we do not find. If we knock, it is opened to us. If we do not knock, it is not opened to us.

"Ye have not because ye ask not" (Jas.4:3).

Thought 1. Failing to persevere in prayer shames God and ourselves. True prayer is persevering prayer. Our genuineness and sincerity are known by how much we persevere in prayer.

1) We show disrespect to the Giver when we ask and walk away before receiving what we ask.
2) We show our gross insincerity when we seek once or twice and stop.
3) We leave any resident questioning when we knock once or twice and walk away before he comes or has time to open.

2. Every believer is heard, and every prayer is answered. It is not just the believers who are well-known—the leaders and official laborers—whom God hears and answers; He hears everyone who "asks and seeks and knocks."

3. God cares *much more* than an earthly father cares. God can be approached as Father. Above all others, He knows what a father should be. Whatever good is within earthly fathers has come from Him. He made fathers. He put within their hearts an *instinctive attachment and love and desire to nurture*. Therefore, we can expect Him to be personally attached to us and to love and nurture us (cp.Ps.103:13).

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(7:8) **Prayer**: why does God not always answer our prayers immediately? Why is it necessary to ask and seek and knock and to keep on asking and seeking and knocking? Why do we need to ask at all when God knows our needs even before we ask?

There are at least four reasons.

1. Prayer teaches us to communicate and fellowship with God and to trust and seek God more and more. When God holds back the giving, we keep coming to talk and share with Him more and more. Just as a human father longs for our fellowship, our heavenly Father longs for our fellowship.
2. Prayer teaches us both patience and hope in God and His promises. When God does not give immediately, we patiently (enduringly) keep coming into His presence, waiting and hoping in what He has promised us (Mt.21:22; Jn.14:26; 1 Jn.5:14-15).
3. Prayer teaches us to love God as our Father more and more. Knowing that God is going to answer our prayer and having to wait on the answer causes us to draw closer and closer to God and His gifts. Then when the prayer is answered, our hearts are endeared to Him much more than before.
4. Prayer demonstrates how deeply we trust God and how much we love and depend upon Him. A person who really trusts God—who really knows he is going to receive what he has asked—will bring more and more concerns to God. He will come to God in prayer more and more. But the person who is not quite sure about receiving will only occasionally come, usually only in emergencies. God easily sees how much we love and trust Him by our prayer life.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(7:8) **Prayer—Promise—Hope**: when we pray as Christ says, we have our request immediately. He assures us, yet the answer is not always in our hands immediately. What then does Christ mean? There are two ways we receive things whether dealing with men or God.

1. We receive things by promise and hope. If some reliable person promises something to us, we know beyond question the gift is ours. (Cp. monthly interest promised on money deposited in savings.) What we tend to forget is this: the promise is as much a fact as an immediate receipt is. The only difference between promise and receipt is time, and whether we are willing to patiently wait and demonstrate our belief in the Giver and the gift. If the Giver is reliable, then His promise is sure: the gift is ours. It will be handed to us when the time and conditions are right.

Now, note two simple but sure things.

   a. Promise and hope are as sure as receiving immediately if the Giver is reliable.
   b. Promise and hope are as sure as the Giver. If the Giver is reliable, the promised gift is coming at the appointed time.

2. We receive things by acceptance—just receiving the gift when it is handed to us.

> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**

3 (7:11) **Prayer**: How does a person persevere in prayer?

1. The believer must come to God as his Father. Christ explicitly tells us how to come to God.
   a. We must come to God as "Our Father which is in heaven." The words "in heaven" acknowledge His sovereignty. God is able to do whatever we ask, and we are to expect Him to grant our requests.
   b. We must come to God as we come to an earthly father: freely and openly, communicating and fellowshipping. And we are to come often, not neglecting the love, respect, and trust due Him.

Note the words "how much more." Whatever earthly parents are, God is much more. He is much more as a Person and as a Father. He knows our every request; and He has the knowledge, intelligence, wisdom, and power to grant them.

Thought 1. God has taken the initiative to create the family relationship with us. He has adopted us as children of God. Therefore, we can come to Him in much more trust and confidence than we can to our earthly fathers. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.4:5-6.)

> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:15-16).**
>
> **"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

Thought 2. God is love (1 Jn.4:8, 16). He is so loving He compares His love and tenderness to that of a mother (Is.66:13).

2. The believer must come to God for good, wholesome things (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.7:11).

Thought 1. Earthly fathers are human and sometimes carnal, and some fathers are even deliberately evil. Note three things about earthly fathers.

1) Earthly fathers sometimes make mistakes in what they give. They can and do give stone and serpent-like things to their sons, not deliberately, but mistakenly. They are simply deceived by what the world calls acceptable and good. But God is not deceived. God gives only "good things," things which are truly wholesome and beneficial. If we ask for that which is wrong and harmful to us, God will quickly and pointedly say, "No," or else He will give what is really needed.
2) Earthly fathers are sometimes ill-natured, cross, provoking, and wrong in their response to a child's request. But not God. He always understands and knows exactly how to respond and what and when to give.
3) Earthly fathers are sometimes evil and harmful, threatening and dangerous, forsaking and deserting. But not God. God knows exactly how to meet the need of the son or daughter who is forsaken or deserted (Ps.27:10).

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk.11:13).**
>
> **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:28).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).**
>
> **"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).**
>
> **"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).**
>
> **"And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (Jer.24:7).**
>
> **"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(7:11) **Good** (agathos): wholesome, beneficial, honorable, needful qualities.

	U. The Summit of Ethics: The Golden Rule & Two Choices in Life, 7:12-14 (Lk.6:31; 13:23-24)	and the prophets.	
1 The golden rule of life a. Demands true justice b. Includes real love c. Teaches the whole law	12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law	13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.	**2 The two choices in life** a. Two gates: Wide vs. narrow[DS2] b. Two ways: Easy vs. hard[DS2] c. Two ends: Destruction vs. life[DS3] d. Two travelers: The wise vs. the unwise[DS4] e. Two decisions: No effort vs. seeking to find[DS5]

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

U. The Summit of Ethics: The Golden Rule and Two Choices in Life, 7:12-14

(7:12-14) **Introduction**: this Scripture contains two of the most well-known things Jesus ever said. They deal with two of the basic issues of life. (1) There is the issue of righteousness. How can a person live righteously, that is, have a right relationship with his neighbor? (2) There is the issue of life. How can a person be sure he has life, real life?

1. The golden rule of life (v.12).
2. The two choices in life (v.13-14).

1 (7:12) **Golden Rule—Righteousness—Justice**: the golden rule is probably the most well-known thing Jesus ever said. It is the summit of ethics, behavior, righteousness, and godliness. It is a very practical statement of God's love; that is, God has done to us just as He wants us to do to Him. God has treated us as He wants us to treat Him (and everyone else).

The golden rule reveals the heart of God. It shows us exactly how God's heart longs for us to live and act. It is a simple statement revealing what love really is and what life in a perfect world is like. It tells believers that they are to live as the golden rule dictates while still on the earth before being transferred into the heavenly world or dimension.

There are four significant facts that set the golden rule apart from all other teachings and make it the summit of human behavior.

1. The golden rule is a one sentence statement that embraces all human behavior. The fact that all law and all love can be stated in one simple sentence is amazing. The simple statement of the golden rule includes all "the law and the prophets" (Mt.7:12).
2. The golden rule demands *true* law and justice. Note the wording: it is not negative and passive, yet it tells man how not to behave. It truly restrains man. For example, the golden rule is teaching a man not to lie, steal, cheat, or injure. And it is teaching much more.
3. The golden rule is concerned with true love and with positive, active behavior.
   a. It is more than not doing wrong (lying, stealing, cheating).
   b. It is more than just doing good (helping, caring, giving).
   c. It is looking, searching, and seeking for ways to do the good that you want others to do to you. It is seeking ways to treat others just as you want them to treat you.
4. The golden rule teaches the whole law. The whole law is contained in the words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39-40). Every human being would like to have all others treat them perfectly: to love and care for them to the ultimate degree and to express that love and care. The believer is to likewise love and care for others while still on earth. He is to give earth a taste of heaven before all things end. Men who are treated so supremely and get a taste of heaven are more likely to turn to God.

> **"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).**
>
> **"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" (Ro.15:1-2).**
>
> **"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal.5:14).**
>
> **"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).**
>
> **"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).**
>
> **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl.12:13).**
>
> **"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).**
>
> **"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).**

Thought 1. A one-sentence *golden rule* has to do three things.

1) Demand true justice: insist that men be treated justly in all situations.
2) Include real love: insist that men actively do good and even go beyond to do more than good.
3) Teach the whole law: insist that men do all that the law teaches.

Thought 2. Three things are required of men.
1) To know what Christ taught.
2) To believe what Christ taught.
3) To do what Christ taught. It is not enough to know or to believe the golden rule. We must live it.

Thought 3. Two simple rules can revolutionize a person's life (or society itself).
1) Treating God as we want God to treat us.
2) Treating others as we want others to treat us.

Thought 4. In practice, the golden rule says several things.
1) We should not treat men the way they treat us: good for good, evil for evil.
2) We should not treat men the way they think they should be treated.
3) We should not treat men the way we think they should be treated.
4) But, we should treat men the way we want them to treat us.

Thought 5. Note several significant truths.
1) Our profession is empty unless we are *living out* the golden rule. The golden rule condemns us and shows us how far short we come.
2) How do we want men to treat us? The judgment as to how we wish to be treated is ours. We are totally responsible for our conclusion. Our conclusion is critical, for it is how we are to treat others. It is the basis of judgment upon ourselves. We will be judged for how we actually treat others.
3) The golden rule makes all men equal. How we wish to be treated is how we should treat others. And how others wish to be treated is how they should treat us. All people—the wealthy, famous, and powerful as well as the poor, unknown, and unimportant—all are to treat each other just as they would wish to be treated. If men would practice the golden rule, the ills of society would be solved: hunger, poverty, disease, and sin.
4) The golden rule would bring about a world of peace overnight if men would just commit themselves to it.
5) The course of wisdom is to live by the golden rule. It is the wisest thing that a man can do. Why? It assures many friends and the very best in life. Many will draw close to a person who treats them well all the time, and they will respond with like treatment, at least a good deal of the time. Realistically, not everyone will respond, but many will.
6) One way to practice the golden rule is to ask the simple question: "How would I want to be treated?" Then treat the other person that way.
7) The golden rule says very much the same thing as the second great law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

Note that Christ says both the golden rule and the two great commandments contain all the law (Mt.7:12; cp. Mt.22:40). The laws of God and the laws of men would both be obeyed if we practiced the golden rule and the two great commandments.

2 (7:13-14) **Life—Decision**: the two choices in life. The picture is not of a man's standing at a crossroads, as some paint the scene. What man faces is a single gate, not two gates. There are two gates, but man faces and sees only one. Man cannot see the narrow gate; it has to be searched for and found. (Note the words "find it," v.14.)

The charge is forceful: turn from the wide gate (worldliness), search for and find and enter the narrow gate.

1. There are two gates (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.7:13-14 for discussion).
2. There are two ways (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.7:13-14 for discussion).
3. There are two ends (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.7:13-14 for discussion).
4. There are two travellers (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.7:14 for discussion).
5. There are two decisions (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.7:14 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:13-14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two gates, one wide and one narrow. Every man stands before the wide gate. It is immediately before him, right before his face. It is the only gate that faces him; in fact, it is so close to him that no entrance is necessary. All he has to do is take a step and he has entered it.

The narrow gate is not seen. A person has to search for it in order to find it. It is both narrow and facing in the opposite direction from the wide gate. This means it...

- is not immediately nor naturally seen.
- can be found only if one turns (repents) to find it.
- has to be sought.
- is difficult to enter when found (narrow).

The point is striking and forceful.

1. The way to eternal life is very specific and very few will choose it (cp. Jer.21:8).
2. There is no choice. There is *only one way*, not many.
3. The way is Jesus Christ. If a person wishes eternal life, he has to come to God through Jesus Christ (Jn.14:6; Acts 4:12).

Thought 1. The wide gate is the world. The narrow gate is the Kingdom of Heaven. The wide gate stands open. It is so wide that four things can be said about it.
1) There is not a single hindrance to entering the wide gate. Nothing keeps a person from entering it. It is as if a person naturally stands before its wide open doors.

2) Plenty of people can enter and are entering its wide doors at any given time. A person has plenty of company in entering the wide gate.
3) It appears to be the only gate to enter because there...
   - is so much growth around it.
   - are so many people entering it.
   - is so much activity going on.

   The point is that a person does not even think of another gate, much less look for one.
4) The wide gate is wide enough to include all: all philosophies and beliefs no matter how extreme, all appetites and passions, all liberties and licenses, all sin and selfishness. The gate is swung wide open so that any and all can enter.

> **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).**

Thought 2. The narrow gate is so narrow it cannot be seen. This says several things.
1) We must turn from the wide gate: turn from following the crowd; turn from the pull of the activity and attractions around the gate.
2) We must search for the narrow gate and seek it out diligently.
3) We must enter immediately when we find the narrow gate. However, it is hard to enter for it is very narrow.

Thought 3. How does a person enter the narrow gate (heaven)?
1) He must repent: turn from the wide gate, the crowd, the activity and attractions around the gate (the world).

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
> **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).**

2) He must confess that he does not know the narrow gate (heaven); the location (belief); the activity around it (righteousness, good works); and the attraction of it (hope, spiritual qualities, and real life), and that he needs help to find it. (See note—Eph.1:3.)

> **"They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ro.3:12).**

3) He must be born again:

> **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...." (Jn.3:3).**
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**

Thought 4. How does a person enter the narrow gate?
1) A person must stoop and bow down: become as a little child (Mk.10:15; Lk.18:17).
2) A person must strip down: put off the old man (Eph.4:23-24; Col.4:10).
3) A person must struggle: struggle against the flesh (2 Cor.6:17; Gal 5:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(7:13-14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two ways or two roads to life—one easy and one hard.

The broad and easy way can be followed without thought. There is plenty of space to walk; there is plenty of space for the attractive things of the world to grow and entice a person; there is plenty of space for a person to wander about. It is difficult to wander off its path. The broad way is the way of the unthoughtful, the undisciplined, the lazy, the worldly, the ungodly, the materialistic, and the carnal.

The narrow and hard way requires commitment, determination, discipline, control, and self-denial. There is little space along its path. It is difficult to get through. A person has to stay alert at all times lest he wander out of the way off its path. The narrow way is the way of the thinking, the disciplined, the responsible, and the spiritual.

The two travellers may be contrasted as the thoughtless vs. the thinking; the undisciplined vs. the disciplined, the lazy vs. the responsible, the materialistic or carnal vs. the spiritual-minded.

Thought 1. The broad way is the easy way, the way of the world. The narrow way is the hard way, the way of heaven, the way of faith, hope, and righteousness. The broad way is very broad and ever so easy to travel.
1) It has very few hedges, or restrictions, or stops to slow a person's journey down. A person can travel right along as he wishes with few prohibitions. He may stop as he is attracted or invited.
2) It offers many attractions along its way. There are attractions that stir the mind and the flesh, aesthetic values and sensual desires, cultural interests and pleasurable stimulators. There are many, many attractions that appeal to all the sensations of a person's nature.

> **"Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths" (Pr.2:15).**

"...the way of transgressors is hard" (Pr.13:15).

"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Is.59:8).

Thought 2. The narrow way is very narrow, and it is hard and difficult to travel.

1) The way (road) is surrounded by a frightening, threatening, and swampy wilderness. Resistence is needed. The temptation to return to the broad way is sometimes strong. Self-denial and the will to struggle are needed to overcome the flesh and the fear.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal.5:17).

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pt.5:10).

2) The way (road) is unpaved, covered with gravel and rocks. It takes strong will and determination and personal sacrifice to stick to the road (Ro.12:1-2). A person must endure hardness and sufferings.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:3-4).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(7:13-14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two ends. The broad way *ends* in destruction and in death. In fact, even as a person walks along the broad way, he is said "to be perishing [apoleian]."

The narrow way ends in life, that is, in "*the fulness of life*" and in "*the highest ideal of life*" (Jn.10:10. See note—1 Cor.1:18 where Paul draws a contrast between "those who are perishing" and those who are "being saved" [Grk.].)

Thought 1. The broad way or road ends. There is an end to it, but the traveller does not pay any attention to its end. The road appears to be so broad and long as he travels day by day that he figures he will know when he comes to the end. There is little chance he can miss it, so he thinks. But he overlooks one thing. The broad road has so many side attractions to draw and embrace the traveller's attention that he often runs upon the end without knowing it. He fails to see that the end is immediately ahead; therefore, he runs off the end without having prepared himself to face the abyss.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death" (Pr.11:19).

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pr.14:12).

"The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord" (Pr.15:9).

Thought 2. The narrow way does not end. It leads to a glorious world that is yet unseen, but it opens up an unbelievable life to the traveller.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev.21:1. See note—Eph.1:3.)

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(7:14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two travellers, the wise vs. the unwise. The unwise are *many*. They enter the wide gate, travel the broad and easy way, and end up perishing and experiencing destruction.

The wise are the *few*. The few search for, find, and enter the narrow gate. They travel the narrow and hard way and end up in *life*. Few experience the fulness of life in its highest ideal.

Thought 1. Many travellers desire the crowd and the attractions of the broad way so much that they are willing to run the risk of wrecking among so much traffic.

Thought 2. Many travellers on the broad road figure this: since so many are travelling the broad road, they could not be wrong. All the *paths* taken within the broad way must end up at the same end. And they are right; the travellers of the broad way, no matter which *path* they take, do end up at the same end.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock....and every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand" (Mt.7:24, 26).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Pr.12:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(7:14) **Salvation—Life—Decision**: there are two decisions, no effort vs. seeking to find. The wide gate requires no decision to enter. A person stands before it automatically by being in the world. Christ does not say a person has to enter it. To enter the gate requires no energy, no search, no commitment. A person is there, facing the gate already. All he has to do is to begin his journey in life and follow its broad and easy course.

The narrow gate requires a decision to enter. It requires (1) a personal decision, (2) a firm determination, and (3) a commitment of energy and effort to search out the entrance. And once the narrow gate has been found, an immediate and definite decision to enter is required: "Enter ye in" is the striking and clear decision that has to be made.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh.24:15).

"Behold, I have set before you the way of life and the way of death" (Jer.21:8; cp. Dt.30:19; cp. v.15).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

The wide gate is *the world* and the narrow gate is *heaven*. The broad way is the *way of the world*, and the narrow way is the *way of heaven*. The broad way leads to *destruction* (perishing) and the narrow way leads to *life*. Many are entering the wide gate and perishing. *Only a few* are entering the narrow gate and living.

Thought 1. Some seek the narrow gate and never enter it.

1) Some come upon it, but they decide it is too narrow for them. It requires too much effort, discipline, and self-denial to enter.
2) Some seek unthoughtfully. They carelessly walk right by it without ever seeing it.
3) Some seek half-heartedly. They still look back to the wide gate so as not to lose sight of it. They miss the narrow gate because of insincerity and lack of discipline.
4) Some seek and run across it, but they do not like what they see: the restraints, the discipline, the gravel and rocky covering. Therefore, they turn back to the wide gate.

Thought 2. The narrow gate is narrow and hard to find. But it is not shut. It is open to all who seek and find it. The invitation is out to whomever will enter it.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Lk.14:23).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

	V. The Warning About False Prophets, 7:15-20	17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.	**4 Their true nature: Is not good, but corrupt and evil**
1 Their presence: Beware **2 Their chief trait** a. Outwardly: As sheep b. Inwardly: Are wolves **3 Their revealing mark: The fruit they gather**	15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?	18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.	**5 Their hopeless fruit: Cannot bear good fruit, but only corrupt & evil fruit** **6 Their terrible future: Judgment**[DSI] **7 Their fruit: Exposes them**

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

V. The Warning about False Prophets, 7:15-20

(7:15-20) **Introduction—False Prophets**: note what Christ is talking about in this passage. He is talking about prophets, men who proclaim and teach the gospel. There are some who are false prophets, men who proclaim and teach a false gospel. Christ says seven things about false prophets. (Cp. Gal.1:6-9.)

1. Their presence: beware (v.15).
2. Their chief trait: they appear as sheep, but inwardly they are wolves (v.15).
3. Their revealing mark: the fruit they gather (v.16).
4. Their true nature: it is not good, but corrupt and evil (v.17).
5. Their hopeless fruit: they cannot bear good fruit, but only corrupt and evil fruit (v.18).
6. Their terrible future: judgment (v.19).
7. Their fruit: exposes them (v.20).

1 (7:15) **False Prophets**: false prophets are present. They are among us. Note two emphases.

1. Christ says: "Beware." The word means to take heed, guard, watch, keep yourself. The word is emphatic; the warning is clear and strong.
2. Christ warns us: one of the major things that keeps us from seeking the right gate and the right way (salvation and heaven) is false teachers. (See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.7:13-14.)

> **"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:3-4).**

2 (7:15) **False Prophets**: the chief trait of false prophets is that they "come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

1. Sheep's clothing: *outwardly* they appear as all ministers and sheep of God in profession, behavior, call, position, and message (2 Cor.11:12-15).
2. Ravening wolves: *inwardly*, false teachers are anything but sheep.
   a. Some false teachers are just like wolves in that they may not be aware that they are *not* what they should be. They go about doing what they know to do, not knowing that what they do is corrupt and evil (v.17). They appear as sheep, but consume all they can in order to fill whatever appetite—personal conviction or doctrine—they have.
   b. Some false teachers are just like wolves in that they are out for self and personal gain: ego, recognition, fame, prestige, position, livelihood, career, and comfort. They are concerned primarily with realizing their own motives and purposes and with pushing their own thoughts and formulas for succeeding in life.
   c. Some false teachers are just like wolves in that they want a pack in which to move and with which to identify. They want a following to acknowledge their lead in intelligence and creativity or knowledge and ability. They appear as sheep, but they howl their own formulas (false gospels), crying aloud: "This is the way, walk in it." When possible, they use all the media they can: screen, radio, journals, magazines, books, newspapers, pamphlets, and tracts.

Thought 1. False teachers are in sheep's clothing. They can easily deceive.

1) They appear as sheep or messengers of light (2 Cor.11:13-15). They appear harmless, innocent, and good. They start out as excellent examples of society, but they lack two things: a life and a testimony changed by the Word of God.

> **"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.**

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:13-15).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

2) They secretly and deceivingly preach heresies (2 Pt.2:1-3; cp. Gal.1:6-10; 1 Cor.15:1-4). They proclaim justice, morality, righteousness, and good. They teach mental and emotional and physical strength—all the high ideals and commendable ideas of men. But they never preach the true gospel of the living Lord.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal.1:6-10).

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve" (1 Cor.15:1-5).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:1-3).

Thought 2. Inwardly false prophets are wolves, real wolves, knowingly or unknowingly. They may appear as sheep, but they are wolves.

1) They have not confessed the *Lord Jesus*: that God has raised Him from the dead.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

2) They have not "put off the old man" of the world.

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph.4:22).

3) They have not been "renewed in the spirit of their mind" nor "put on the new man."

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

4) They have not been put into the ministry by God. (Note especially 1 Tim.1:12, the fact that God counts the men whom He chooses as *trustworthy*.)

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

Thought 3. A false prophet sometimes does not know he is false. He is *deceiving* because he is *being deceived*.

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4. Cp. 2 Tim.3:1-15.)

3 (7:16) **False Prophets**: how can we tell if a prophet is false? There is one revealing mark: the fruit he gathers. A false prophet is known by the fruit he feeds upon and the fruit he feeds to others (see outlines and notes—Jn.15:1-8). If he *feeds himself* on thorns and thistles and not on grapes and figs, that is one way to tell. If what he *feeds to others* is thorns and thistles instead of grapes and figs, that is another way to tell.

Thorns and thistles are false food, worldliness (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.13:7, 22). Grapes and figs are true food. There is only one true food for the soul of man: the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. (See note—Jn.6:1-71; outlines and notes—Jn.6:30-36; 6:41-51. Cp. all outlines and notes Jn.6:1-71; Jn.17:14-16; 17:17-19; cp. Jn.5:24; 1 Pt.2:2-3.) A prophet must feed upon the truth of the Lord and His Word, and he must feed the same food to others. Any other source of food for the human soul is false food: it is thorns and thistles (worldliness). If eaten or served to others, it will choke the life out of the soul (Mt.13:7. Cp. 1 Jn.2:15-16; 2 Cor.6:17-18; Ro.12:1-2.)

Note that Christ asks a question: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" This can mean two things.

1. Does the prophet himself feed upon a worldly nourishment or a nourishment of Christ and His Word?
2. Does a person seek grapes and figs among thorns and thistles, among false prophets? A person knows false prophets by their fruits.

Thought 1. "Ye shall know them by their fruit."
1) "Try [test] the spirits," the prophets (1 Jn.4:1).
2) "Prove [examine] all things," the prophet's fruit (1 Th.5:21).

Thought 2. We cannot always tell a tree by its appearance (bark and leaves), but we can always tell it by its fruit.

Thought 3. Fruit has to do with two things.
1) What a person bears in his own life.
2) What a person bears in the lives of others.

A prophet is to be measured by the fruit borne in his own life and the fruit borne by him in other lives (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8).

4 (7:17) **Prophets, False**: What is the true nature of a prophet? Note something critically important: a tree is not judged by a bad piece of fruit here and there, but by the good fruit it bears. Every tree produces some bad fruit, yet the tree is not cast away. A tree is not rejected unless it *leans toward* bearing bad fruit. In testing and examining prophets, we must observe not single acts here and there; but the tenor, the lean, the whole behavior of their lives. How important! Such considerations as the following are given in Scripture.

1. Their preaching and teaching. Are they "enemies of the cross of Christ"?

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2).

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Ph.3:18).

2. Their minds. Do they usually keep their minds on carnal or on spiritual things?

"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:19).

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5).

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:3-5).

3. Their appetite. Can it be said, "God is their belly"?

"Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:19).

4. Their day-to-day ethics or behavior. Is it their practice to live immorally, either vicariously (through what they look at, watch, read, talk, and joke about) or through what they do?

"Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adul-

terers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:8-10).

Now, how can Christ call a man corrupt who does good in the eyes of the world? How can Christ say the man's fruit, his good works, are evil? How can preaching strong character and moral justice, feeding and clothing, caring for and looking after the physical and emotional welfare of a person be wrong? It is not wrong. Christ is not saying social justice and welfare are wrong. What is evil is concentrating *only* upon social welfare. "Man shall not live by bread alone," not by the physical only, "but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt.4:4).

A prophet who only preaches and takes care of the physical and mental is corrupt in that he shortchanges and deceives people. He does not proclaim and minister the whole truth, but half truths. He preaches and teaches mental health in spiritual terms, but he lulls people to sleep spiritually. He leads them into thinking they are in good standing with God, but this is not the teaching of Scripture. They are not acceptable to God when only their physical and mental needs are ministered to, regardless of the spiritual terms used. They must have their spirits *made and kept* right with God. False prophets "are enemies of the cross of Christ" (Ph.3:18). Thus, Christ says they are corrupt and bear fruit of evil.

Thought 1. A false prophet's *true* nature is not good, no matter what he or others think and profess (see note—Mt.7:18).

5 (7:18) **Prophets—False Prophets**: the false prophet's fruit is hopeless. He cannot bear good fruit, but only corrupt and evil fruit. The results of his life and ministry are "evil," so says Christ. Why? His message at best is only half true. It is deceiving in that it leads a man into thinking he is acceptable to God when really he is not. Men believe what their prophets (ministers, pastors, and teachers) tell them and live before them. Thus, to share only part of the truth is evil and destructive.

What are some of the *evil fruits* (the evil gospel) proclaimed and taught by false prophets? Scripture covers the following.

1. There is the gospel which primarily stresses legalism and works, the efforts of man to do enough good to become acceptable to God. (See note—Mt.23:4; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.6:7.)

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?...For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Gal.3:1-2, 10-11).

2. There is the gospel which primarily stresses grace and faith and minimizes behavior. A person can be worldly as long as he takes care of his spirit at the appointed times of worship on Sunday (Ro.6:1f).

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Ro.6:1-2).

"Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:8-11).

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:14, 17).

3. There is the gospel which primarily stresses negativism, rules and regulations to control every act of behavior: "Touch not, taste not."

"Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body [personal discipline]; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh" (Col.2:21-23).

4. There is the gospel which primarily stresses physical and mental health in spiritual terms (see note—Mt.7:17 for more discussion).

5. There is the gospel which primarily stresses formalism and ritual, externals and ceremonies—a person is acceptable to God just so he is baptized and somewhat faithful to the church and its rituals and ordinances.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

6. There is the gospel which primarily stresses separation and monasticism: a gospel that takes a person out of the world (see outlines and notes—Mt.5:14; 5:14-15).

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (Jn.17:15).

7. There is the gospel which primarily stresses the true spiritual needs of man, but ignores and neglects the physical needs.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:41-43; cp. Mt.25:34-46).

Thought 1. Good fruit can never be expected or produced by a corrupt tree.

Thought 2. Evil fruit is constantly being reaped from a corrupt tree. A false prophet is lulling more and more persons into thinking they are acceptable and deepening their faith in a false gospel.

6 (7:19) **False Prophets**: the terrible future of the false prophet is severe judgment (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.7:19). When a tree leans toward bearing bad fruit, it is...

- marked as corrupt.
- cut down.
- cast into the fire.

Christ says the same fate is to be the destiny of the false prophets. The terrible judgment coming upon false prophets is given in several passages.

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taken away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit....If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:2, 6).

"Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous *shall not inherit* the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:8-10).

"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:15).

"But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was" (2 Tim.3:9).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire....Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core....And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 5-7, 11, 14-15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:19) **Judgment—Hell Fire**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22.

7 (7:20) **False Prophets**: their fruit exposes them (see notes—Mt.7:16; 7:17; 7:18 for discussion).

	W. The Warning About False Pretenses: Who Shall Enter the Kingdom of Heaven, 7:21-23 (Lk.13:26-27)	heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?	**2 The plea of false profession: Works** a. Plea 1: Prophesied & cast out evil spirits b. Plea 2: Great works c. Plea 3: Served in the Lord's name
1 The law of entrance a. A person must do more than profess b. A person must do God's will	21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in	23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.	**3 The rejection of false profession**[DSI] a. Bc. Christ never knew b. Bc. worked iniquity

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

W. The Warning About False Pretenses: Who Shall Enter the Kingdom of Heaven, 7:21-23

(7:21-23) **Introduction—Profession Only—False Profession**: Who will enter the kingdom of heaven? Will everyone who professes Christ enter? The Lord says, "No. There are some who profess my name only...." The *false professor* is a person who uses the Christian's vocabulary, recites his creeds and prayers, attends his services, participates in his functions, yet he does not know nor accept the Lord's Word. He does not obey the Lord's Word (Mt.7:18; Lk.6:46). He does not really know Christ—not personally. Therefore, Christ says he shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. The law of entrance (v.21).
2. The plea of false profession: works (v.22).
3. The rejection of false profession (v.23).

1 (7:21) **Profession Only—False Profession**: the law of entrance. A person cannot get into heaven by professing that Jesus Christ is Lord; he can get into heaven only by doing the will of God. This is the law that governs the gate and entrance into heaven. Note two points.

1. A person must do more than profess to enter heaven. There are two kinds of people who say "Lord, Lord," making a false profession. First, there are those who profess and do very little else. They do not hesitate to talk about their religion or church and to express confidence in it. They feel religion has its place in the lives of men and in the structure of society. They attend church, give and serve others as much as is needed in order to make them feel comfortable with themselves and acceptable to God. Some feel comfortable and acceptable attending a few services, giving a little and serving only when approached. Others need more, so they do more.

Second, there are those who profess and do a tremendous work for their religion and society. They are as sincere as can be; and they call Christ, "Lord, Lord" in all the areas of religious life, in...

- prayer
- witnessing
- teaching
- dress
- confessions
- rituals
- formulas
- giving
- appearance
- conversation
- preaching
- writing
- ordinances
- activities
- helping others
- church or synagogue attendance

Why is this person rejected and shut out from heaven, a person who calls Christ "Lord" and labors so diligently "in His name?" There are three primary reasons.

a. Profession alone fails to do more than profess. Profession alone is the big "I." Note the words, "Have we not" done all these things, "many wonderful works" (v.22). They were wonderful works, but when we stand before God, what we have done will count for nothing. In that day (Judgment Day) a genuine believer is not going to be professing what he has done. What he has done is nothing compared to what Christ has done. He is going to be worshipping Christ! This is the critical point: profession only shows just how inadequate our understanding of God and ourselves really is. It shows just how centered we are upon our own ability and goodness.

Just think and be honest: How can anyone ever stand before the Supreme Being and Intelligence of the Universe, before God Almighty, and claim anything? If such a *Person as God* is going to let any man enter heaven, it is going to be because He wills to accept the man, not because the man has done anything. Profession alone does not *understand* or else rejects the true nature of God and man—the true nature of God and man as revealed by the Bible and witnessed by history. History exposes the selfishness, greed, and evil of every nation and person of the world day by day.

b. *Profession alone* does not do God's will. *Profession alone* is "a form of godliness, but denies the power thereof" (2 Tim.3:5). This simply means that a person goes through all the forms of religious life, yet he denies the power of godliness. What is godliness?

> **"That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself... For He [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:19, 21).**
>
> **"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).**

This is the crux of the matter: the only Lord that God knows is the Lord Jesus Christ whom He sent from heaven (Jn.3:16). God sent the Lord Jesus to die for our sins, to die so that through belief...

- we might be counted free of sin's penalty.
- we might be justified, that is, counted perfectly righteous and acceptable to God because of Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; note—5:1 for discussion.)

God sent the Lord Jesus to arise from the dead, to arise so that through belief...

- we might be counted as *new men* in His resurrected life.
- we might be acceptable *in Him* to live eternally with God. (Again, see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; note—5:1.)

Anyone who denies the power of godliness—the power of Christ's death and resurrection to impart forgiveness and life to him—shall not enter heaven. All his works and religion, no matter how good, are only a form of godliness (see notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18).

c. *Profession alone* acknowledges and honors self, not Christ. Note something of critical importance. When Christ died *for us*, He was the One who had done all the good, all the work of salvation. We have done nothing. He was the One who died; therefore, He is the One who is to be honored and lifted up and praised. He is the Subject, the only Subject, of redemption.

This is the very thing God is after: the honor of His dear Son. It is the man who trusts Christ's death and resurrection who honors Christ. And it is that man who shall be allowed to enter heaven and that man alone.

> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).**
>
> **"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues" (Ps.78:35-36).**
>
> **"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (Ezk.33:31-32).**

2. A person must do God's will in order to enter heaven. Note: Christ is talking about people who are interested in heaven. He is not talking about those who are not interested in heaven. Heaven should be the final goal of every man. It should be the place every man seeks to enter. However, not everyone interested in heaven will enter heaven. There are some who call Him "Lord" who will not be allowed to enter. The people who wish to enter heaven must do the will of Him who is in heaven. Who is in heaven? Who is it that controls the entrance into heaven? The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. If a person wishes to enter heaven, he must do the will of Christ's Father, not the will of some other *god* or *prophet*. Now, what is the primary will of God?

> **"This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**

The person who does God's will is the person who *truly believes, obeys, and loves* God's Son.

> **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).**
>
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).**

Thought 1. Christ is claiming that He Himself is to be the future Judge of the world (Jn.5:22, 27). Note the professing person calls upon Him but is rejected by Him.

Thought 2. What do we mean when we call Jesus "Lord"? Do we mean...

- that He was a great teacher?
- that He was a living example of what all good men should be?
- that He was a great martyr, who shows all men how they should embrace a purpose?
- that He was a great man upon whom the Spirit of God rested in a special way? (See notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18.)

Thought 3. In the deepest moments of our thoughts, we know that we need help in living, in particular if we are to escape death and live forever—help from Someone above and beyond ourselves. Why then do we have so much difficulty confessing our need?

Confession and obedience and honor are due God; it is not due man. We are the ones who have a desperate need for life. The person who confesses and obeys and honors God shall enter heaven eternally.

2 (7:22) **False Profession—Self-Righteousness**: the plea of false profession is *works*. There is all the difference in the world between a man who professes that his righteousness is the righteousness of Christ and the man who professes that his works please God and make him acceptable to God.

The first man believes that Christ died for his sins and rose again to give him life; he trusts God to *count him forgiven and righteous* "in Christ's death" and *alive* "in Christ's resurrection" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22; note—5:1; cp. 4:4-5; 4:1-3; 4:1-25). This man works, yes, but he works because of the love of Christ. Christ has done so much for him by imputing righteousness and life to him that he surrenders his life in service to Christ.

The second man works also, but he works to become acceptable to God. He believes his works please God; therefore, he thinks God accepts him because he does good and lives righteously. This man has a *formal* religion, resting his destiny upon his good works. His confidence is in his own goodness and ability. Thereby Christ is not honored; the man is honored (see notes—Mt.7:21-23).

Note the three great pleas of false profession in the Day of Judgment.

1. The great plea to the Lord Himself: "Lord, Lord." The problem is what a person really means by "Lord" (see note, Thought 2—Mt.7:21).

Christ said to His own apostles "Ye call me Master (teacher) and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am" (Jn.13:13). He *is* Lord (Ph.2:5-11; cp. 2 Cor.5:21; Heb.1:1-3; 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18).

> **"[The gospel] concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:3-4).**
>
> **"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).**
>
> **"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).**
>
> **"[God's power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**
>
> **"But [Christ Jesus] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Ph.2:7-10).**

2. The great plea of their profession: "Have we not...done many wonderful works?" The works are wonderful, a tremendous help to mankind. But two things are wrong with the profession of their lives: they rest in their works, and they embrace only half of the gospel (see notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18; 7:21).

> **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).**
>
> **"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Ro.3:20).**
>
> **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).**
>
> **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).**
>
> **"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:4-5).**

3. The great plea of confidence: "Lord, Lord, have we not [done these works] in thy name?" "Lord, You know...You know." But they are deceived. Confidence in self is not God's way. God's way is confidence in Christ and His righteousness (see notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18; cp. note—Mt.7:21).

> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).**
>
> **"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4).**
>
> **"I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me" (Job 33:9).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Pr.20:9).**
>
> **"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**

Thought 1. The three pleas are strong pleas.

1) Plea 1: to have prophesied in Christ's name can mean to have proclaimed, preached, taught, predicted, borne witness to. To have cast out evil spirits can mean to have exorcised demons or to have turned men from evil and the evil one.
2) Plea 2: to have done great works can mean many of the things listed in note Mt.7:21.

3) Plea 3: to have done all "in the Lord's name" can mean that they professed to have lived and to have done all their works for Him. They are pleading that they did honor to the name "Christian"; therefore, they had a good reputation among men. They were dedicated to the church and to the service of mankind and society. Perhaps they were even leaders in their church and society.

Thought 2. Many think they will go to heaven because of what they have done. They think that God will accept them...

- because they have preached and taught and seen people converted from evil (spirits) to good (spirits).
- because they have done many wonderful works.
- because they have done it all "in the Lord's name."

These have an excellent name and reputation among men. They have been faithful and given to their church and its causes. Some have even been leaders in their church and community affairs.

What is their lack? Society asks, where in the world do they come short?

> **"This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another" (1 Jn.3:23).**

God's will is a two-edged sword: it is not only *loving one another*, that is, preaching and teaching and doing many wonderful works. It is first "that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ." To believe is not only believing in the wonderful works that He did but believing in *who He is and all that He did* including the cross and the resurrection (see notes—Mt.7:21; 7:22; Jn.1:34; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31; note—3:32-34; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34. Cp. notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18.)

3 (7:23) **False Profession**: the rejection of false profession is for two reasons.

1. Christ *never knew* the false professors—not personally. False professors do not know Christ personally; they do not acknowledge His redemption and their need for His redemption. They never come to Him for personal salvation. Therefore, Christ never has the chance to know them. In the Day of Judgment He is tragically forced to pronounce the truth: "I never knew you" (Mt.10:32; Jn.3:18 cp. 3:16-18).

> **"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23).**
>
> **"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Mt.25:12).**
>
> **"But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Lk.12:9).**
>
> **"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).**

2. The professor only worked iniquity. The word iniquity (anomia) means lawlessness, wickedness. It is neglect of or opposition to the law of God; it is substituting the will of self in the place of God's will (1 Jn.3:4). It is looking to self or to the world instead of looking to God. It is following the course of self and the desires of self instead of following the course of God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.7:23 for discussion.)

Thought 1. Judgment is to be public: before the many who are pleading, "Lord, Lord."

Thought 2. The *many* will have to depart from God's presence—to go away and be cut off from Him and leave the place where He is. No matter what man may think (in his small world and short life), Christ said the day is coming when He shall say to *many*: "Depart from me."

Thought 3. Why are *many* to be cut off from Christ? Christ said because they "work iniquity." How can anyone who does *good* in the eyes of men be called "a worker of iniquity"? Very simply, "man shall not live by bread [the physical] alone." True, man does live by the physical, but not only by the physical. To stress only the physical, mental, and moral strength of man, even if they are stressed in religious terms, is to miss the gospel (see notes—Mt.7:17; 7:18).

Thought 4. There is a message in the word "depart"—a message that can save us. "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:23) **Depart** (apochoreo): to depart from; to be cut off from; to leave a place; to go away. The idea is the enormous distance, or the great gulf placed between the professor only and the Lord's presence.

> **"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).**
>
> **"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13).**
>
> **"And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.24:51).**
>
> **"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).**
>
> **"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).**

	X. The Wise & Foolish Builder, 7:24-27 (Lk.6:47-49)	that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.	
1 A wise builder: Hears the instructions & obeys them a. He builds a house b. He builds upon a rock c. He faces a storm d. He builds wisely: The difference is the foundation	24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon	26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.	**2 A foolish builder: Hears the instructions & does not obey them** a. He builds a house b. He builds upon the sand c. He faces a storm d. He builds foolishly: Suffers great destruction—the difference is the foundation

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

X. The Wise and Foolish Builder, 7:24-27

(7:24-27) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Profession—Carpenter—Life—Foundation**: Jesus Christ was a carpenter by trade and profession. He knew houses; He knew the building trade.

Several important matters about building a house need to be noted here.

1. Hearing instructions. This is critical, for a person must heed the instructions in order to know *how* to build the house.
   a. A person must hear and follow (obey) the instructions.
   b. A person must hear and build upon what he hears, ever learning the very best materials and methods for construction. Builders must always be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come...." (1 Tim.6:19).
2. Selecting the foundation. This is also critical, for selecting the site and material determine the future of the house.
   a. A person must build upon a solid foundation. There is only one foundation upon which to build: the rock (1 Cor.3:11).
   b. A person must make sure of his call and choice to build (2 Pt.1:10).
   c. A person must know that building upon rock takes time and skill.
3. Counting the cost. This, too, is critical: it is brought out by Christ in another passage. Beginning and not finishing the house brings mockery and shame (Lk.14:28-30).

Several introductory applications are clearly seen in this picture of house building.

1. Every person has a house—a life—to build. How he builds his life determines his destiny, not just for this life but for eternity. How he builds his life makes all the difference...
   - between success and failure
   - between acceptance and rejection
   - between life and death
   - between standing and falling
   - between reward and loss
2. There is only one Foundation for every life: Jesus Christ (1 Cor.3:11). He is the Rock upon which both individuals and churches are to build (Mt.16:18).
3. Everyone either builds his life upon this world or upon Christ (heaven itself). Jesus teaches that there are two kinds of builders.
   a. A wise builder: hears the instructions and obeys them (v.24-25).
   b. A foolish builder: hears the instructions and does not obey them (v.26-27).

(7:24-27) **Another Outline**: The Wise and Foolish Builder.

1. Both are building a house. (Cp.1 Cor.3:11-13.)
2. Both choose a foundation: there is one supreme difference—the foundation.(Cp. 1 Pt.2:6-10.)
3. Both experience rains, floods, and winds beating upon their house.
4. Both heard the instructions.
   a. One heard and obeyed: experienced a great deliverance.
   b. One heard and did not obey: experienced a great fall.

1 (7:24-25) **Life, Foundation**: the wise builder is a man who hears the instructions and obeys them.

1. The wise builder builds a house.
   a. Every person has a house to build, a life to build. Once in the world, we cannot escape the fact—we are building our lives. How we build our lives determines our eternal destiny.
   b. God's own Son instructs a man how to build. A man hears and follows (obeys) the instructions or hears and rejects (disobeys) the instructions and builds his own way.
   c. As Christ says, His *sayings*, instructions, and words are the materials which determine the structure and fate of our lives. Our lives and our destinies depend upon how we respond to the *sayings* of Christ.

Thought 1. Every man is put into one of two classes by Christ. There is the class of men called "wise" and there is the class of men called "foolish." How we build our lives determines in which class we are placed.

Thought 2. Note: both builders *hear* and receive the instructions. Christ is talking about people who...

- are in the church.
- have Christian parents.
- have Christian friends.
- have a source of some Christian influence.

2. The wise builder builds upon a rock.

a. Christ is the only Rock, the only Foundation upon which we can build and structure our lives.

> **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).**
>
> **"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph.2:20).**
>
> **"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:4-5).**

b. The Lord is not a lifeless rock, but "a living stone" (1 Pt.2:4). When we come to Him as "a living stone" we are "built up a spiritual house" (1 Pt.2:2-5).

1) We are to thirst after His Word: we are to "desire the sincere milk of the Word" (1 Pt.2:2).
2) We grow (are built up) through His Word (1 Pt.2:2).
3) We taste that the Lord is gracious through His Word (1 Pt.2:3).
4) We come to the Lord as to a living stone through His Word (1 Pt.2:4).
5) We are built up a spiritual house by Him through His Word (1 Pt.2:5).

Our lives and destinies are determined by what we do with the Word, the "*sayings*" of the Lord Jesus.

> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:2-5).**

Thought 1. Building upon the rock takes time and commitment and energy. We have to deny ourselves, give up slumber, and apply ourselves ever so diligently.

Thought 2. The man who builds upon the Rock is wise: prudent and sensible (Pr.16:21). He knows several things.

1) Where he has come from (his instructions).
2) Why he is here (to build an excellent house).
3) Where he is going (the kind of house or life he should build). He sees the finished product by faith and hope.

3. The wise builder faces a storm. There have always been storms in life, and there always will be. The wise man is not exempt from the storms because he builds an excellent house. In fact, the major reason for building a solid house is to assure that he will be able to weather all storms. It rains "on the just and on the unjust" (Mt.5:45).

> **"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt.5:45).**
>
> **"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" (Mt.18:7).**

Thought 1. All kinds of rain and storms come. There are storms of...

- sickness
- sorrow
- nervous stress
- neglect
- loneliness
- sin
- suffering
- disappointment
- disease
- emotions
- tension
- poverty
- pain
- death
- rejection
- accidents
- handicaps
- complaints
- mistreatment
- pressure
- misunderstanding
- doubt
- gossip
- hospitalization
- temptations
- failure
- loss
- abuse

4. The wise builder builds wisely: the difference is the foundation. One thing alone determines if a man is *truly wise*: the kind of foundation he lays in this life.

> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).

"Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance" (Ps.32:7).

Thought 1. If a person builds his life upon Christ, he never falls, no matter the severity of the storm. This reason is clearly seen in the promises of God.

1) God accepts us in Christ (the beloved, Eph.1:6); He adopts us as children of His.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:6-7).

2) God promises to provide the necessities of life.

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:31-33; cp. Mt.6:25-34).

3) God promises to work out all things (all storms) together for good to those who build wisely.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

4) God blesses those who "hear the Word of God and keep it" (Lk.11:28).
5) Christ promises joy to those who hear and receive the things He said.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11; cp. Jn.13:17).

6) The Lord promises to deliver the believer into His heavenly kingdom when the believer passes from this world into the next.

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"The wise shall inherit glory" (Pr.3:35; cp. Pr.15:24).

Thought 2. "The wise in heart" shall receive more and more instructions from the Lord. His life shall be directed day by day through all the storms of life, even through eternity (Prov.10:8; Jn.16:13-15; Heb.13:5).

2 (7:26-27) **Life, Foundation**: the foolish builder is a man who hears the instructions and does not obey them.

1. The foolish builder builds a house, but note something of critical *importance and interest*.
   a. He hears the instructions of the Master Builder. This means that he is in the church and he has some Christian influence from someplace. He receives the seed, the Word, through church, parents, radio, books, friends, tapes, or television (Mt.13:4).
   b. He is in a most dangerous position. He knows how to build, but he chooses not to build according to instructions. How foolish not to follow instructions when building a house!

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch" (Pr.11:28).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).

"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:10).

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).

"Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it" (Ezk.13:11).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezk.33:31).

Thought 1. There is no middle ground. Once we hear, we either build wisely (obey) or build foolishly (disobey).

Thought 2. There are those who hear time and again, get up and go out, and still do not follow the instructions of the Master Builder.

Thought 3. The counsel is clear: "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end" (Pr.19:20).

2. The foolish builder builds upon sand. This is the depth of foolishness, as Christ well illustrates. Imagine a man building a house. He knows how to build it; he knows that he should build it upon rock. But he goes out and builds it upon sand. The sand is anything other than Christ (1 Cor.3:11; cp. 1 Jn.2:15-16; 2 Cor.6:17-18).

⇒ There is the sand of the world, the material possessions and wealth of the world.
⇒ There is the sand of the flesh, the pleasures that stimulate and satisfy it.
⇒ There is the sand of fame and recognition and the pride of it.

Any honest and thinking person knows that sand cannot withstand serious storms either in this life or in the life to come. Therefore, any life built upon sand is doomed to collapse.

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness" (Pr.11:5).

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD" (Jer.6:15).

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:13-15).

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Th.5:2-3; cp. 2 Pt.3:4, 9-13).

"There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise" (Ps.36:12).

"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy" (Pr.6:15).

Thought 1. Tragedy! This man heard what the prophets and righteous men of old desired to hear (Mt.13:17; 1 Pt.1:10). What a privilege he had, but what an abuse of privilege! Week after week, year after year he heard, yet he never followed the instructions on how to build his life.

"For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Mt.13:17).

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pt.1:10-11).

Thought 2. The foolish builder is like the man who receives the seed "by the wayside." He is in church, under some proper (Christian) instruction about how to build his life. But he is *off to the side*. He deliberately puts himself there. And he refuses to receive the instruction (Word). He refuses to be stirred or warned, ignoring and neglecting the instructions and warnings. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:1-9.)

Thought 3. Even religion can be sinking sand (see outline and notes—Mt.7:15-20; 7:21-23).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:21-23).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).

Thought 4. Many hear, but few are willing to heed. There are many foolish builders and only a few wise builders.

> **"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mt.7:13-14).**
>
> **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Mt.7:22).**

Thought 5. We should not receive the instructions (the grace of God) in vain (2 Cor.6:1). Yet how many sit and receive instructions time after time and never guide their lives according to plan?

Thought 6. There are many who profess loyalty and respect (even love) for the Master Builder, yet they go right on building their way, as they will.

> **"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (Ezk.33:31-32).**

Thought 7. A hearer only deceives himself. The doer is the man who is to be blessed. He will withstand the storms of life and judgment.

> **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jas.1:22-25).**

3. The foolish builder faces a storm. The fact is clear and descriptive, easily pictured.
   a. "The rain descended." Pellets of rain or trials do fall upon men. No man stops them. Sometimes the rain or trials fall slowly and in small drops; sometimes they fall rapidly and in large drops. The house built upon the sand is eroded away by both the rains and the trials of life.
   b. "The floods came." Floods of trials do come against us. The floods cannot be stopped. The house built upon sand cannot stand. The sand is washed away by the floods of trials.
   c. "The winds blew." The winds of trial do blow against us, and no man can stop them. The force ranges from small to great, and no matter how much they are dreaded or feared, they come with whatever force is packed within their nature. Again, the house built upon the sand has its foundation blown away by the winds of trial.

Thought 1. Every man faces the rains and storms of life. They wait upon no man, prepared or not.

Thought 2. A terrible storm is coming at death and in the Great Day of Judgment, a storm against which no man can stand unless he is held up by Christ (Joel 2:31; Mt.24:51; 25:30, 46).

4. The foolish builder builds foolishly: there was great destruction—the difference was the foundation. The house fell. If we do not follow the Lord's sayings, His instructions, we will see our houses fall and collapse. The trials of this life and the great trial to come will beat upon our houses and condemn them to destruction: "And great was the fall of it."

Thought 1. Every man's work shall be made manifest. Our work is to be tested in this life through many trials, and in the next life by Christ. Great will be "the fall" of our lives if they are not built upon Christ. The man who built his house upon sand *will have to face* Christ in that day (1 Cor.3:13).

Thought 2. The man who builds on sand is hopeless.

> **"What is the hope of the hypocrite...when God taketh away his soul?" (Job 27:8).**
>
> **"The hypocrite's hope shall perish....he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand" (Job 8:13, 15).**

Thought 3. When do we need a solid house the most? Is it not when the winds begin to blow and the storms come? But note: when the storm begins, it is too late to build the house. How tragic: to build and then experience the collapse of our lives when the storms come!

Thought 4. Storms can come anytime, anywhere. They can come today: through accident, through some bad news, through some tragedy—whatever. The day is coming when it will be too late to build.

	Y. The Teaching of Jesus & Its Impact, 7:28-29
1 **The impact: The people were amazed**	28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:
2 **The reason: Jesus taught with authority**[DSI]	29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

DIVISION IV

THE TEACHINGS OF THE MESSIAH TO HIS DISCIPLES: THE GREAT SERMON ON THE MOUNT, 5:1-7:29

Y. The Teaching of Jesus & Its Impact, 7:28-29

(7:28-29) **Introduction**: no one has ever taught like Jesus. In fact, He was such a strong teacher that many who deny His deity still commit their lives to the ministry of His teaching. Few deny the strength of His ability as a teacher and the strength of His ethics. In addition to these, there are those who believe that Jesus is truly the Son of God. To these, there is no one who compares to Jesus as a person or teacher.

1. The impact: the people were amazed (v.28).
2. The reason: Jesus taught with authority (v.29).

1 (7:28) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: the impact of Jesus' teaching is forcibly stated, "The people were astonished," that is, amazed. Note several facts.

1. Jesus was compelled to preach and teach, no matter who the audience was. He reached out to everyone who would listen. His compulsion is a dynamic example for all believers.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk.4:18-19).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Lk.4:43).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

2. Multitudes of people were astonished. But note: those astonished were not the religionists, the wealthy, and the ruling class, but the common people. Too often, those with wealth and influence feel threatened by Christ. They fear that discipleship might cost them something. And it will, for Jesus Christ demands *all that a person is and has*.

> **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**
>
> **"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:27-28).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

3. All that is said about the people is that they were astonished. There is a big difference between being astonished and doing what Jesus says, between hearing and doing, between profession and true discipleship.

Astonishing the audience was not what Jesus was after. He had already conquered the threat of this temptation (see note—Mt.4:5-7). He was after their lives, their commitment, their changed behavior (Mt.7:21-23; cp. 7:15-20). Being astonished just is not enough. We must follow Christ. There is nothing wrong with being amazed at the teaching of Christ; most people are. But the point and purpose of His teaching is obedience to God's will (Mt.7:21).

> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:21-23).**
>
> **"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will like him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Mt.7:24-25; cp. Mt.7:26-27).**
>
> **"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:17).**
>
> **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).**
>
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10-14).**

2 (7:29) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: the reason the people were amazed is that Jesus taught with authority. This probably means several things.

1. He spoke with a tone that sounded authoritative.
2. He spoke as the true Messiah, a Person who had the right to dictate laws and give commandments and to expect obedience.
3. He spoke in the power of the Holy Spirit. As He spoke the Spirit of God moved in the hearts of those who believed Him to be the Messiah. When Christ teaches there is always an attraction, a drawing, a pull to Him.

> **"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (Jn.16:7-11).**

In contrast to Christ, the Scribes did not speak or teach with authority. This was most unusual, for they actually had as much authority backing them as any group of teachers in history. They not only had the Holy Scriptures, but they also had the oral tradition and the influence of their religion and their personal commitment to it.

Their problem was twofold.

a. They were always calling upon other authorities—always referring to the source of their statements. This tended to lose their audiences.
b. They seldom elaborated or illustrated. This made their messages or lessons flat, dull, and uninteresting.

Thought 1. The major reason Jesus was able to speak with authority was that He is the Son of God. Everything that He did was with the authority of God.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him" (Mk.1:27; cp. Jn.5:19-30).**
>
> **"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:27).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:29) **Scribes**: see note—Lk.6:2; 6:7.

	CHAPTER 8 **V. THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY & POWER REVEALED IN WORD & WORK, 8:1-9:34** **A. Jesus Heals a Leper: Cleansing the Most Defiled,**[DS1,2,3] **8:1-4** (Mk.1:40-45; Lk.5:12-16)	2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. 4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.	**2 The leper: The unclean** a. He came to Jesus b. He worshipped Jesus c. He asked & trusted Jesus for cleansing **3 The Lord Jesus** a. He touched b. He said, "I will" c. He cleansed **4 The cleansed man** a. He must beware of pride, of boasting b. He must obey the Law[DS4]
1 Multitudes followed Jesus	When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.		

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

A. Jesus Heals a Leper: Cleansing the Most Defiled, 8:1-4

(8:1-4) **Introduction—Leprosy—Salvation—Spiritual Cleansing**: this passage is a beautiful picture of spiritual cleansing. The power of Jesus to heal and cleanse the most defiled person is clearly seen.

1. Multitudes followed Jesus (v.1).
2. The leper, the most unclean and defiled person (v.2).
3. The Lord Jesus (v.3).
4. The cleansed man (v.4).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:1-4) **Leprosy**: William Barclay points out that leprosy was the most terrible disease in the day of Jesus, greatly feared. It was disfiguring and sometimes fatal. In the Bible leprosy is a type of sin (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.300).

1. The leper himself was considered *utterly unclean*—physically and spiritually. He could not approach within six feet of any person including family members. "His clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean' " (Lev.13:45).
2. He was judged *dead*—the living dead. He had to wear a black garment so he could be recognized as being among the *dead*.
3. He was banished as an outcast, totally ostracized from society—earthly and heavenly. "All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be *defiled*; he is *unclean*; he shall *dwell alone*; *without the camp* shall his habitation be" (Lev.13:46). He could not live within the walls of any city; his dwelling had to be outside the city gates.
4. He was thought to be polluted, incurable by any human means whatsoever. He could be cured by God and His power alone. (Note how Jesus proved His Messiahship and deity by healing the leper.)

Imagine the anguish and heartbreak of the leper, being completely cut off from family and friends and society. Imagine the emotional and mental pain. There are other recorded instances of lepers' being healed (cp. Mt.10:8; 11:5; Mk.1:40; Lk.7:22; 17:12; and perhaps Mt.26:6; cp. Mk.14:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:1-4) **Jesus Christ**: this is the first healing miracle performed by Jesus in Matthew. Christ proved two things when He healed the leper.

1. Jesus proved Himself to be God, to possess the power of God. The people knew no one could cure a leper but God (2 Ki.5:7).
2. Jesus proved Himself to be the Messiah, the Savior of the world. He not only pronounced the leper cured, as the priests did; He *cleansed* the leper. He took the man's leprosy (sin) away; He cleansed the man thoroughly and completely.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(8:1-4) **Healing—Suffering**: this leper was healed. In looking at miraculous healings, the question is often asked, why are all faithful believers not healed when they are sick and ask for healing? Some walk ever so faithfully before God, and they believe that God does heal; and they have as much faith, if not more faith, than some who are healed. Why then are they not also healed?

The reason is God. When God looks at our requests, He considers at least four things. (Also see notes—Eph.1:3; see outline and notes—2 Cor.1:3-11. Cp. Ph.1:29.)

1. God's glory. Would granting the request bring the greatest glory to God's name?

2. Our good, not only physically, but spiritually. What particular spiritual grace or quality do we need to learn: endurance, self-control, trust, dependence?
   a. Spiritually, within ourselves: will granting our request strengthen us more spiritually? Which way will our faith and trust in God grow more?
   b. Spiritually, without ourselves: how does God now want to use us—as a constant prayer warrior? As an unbelievable testimony to His empowering spiritual strength, no matter the physical condition? Consider something else: What do the people need with whom God wants to use us? What is the best way for God to reach them—by demonstrating His strength in and through our trial? No matter what some may claim, the power of God is often more forcibly seen by manifesting itself through infirmities and weaknesses.

> **"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor.12:8-9).**

3. God's wisdom. He knows what is needed by whom; when it is needed; for whom it is needed; where it is needed; how it is needed; why it is needed.
4. God's mercy. He wills above all else for men to know His mercy. He does whatever is needed to demonstrate His mercy to men. Sometimes walking through the trials of life reveals His mercy more; sometimes removing the trials reveals His mercy more. He chooses the best way for both the sufferer and those who surround him.

1 (8:1) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: multitudes followed Jesus. They followed because they were astonished at His teaching. (See outline and notes—Mt.7:28-29.)

2 (8:2) **Seeking Christ**: there was the leper—the most defiled and unclean person. The leper dramatically demonstrates that no person is too unclean, polluted, dirty, or sinful to come to Jesus Christ. Note three significant points.

1. The leper came to Jesus. He came despite what people thought. He came...
   - despite being "utterly unclean" (Ro.3:23; cp. 3:10-18).
   - despite being considered dead (Eph.2:1; 4:18; 1 Jn.5:12).
   - despite being an outcast and ostracized by people.
   - despite being considered polluted and incurable by people.
2. The leper worshipped Jesus. The word worship (proskuneo) means to reverence; to pay homage. The attitude of reverence and worship was shown by bowing. The leper was desperate and knew his desperate plight. He was not allowed to approach within six feet of anyone. However, he rushed up to Jesus and fell prostrate before Jesus' feet and worshipped Him. The leper demonstrated *two significant things* by rushing up and worshipping Jesus.
   ⇒ His desire and willingness to break away from the world and its restrictions.
   ⇒ His acknowledgment that Jesus was worthy of worship.
3. The leper asked and trusted Jesus for cleansing. The leper did not ask merely to be healed, but he asked to be cleansed. He wanted to be restored, that is, made whole and *saved completely*. He wanted all the rights and privileges of a whole man. He wanted to be completely restored with men (socially) and with God (religiously).

The words "If thou wilt" show two things.

   a. They show great faith in Jesus. The leper believed that Jesus had the power to heal him; it was just a matter of Jesus choosing to cleanse him.
   b. They show that the leper appealed to Jesus' heart, not to His power. He believed and knew Jesus had the power. What was needed was for the leper to touch Jesus' heart. In essence, what the leper asked for was the love and the power of God.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**

Thought 1. The leper asked to be cleansed. God says that all men must ask if they wish to be cleansed. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (Jn.11:22).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"Wherefore he saith, awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

Thought 2. The leper did two things that we must all do when we ask Christ to cleanse us.
1) He genuinely trusted Christ: believed in Him and His power.
2) He offered himself to Christ: bowed and received the love and power of Christ to cleanse him.

Thought 3. Not every leper came to Jesus for cleansing. Every generation has its unbelievers who do not come to Him for cleansing.
1) Some just do not trust Jesus. They do not believe in Him nor His power.
2) Some know about Jesus, but are just unwilling to offer themselves to Him. They are unwilling to bow and to receive His love and power.

3 (8:3) **Compassion—Salvation**: there was the Lord Jesus. The heart of Jesus was deeply touched by the leper. The sight just gripped His heart. The man's condition was wretched. Just imagine...

- his body full of sores
- his flesh eaten away
- his loneliness
- his desperation
- his alienation
- his emptiness
- his helplessness

1. Jesus "touched" the leper. Note that before saying a word, Jesus reached out for the man: He "put forth His hand, and touched him." When no one else would, Jesus reached out for the most defiled. How long had it been since anyone had touched him? Weeks? Months? Years?

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them" (Is.63:9).

Thought 1. So many will not touch the *most defiled*. They will have nothing to do with them. They shun and avoid them. Too often, even when the defiled wander into church, the church gets rid of them as soon as possible. So many in the church have little time for the defiled. They neglect and leave them where they are. Too many believers and too many churches have lost the sense of mission to reach the most defiled.

2. Jesus said, "I will." These words say several significant things about Jesus.
   a. Jesus was not willing even for the most defiled to perish (2 Pt.3:9).
   b. Jesus did not have to be urged to help the most defiled. The most defiled simply had to approach Jesus with a sincere heart.
   c. Jesus did not have to be paid to help the most defiled. The leper did nothing but come to Jesus, believing that Jesus would cleanse him.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).

Thought 1. "I will." The mission of Jesus Christ is to seek and to save that which is lost, no matter how defiled (Lk.19:10; Mt.9:12-13; 20:28). The church is called to the very same mission (Jn.20:21). Jesus Christ said go—go to "every creature," to every human being (Mk.16:15; cp. Mt.28:19-20).

3. Jesus cleansed. The leper had acknowledged Jesus' power. Now he received that power: he was cleansed physically and ceremonially, that is, religiously and spiritually. Note that Jesus cleansed the man immediately. He did not hesitate; there was no waiting. The man meant business with Jesus; he genuinely wanted to be cleansed. Jesus knew his sincerity, so He cleansed him immediately. The idea is that He cleansed him *through and through* (cp. Ps.5:7; 1 Jn.1:9).

Thought 1. Every man must be cleansed and washed from his sins.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:9-11).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).

4 (8:4) **Pride—Witnessing**: there was the cleansed man. After the leper had been cleansed, he still needed to do two things—two things that every genuine believer must do.

1. The cleansed man had to be aware of pride. The leper had been cleansed and delivered from the pit of defilement. There were many still in the pit where he had come from. Jesus knew this man's heart, knew that he stood in danger of temptation, the temptation of self importance. He could have easily gone about saying what is so often heard: "Jesus has cleansed me. But for the grace of God, I would still be a sinner." Of course, *this was true*. But to go about proclaiming such would have tended to separate him apart as *more favored* than others, and he was not a favorite of God. God has no favorites. He was just a man who had been desperately unclean and whom Christ had cleansed. The cleansed man *needed to proclaim Christ and His cleansing power, not his own cleansing*. He deserved nothing, especially the grace of God; therefore, he had no reason to profess, "But for the grace of God...." Such would have been self-centered, prideful, and boastful. Jesus wanted to prevent such a profession. (See note—Mk.1:44.)
2. The cleansed man had to obey the law (see note—Mt.8:4). Jesus told the man to obey the law for two reasons.
   a. He cared deeply for the cleansed man. He wanted him to be restored, accepted, and reunited with his family and friends. They would accept him only if he were proven to be cured.
   b. He wanted the man to respect God's law and to walk in it for the remainder of his life.

"This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Dt.26:16).

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh.1:8).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:17).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(8:4) **Leprosy**: the healing of a leper was a most unlikely event. If it ever happened, there was a detailed list of laws and rituals the leper had to go through. These rituals gave the priests time to confirm the cure. The rituals were considered to be a thanksgiving offering to God (Lev.14:1-32; cp. 13:38-59). Jesus charged the leper to make his offering to God and to receive the certificate that he was cleansed.

	B. Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant: Receiving & Rejecting Men,[DS1] **8:5-13** (Lk. 7:1-10)	other, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.	2) In Jesus as Sovereign Lord (v.8)
1 Jesus' great power was aroused to receive the rejected a. By the centurion's humility 1) Begged a Jew 2) Called Jesus *Lord* 3) Jesus' response: "I will" b. By the centurion's sense of unworthiness c. By the centurion's love for a slave[DS2] d. By the centurion's great faith[DS3] 1) In Jesus' supreme authority & power	5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, 6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. 7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. 8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to an	10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. 11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.	**2 Jesus' great power was aroused to embrace believers of every nationality** a. The Roman centurion b. The "many" from every place, from all nations[DS4] **3 Jesus' great power shall reject the unbelieving** **4 Jesus' great power proved His Messiahship**

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

B. Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant: Receiving and Rejecting Men, 8:5-13

(8:5-13) **Introduction**: this is a great passage showing that Jesus is definitely the Messiah (v.13). He has the Messianic power to receive men (v.10-11) and to reject men (v.12). He can receive any man who truly trusts Him, no matter how far away the man may be or how many barriers may seem to stand in the way. As Messiah, He also has the power to reject the unbelieving (v.12).

Note the deep emotion felt by Jesus throughout this experience. He was aroused to make the statements He made and to prove His Messianic power (vs.5-7, 10-13). Matthew's apparent purpose in recording this miracle was to show that Jesus did possess the Messianic power to do two things.

1. Jesus possessed the power to receive any man, regardless of the barrier. He could span every conceivable barrier.
   a. The idealogical barrier: the centurion was a man *rejected*, despised, and hated by the Jews (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 23:23); yet Jesus could reach him and meet his need. He had the power to span and to overcome the ideas and prejudices that divided man against man, neighbor against neighbor, race against race, nation against nation, employee against employer, child against parent, wife against husband. (See Introduction, Special Feature 3—Eph.; See note—Eph.2:14-15.)
   b. The physical barriers: the centurion's servant was desperately ill and some miles away, yet Jesus could reach the servant. His power could span all the physical barriers, no matter how far away or how severe the condition.
   c. The spiritual barrier: the centurion was a Gentile, considered by the Jews to be lost spiritually, an alien and an enemy to the people of God. But Jesus had the power to reach the man, to pierce the spiritual barriers of his soul and save him. Jesus can reach the soul of any man who will believe in Him, no matter how lost or how alien or how much of an enemy to God he has been.
2. Jesus possessed the power to reject any man, even those who professed to be children of the kingdom, that is, the religious (v.12).

The great faith of the centurion aroused Jesus to show the above. Jesus strongly demonstrated that He receives any man who truly believes, but He rejects those who do not believe, no matter who they are.

1. Jesus' great power was aroused to receive the rejected (v.5-9).
2. Jesus' great power was aroused to embrace all nationalities (v.10-11).
3. Jesus' great power was aroused to reject the unbelieving (v.12).
4. Jesus' great power proved His Messiahship (v.13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:5-13) **Centurion**: see note—Acts 23:23.

1 (8:5-9) **Jesus Christ, Power—Compassion—Humility—Love**: Jesus' great power was aroused to receive the rejected.

1. Jesus' power was aroused by the centurion's humility. The man's humility is seen in two most unusual acts.
   a. He was a Gentile and a Roman officer, yet he came to a Jew for help. Approaching a Jew was socially unacceptable and unheard of for a Gentile but being an officer of Rome made it worse. Jesus knew that the centurion had great courage and humility to approach Him for help.
   b. The centurion came to Jesus as "Lord," acknowledging His superior being and Messiahship. He approached Him as the One who could meet his need. Note several things.
      ⇒ He *knew and confessed* that he had a need, a need that other men could not meet. Knowing and confessing are both essential when a person really wants a need to be met.
      ⇒ He knew where to go and to whom to go in order to have his need met.
      ⇒ He was willing to do all he could to have his need met. He then trusted Jesus to satisfy his need.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).

Jesus' response to the centurion's cry for help was forceful: "I will." These words declare that Jesus will span and overcome all the barriers and divisions of men to meet a man's need (see note—Mt.8:5-13). He will meet the need of anyone who truly trusts Him: master or servant, noble or common, parent or child, rich or poor, man or woman, sinner or saint, doomed or saved, helpless or capable, hopeless or assured. Jesus has no favorites. He does not favor one person over another.

"There is no respect of persons with God: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17; cp. 2 Sam. 14:14).

Thought 1. The greatest of men must approach Jesus *begging*, totally dependent upon Him. There is no other way. Position, power, fame, wealth, and social acceptability must be laid aside. Our thoughts cannot be focused on self and social acceptability, but only upon Christ and His power if we wish Him to meet our need.

Thought 2. Our thoughts—what our minds are upon—reveal the sincerity of our hearts when approaching Jesus.
1) If our thoughts are focused on self and social acceptability, then our sincerity is weak and lacking. Jesus knows we care more for this world than for Him.
2) If our thoughts are focused on Him and His power, then Jesus knows that we are really depending upon Him to help us, regardless of what others may think or say.

Thought 3. "I will." Note that the emphasis is on the *Lord Himself*, on who He is, not on His coming to the centurion's home. It is the Lord Himself who will meet the soldiers need.

2. Jesus' power was aroused by the centurion's sense of unworthiness. The centurion did not say, "My servant is not worthy to have you come"; but he said, "I am not worthy." A sense of *personal unworthiness* gripped him. Jesus Christ is the Sovereign Lord. He is the One who alone has the power to meet our need. Therefore, we have to confess our inadequacy and unworthiness to have the Lord help us.

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12; cp. Lk.14:11; 18:14).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off" (Ps.138:6).

Thought 1. Socially, the greater proclaimed his inferiority to the lesser. Society considered the centurion greater than the poor preacher from Nazareth. But the centurion humbly confessed a deep unworthiness before Christ. He saw something of God in Christ, something that caused him to humble himself before Christ.

1) We are to see God in Christ.
2) We are to see value in every man, the value that God puts upon even the poorest and unacceptable. We are to humble ourselves before all, no matter how it may hurt.

> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

3. Jesus' power was aroused by the centurion's love—his love for a slave. The centurion was pouring out his heart for another person (intercessory prayer). In the eyes of society the person should have been meaningless to him, yet the man meant much to him. He loved this *meaningless* person, this slave.

Thought 1. What a lesson for us! The great need is for intercessory prayer and love for all, no matter who they are and what others may think.

> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
>
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).**
>
> **"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).**
>
> **"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).**
>
> **"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).**

Thought 2. The believer is to love. He is not only to love those close to him, but he is to love all. The centurion loved a slave. Our love can be measured by the centurion's love.

1) How much do we carry the needs of our loved ones to the Lord?
2) How much do we carry the needs of slaves, those alien to us, to the Lord?
3) How much do we look after and care for those of our own household, whether aged and disabled parents or children or spouse (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:8)?

4. Jesus' power was aroused by the centurion's great faith (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:8-10 for discussion and verses). The centurion believed in the great power of Jesus to span and to overcome all barriers—even the barrier of space and time. What great faith! (See notes—Mt.8:5-13.)

Thought 1. The centurion's faith was great because it was a personal faith in Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt. 8:8-10)...

- in Jesus' supreme authority and power.
- in Jesus as Sovereign Lord over all: all men and all nature. Note this included himself, a soldier of Rome, the conquering nation; it included space and time and the physical corruption of disease (cp. Jer.23:23-24). He believed Jesus to be Lord over both the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of heaven.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:8) **Slave—Care—Love—Intercession**: this is the only recorded time a person came to Jesus in behalf of a slave or servant. There were several times when parents brought children (Mt.9:18-34; Lk.7:11-18; Jn.4:46-54), and friends brought friends (Lk.18:26), but this soldier and officer brought his servant. Note that the slave, being sick with palsy, would have been completely helpless and useless to the centurion. He was disabled for his work, yet the centurion took care of him. He had not *rejected* him, sent him to some other home, or put him under someone else's care. He had personally *received* the slave with open arms and was looking after him. This was bound to have affected Jesus dramatically.

Jesus used this occasion to strongly demonstrate a much needed lesson: He receives any man who truly believes and rejects any man who does not believe, no matter who he is.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(8:8-10) **Faith**: the centurion illustrated perfectly what faith is (Heb.11:6).

1. It is believing that *Christ is*: that He is sovereign Lord. All power is subject to Him (Heb.11:6; cp. Mt.8:6).
2 It is believing that "Christ is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6; cp. Mt.8:8-9).

Note that the centurion had diligently sought Christ, believing Christ could meet his need. Many believers so seek the Lord, but what made the centurion's faith so much greater was his belief that the *Word of Christ* was all that was needed. Christ did not have to be present for the need to be met. As a centurion, he had authority over men. All he had to do was issue an order, and it was carried out whether he was present or not. He was a sovereign commander. He was saying, "How much more are you, O' Lord. But speak the word only, and my need shall be met." Forceful—powerful: a great lesson on faith for all.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).
"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).
"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).
"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Ps.118:8).
"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).
"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

2 (8:10-11) **Jesus Christ, Power—Salvation, Universal**: Jesus' great power was aroused to embrace believers of every nationality.

1. Jesus' power to embrace the Roman centurion. Jesus *opened* His heart and arms and *embraced* the centurion. This He did despite the fact that the man was despised and rejected as a Gentile. (Imagine. He was not just a Gentile, but a Roman and a soldier, a citizen and soldier of the nation that enslaved the Jews.) Jesus not only received the centurion, He commended him for his faith. Note: He did not commend him for who he was nor for what he had done as a soldier.

Thought 1. True belief is a rare thing. Not many believe, yet belief in Jesus Christ is one of the greatest qualities of human life—a quality ignored, neglected, and in some cases denied.

Thought 2. There are times when recognition and commendation are to be given. But again, note for what: it is for spiritual strength. However, caution should always be exercised lest the temptation of pride and self-importance set in.

Thought 3. What Jesus is after is faith. Note His emotion over faith: He marvelled. He was aroused to blurt out that He shall embrace all who come by faith, no matter who they are or from where they come.

2. Jesus' power to embrace the "many" from every place, from all nations (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.8:11).

"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage" (Mt.22:9).
"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).
"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).
"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).
"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

Thought 1. Who are to be saved? The centurion's faith stirred deep emotion within Christ, emotion so strong that He claimed several things.
1) Many shall come—just as the centurion had come—by faith (Gal.3:14; Eph.2:8-9; cp. Ro.4:11-12, 16).
2) Many shall come—just as the centurion had come—from everywhere, the east and the west (Rev.7:9; 21:24; cp. Mt.24:3).
3) Many shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in heaven (Heb.2:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(8:11) **Gentiles, Conversion**: Jesus used the centurion's great faith to predict a great revival among Gentiles in the future. We, of course, are in the midst of this great Gentile conversion, the Gentile conversion so clearly predicted by our Lord on the memorable day of the centurion's conversion.

1. The centurion had something unusual. He had whatever had given Abraham and Isaac and Jacob their entrance into heaven. *He had faith*. He was a Gentile, not a son of Abraham by birth, but he had just become a son of Abraham by faith (Ro.4:11-12. See outlines and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25.)
2. The centurion was to do something unusual. He was to "sit down" with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in heaven. Jesus was saying that salvation shall come to the Gentiles (see outline—Ro.9:25-33; 10:12-21; Gal.3:13-14).
3. The centurion was an illustration, a foreshadowing of the coming conversion of the Gentiles (see outline—Ro.9:25-33; Ro.10:12-21).

3 (8:12) **Judgment**: Jesus' great power shall reject the unbelieving. The judgment of unbelievers is to be terrible (see notes—Mt.8:12). Note: Jesus predicted that the Jews who persist in unbelief shall perish. They are rejected by God, despite the fact they had been chosen to be the children of God and had been given so many privileges (see outlines and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; notes—Ro.9:1-33; 10:1-21).

1. There will be *outer darkness*: a region, a place, a habitation, a home of pitch black that forbids any sight whatsoever. A place without light, without gleam or hope of any light whatsoever. It is a place of utter darkness in which one lives completely incapacitated, helpless, and hopeless. It is far away from the splendor and glory and brightness of God's presence. It is being cast into the gloom and blackness of the outer world. It is misery, the misery of a lost soul.

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13).

"These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" (2 Pt.2:17).

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

"Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine" (Job 18:5).

"Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness" (Pr.20:20).

2. There will be *weeping*: grief, loud grief, mourning, groaning, wailing, floods and floods of tears.
3. There will be *gnashing of teeth* (brugmos): grinding; biting in hostility and bitterness and indignation; spitefully snapping the teeth. It is rage, fury, and despair because nothing can be done. A person's state is permanently determined.

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:42).

"And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.24:51).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish" (Ps.112:10).

Thought 1. Entrance into heaven is based upon one thing and one thing only: faith in Christ. Heritage, godly parents and children, religious profession, baptism, and church membership—all are useless without faith. Without faith, man has only the judgment of God to look forward to.

4 (8:13) **Jesus Christ, Messiahship**: Jesus' great power proves His Messiahship. His great power to meet the centurion's request proved His unlimited power as Messiah.

Thought 1. Jesus often encourages us when we seek Him in behalf of others. He so encouraged the centurion.

Thought 2. As we believe, so it shall happen to us. These were the words of Jesus to the centurion. It is almost like a blank check: the amount we receive depends on our faith in Him.

	C. Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-In-Law: Jesus' Power & Its Purpose, 8:14-17 (Mk.1:29-34;Lk.4:38-41)	arose, and ministered unto them. 16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:	**2 Purpose 2: To meet the needs of the multitude**
1 Purpose 1: To meet the needs of individuals & families a. He visited Peter's home[DS1] b. He healed Peter's mother-in-law: She arose & served	14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. 15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she	17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.	**3 Purpose 3: To prove His Messiahship** a. He bore the ultimate cause of disease[DS2] b. He bore each fresh illness

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

C. Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law: Jesus' Power and Its Purpose, 8:14-17

(8:14-17) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Purpose**: one of the purposes for which Jesus came to earth was to meet the needs of individuals and families. The experience in Peter's home shows this.

Jesus was entering Peter's home in order to rest. It was the Sabbath, and He had just been ministering in the synagogue, teaching and healing (Mk.1:29; Mk.1:21-34). On the way to Peter's home, He encountered a desperate plea to heal the centurion's servant. Now He was tired, very tired; He needed rest. Yet when He entered the home, there was another demand made upon Him. Another person needed help.

How often Jesus must have felt that He could not put one foot in front of the other! He desperately felt the need to collapse into bed, but He went on. Note several things.

1. This was an individual in a single home. There was no crowd, no publicity, no recognition. There was only a simple lady lying sick in bed.
2. This was the very purpose for which Jesus came: to minister. He loved and had the power to help, so He helped. He did what He could when He could, forgetting all about Himself.

> **"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mt.20:28).**
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

Individuals and families were important to Jesus, just as important as the multitude. He often left the multitude in order to help individuals, and even while ministering to the multitude, He often turned His attention to the individual (cp. Mt.9:18-34; 12:9-13; Lk.7:11-17; 8:41-56; 13:10-17).

1. Purpose 1: to meet the needs of individuals and families (v.14-15).
2. Purpose 2: to meet the needs of the multitude (v.16).
3. Purpose 3: to prove His Messiahship (v.17).

1 (8:14-15) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the first purpose of Jesus' power was to meet the needs of individuals and families. He demonstrated this purpose in two acts.

1. Jesus visited Peter's home. Jesus visited the homes and families of those who ministered with Him. He had a very special care and love for families. Note the individuals involved in this home:
   a. The husband, Peter.
   b. The wife.
   c. The mother-in-law.
   d. The brother-in-law, Andrew.
   e. The friends, James and John (Mk.1:29f).

Also remember the attention Jesus gave to little children (Mt.18:1-4; 19:13-15; Lk.9:46-48; 18:15-17).

> **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).**
> **"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:14).**
> **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:25).**
> **"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph.5:28-31).**

"Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Ps.128:3).

Thought 1. No individual or family is too poor or unimportant for Jesus to visit and help. He cares for all.

Thought 2. Who were Peter's wife and mother-in-law? This is the only time they are mentioned. They represent the quiet and unknown believers. Note that the individual person and family are most important to Jesus. He is not after the recognition of a crowd. He did not serve only when it would gain Him recognition. He willingly ministered quietly, unbeknown to others. He will meet our needs quietly, when we are all alone and unknown to the world.

2. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law.
   a. Note what immediately grabbed the attention of Jesus when he entered Peter's house: "He saw his [Peter's] wife's mother...sick of a fever." *Need* grabbed Jesus' attention. His very purpose on earth was to focus on the needs of individuals and families. He cared about their needs, including their sicknesses (cp. Mt.9:18-34; Lk.7:11-17; Jn.4:46-54).
   b. Note what Jesus did: He "touched her." There is something special about a touch between individuals.
      1) There is a communication of warmth, tenderness, and caring.
      2) There is also a communication of power when we touch and pray. This power is an infusion of real assurance and confidence over whatever is being prayed. We are assured that "we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

"[That ye may know] what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:19).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

   c. Note what Peter's mother-in-law did: she arose and began to serve the Lord immediately.
      1) She had been sick with a fever and could have sat around for a while claiming weakness and the need to regain her strength.
      2) She was not the head of the house. She could have waited to follow the head or wife of the house. But note: she did neither; she immediately arose and began serving her Lord.

"The aged men [must] be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things" (Tit.2:2-3).

"The [gray] head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (Pr.16:31).

"And even to your old age I am he; and even to [gray] hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).

Thought 1. What a lesson for us...
- When Jesus touches us, we need to get up immediately and begin serving.
- When Jesus touches us with power, it is not to make us feel important. His touch of power is for service, not for feelings of self-importance.
- When Jesus touches us with power we are not to wait until others begin serving. We are to get up ourselves and launch the ministry of reaching others for the Lord.

Peter's mother-in-law had been favored with the wonderful power of the Lord. She could have felt important enough to be exempt from the menial duties. She could have joined the others waiting to be served.

Thought 2. "He touched her." Jesus' purpose on earth was to touch individuals and families. There is no question His touch affected Peter's mother-in-law. She got up and ministered. But His touch was bound to have affected the others also. A touch intimately communicates what a person is trying to say to another person.

Thought 3. Jesus' purpose is summarized by Scripture: He is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities" (Heb.4:15-16).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:14) **Peter**: note these facts about Peter's home life and family tree.

1. Peter had a wife. He was to live some forty or more years, so he and his wife were probably newlyweds when Christ called him. Interestingly, tradition says that Peter's wife served with him in the ministry. William Barclay quotes a touching picture by Clement of Alexandria who said that she was martyred with Peter: "On seeing his wife led to death,

Peter rejoiced on account of her call and her conveyance home, and called very encouragingly and comfortingly, addressing her by name, 'Remember thou the Lord'" (Stromateis 7:6. Quoted by Barclay. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.313). There is strong evidence that Peter was martyred by crucifixion in Rome. Tradition says he felt so unworthy to be crucified like his Lord that he begged to be crucified upside down.

2. Peter had a house. He was formerly from Bethsaida (Jn.1:44). Here he is seen in Capernaum. After Jesus called him to be an apostle, he probably moved to Capernaum where the headquarters of Jesus was located.

3. Peter looked after his mother-in-law. Apparently she was old and widowed, needing to be cared for by her children. Peter demonstrated real compassion and a tenderness of heart in allowing her to live with his family.

4. Peter opened his home to guests. Mark says that the home was that of Peter and Andrew; however, it was probably owned by Peter, since his wife and mother-in-law are mentioned. Note that Jesus, James, and John were being entertained by Peter as guests (Mk.1:29f). It is possible that Jesus stayed at Peter's home when in Capernaum and that Peter's home was Jesus' headquarters.

5. Peter's father was Jona or Jonah (Jn.21:15-17). He had at least one brother, Andrew (Jn.1:41).

2 (8:16) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the second purpose of Jesus' power was to meet the needs of the multitude. Note three things.

1. Jesus was tired; he was finally getting some rest. But the people heard He was in town, and their needs were desperate. They began to gather at the door begging Him to help them.
   a. He was faced with man's unceasing cry for help.
   b. He gave up His rest in order to help. He walked on earth for that very purpose.
   c. He turned no one away. He "healed all." As long as there was one person who needed Him, He helped.
2. This scene was a picture of how desperately the world needs Jesus. Not all the city came, just as all the world does not come today. But some did come. Who? Those who knew and confessed their need for His help.
   a. It is for the ones who are "lost" that He has come.

> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

   b. It is for the ones who are "sick," the ones who need the Physician, that He has come.

> **"But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt.9:13).**
>
> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**

   c. It is for all who would "come" that He has come.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt.23:37).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

3. Jesus had the power to help all. The word "all" is emphasized. There was no need—no matter how desperate—that His power could not reach.
   a. His power could "cast out the spirits" of evil (demons). He proved His power over Satan. He had the power to overthrow and destroy Satan.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

   b. His power could meet *all* needs, no matter how desperate. Note the words, "He healed all." The emphasis is upon *all*.

> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

3 (8:17) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the third purpose of Jesus' power was to prove His Messiahship. Jesus was the Messiah. His ministry was beyond question a fulfillment of the Scriptures that predicted the Messiah. This is clearly seen in that He is the "Ideal Servant of God"; that is, He did not just heal our sicknesses as any other minister, but He "Himself took [elaben] our infirmities, and bore [ebastasen] our sicknesses." This means at least two things.

1. He bore our infirmities and sicknesses to the ultimate degree when He died on the cross for us. It was there that He bore them (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:17 for discussion). (Cp.Jn.1:29.)
2. He bore each fresh illness in a way that will never be understood.
   a. Each need that stood before Him was *a reminder* that He had to bear the sin of the world. He knew what it meant to bear the sin of the world and all that it was to include. So seeing the needs of men standing before Him reminded Him of the suffering He was to bear.
   b. Each need that He met was a foretaste of the cross. The thought of what He had to bear was upon His mind day by day and hour by hour as He went about ministering. This was bound to weigh ever so heavily upon Him.
      ⇒ Mark says that *virtue*, that is, power, went out of Him when He healed (Mk.5:30; cp.Lk.8:46).
      ⇒ He sighed heavily at one miracle (Mk.7:34).
      ⇒ He experienced deep emotion when raising Lazarus from the dead (Jn.11:33).

The following is a simple yet descriptive way to picture how Jesus bore our sins for us.

1. He bore our sins *for us*: "in His own body on the tree" (1 Pt.2:24; cp. Is.53:4-6).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, bring dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

2. He bore our sins *off and from us*: removed, lifted them off us. He has "carried away" our sins (Mt.8:17). "He has cast our sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic.7:19) and as far as "the east is from the west" (Ps.103:12).

"He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic.7:19).

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps.103:12).

3. He bares our sins *with us*. He can be "touched with the feelings of our infirmities" (Heb.4:15-16).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

Thought 1. There is only one sure provision for the needs of the human soul: Jesus Christ. Our needs cannot be met...

- by philosophy and psychology.
- by mental and physical health.

Jesus Christ alone is "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn.14:6). When we turn to Him, then we shall come to know the *comfort and support* needed to walk through life.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:17) **Disease—Sickness—Corruption**: the ultimate cause of corruption is sin and evil in the world (Gen.2:15-3:7). An imperfect and corruptible world produces the seed of imperfection and incompleteness. It produces the seed of aging and deterioration until finally all waste away. Imperfection, sin, and disease are just the way of a world that is imperfect. The seed of corruption eats away until all become diseased and sick and ready for the grave. But this is the object of the glorious gospel, to proclaim...

- that Jesus bore the world's corruption, its disease and sickness (Ro.8:19-23; cp. Is.53:4).
- that Jesus bore the sins and evil of men (1 Pt.2:24).

Jesus also promises to intervene and recreate a new heaven and earth—a new heaven and earth that will be incorruptible and eternal (2 Pt.3:10-13; Rev.21:1f). He furthermore promises that the man who believes in Him has everlasting life and shall be a citizen of the new heavens and earth. The believer will never be condemned to corruption and death, but he passes from death to life the very moment he trusts Jesus Christ as his Savior (Jn.5:24). (See notes—Mt.6:19-20; note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Pt.1:4.)

	D. Jesus Attracts People: The Cost of True Discipleship, 8:18-22 (Lk.9:57-62)	20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.	b. He was determined c. Jesus demanded more 1) Must accept Him as the Son of Man[DS3] 2) Personal poverty[DS4] 3) Must abandon all
1 **The multitude was attracted**	18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.	21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.	3 **The average disciple was attracted**[DS5] a. He hesitated
2 **The scholar was attracted**[DS1,2] a. He willed to follow	19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.	22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.	b. He had divided attention c. Jesus demanded more 1) Immediate loyalty 2) A sense of urgency

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

D. Jesus Attracts People: The Cost of True Discipleship, 8:18-22

(8:18-22) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ attracts people. He has made such an impact upon the world that human history itself measures its years by the date of His birth and death (B.C. - Before Christ, and A.D. - anno Domini, in the year of the Lord). Jesus predicted: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth [the cross], will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).

1. The multitude was attracted (v.18).
2. The scholar was attracted (v.19).
3. The average disciple was attracted (v.21-22).

1 (8:18) **Multitudes—Jesus Christ, Response**: the multitude was attracted to Jesus. Note that the multitude gathered about Jesus because they had desperate needs, and He was meeting their needs out of a heart of deep compassion (cp. Mt.8:16-17). The whole countryside and surrounding towns were swarming with people who had heard that He was in Capernaum, and they had flocked to Him. They were attracted to what they were hearing, ever hoping to have their needs met.

Thought 1. People often come to Jesus Christ because of *what they can get out of Him*. Men have a faint idea and some understanding that He can meet needs; so when they face bad situations, they come to Him and to the church for help. Jesus said it well:

> **"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (Jn.6:26; cp. Jn.6:5-26).**

Thought 2. There are several reasons why the multitude is attracted to Jesus.

1) Some like what they see: lives are changed for good, people are helped, ministry is carried on for the public good, and good works abound. Some people agree with what is being done—at least in spirit—and they are perfectly willing to be identified with such a movement.
2) Some profess Christ and belong to a church because of the image and social standing it brings. Professing Christ, even if it is done quietly or silently, opens doors. Membership in Christ's church is even listed and expected by some employers when hiring personnel. Belonging to a church helps to show a well-rounded and moral person. Some just want the image that profession of faith conveys.
3) Some follow Christ and His church because of family and friends. They are urged to belong to a church; therefore, they profess and attend—some regularly, others irregularly.
4) Some feel more comfortable following Christ and attending church. Their consciences would bother them if they did not profess Him and attend church at least occasionally. They profess and attend only enough to feel comfortable and to keep their consciences subdued.
5) Some have a faint understanding of God. They want to be approved and accepted by Him. They know that they must show some interest in Him if they wish Him to show interest in them, looking after and caring for them. So they profess Him and attend church as much as they deem necessary in order to secure His approval and care.
6) Some have seen God's power to change lives and deliver through terrible trials. It may have been in the life of a family member, a friend, a fellow employee, a relative, or a distant acquaintance. But the power of Christ was clearly evident. Thus they know that Christ and His church might be able to help them when trouble comes.
7) Some believe Jesus is the Savior, the promised Messiah, and they want to be identified with Him. So they follow Him and His church.

What the multitude missed is stated very pointedly by Christ in answer to the multitude's question.

> **"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (Jn.6: 28-29).**

Christ also gave another forceful answer on another occasion.

"And He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up His cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23; see note—Lk.9:23).

2 (8:19-20) **Self-Denial—Discipleship**: the scholar was attracted to Jesus. Note that this man was a disciple, a follower of Jesus (v.21). The scholar believed Jesus to be the most superior teacher he had ever seen. He himself was a teacher by profession, and he was enormously attracted to the teaching ability of Jesus.

1. The scholar yearned to follow Jesus. The depth of his desire was most unusual for there was constant conflict between Jesus and the scholar's professional peers.
   a. Jesus opposed the legalistic traditions of the Scribes and other religionists, strongly opposed them. He said so in no uncertain terms, condemning them with such language that only God Himself would dare use (cp. Lk.11:37-54).
   b. The Scribes opposed Jesus with deep hostility, even to the point of plotting to kill Him (Lk.11:52-54; Jn.7:1f).
2. The scholar proclaimed his willingness to go anyplace. Note his words: he said he *was willing* to go anyplace. This too is most unusual, for he worked in a quiet atmosphere where he could copy and teach the law. Being around Jesus, who was surrounded by multitudes of people including children, was anything but quiet.
3. Jesus demanded more: being willing to follow Jesus was not enough. Being willing to go to the ends of the earth was not enough. Jesus said three things were essential for the man to become a disciple.
   a. The man had to accept Jesus as the Son of Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20).
   b. The man had to know personal poverty (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.8:20).
   c. The man had to abandon all: for Christ and His mission—*all he was and had.*

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

Thought 1. Some scholars, the intelligencia of the world—the teacher, the wealthy, the famous, the powerful—desire to follow Jesus; but they stumble at the demands that require *more*.

1) Some stumble over confessing Jesus to be *the Son of Man*. Every belief and doctrine that points to His deity is questioned and doubted or denied. They have difficulty doing what Jesus told this Scribe to do: follow Him as *the Son of Man*, as God's very own Son, begotten of Him (Jn.3:16). They suggest problems with the virgin birth, Incarnation, Godly power, miraculous works, death, resurrection, ascension, exaltation, and the spiritual and intercessory ministry of Jesus Christ. They are attracted to Him as the greatest of all teachers, but they are just unwilling to follow Him as *the Lord*, as God Himself incarnate in human flesh (see outlines and notes—Ph.2:5-11. Cp. Heb.2:14-15.)
2) Some stumble over personal poverty. Giving and working ever so diligently in order to give more is foreign to them. Giving to the point that they would have to trust Christ for the necessities of life is unknown (cp. Mt.1:24—34). They have allowed the world to influence them. They seek the material security and comfort of this world. They save, lay up, and insure. They ignore the fact that this world's wealth fluctuates up and down and is subject to collapse ever so quickly because of the unexpected. They excuse their hoarding with the interpretation that a person must be *willing* to give all he has, not really give it. They feel that it is the willingness to give that Jesus is really after. A person does not necessarily have to give it all. However this argument fails to see a critical point. What Christ says to the scholar, He says to all:
   ⇒ "Being willing is not enough. You must give all. *Being willing is following and doing*. I have no luxuries, not even a place to lay my head. I have given all. You must give all if you wish to follow me." (Cp. Mt.19:16-22.) Few of us are willing to pay this kind of price to follow Christ. Are you? Am I? Are we willing to give *all we are and have*?
3) Some stumble over total abandonment of themselves and their possessions (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

Thought 2. Some are even willing and determined to go to the ends of the earth, but no matter, Jesus says...

- we must accept Him as the Son of Man.
- we must adopt His pattern of life—give *all we are and have*.

Thought 3. The words of Jesus are a warning to us.

1) We must accept Him as "the Son of Man" in order to follow His pattern of life.
2) We must experience personal poverty and go beyond just the willingness to give all.
3) We must abandon all.

Thought 4. The words of the Scripture warn us.

"Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe?...Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor.1:20, 26). (See outline and notes 1 Cor.1:26-31.)

Thought 5. Many are committed, but their commitments are *self-commitments* not Christ commitments. We must realize that self-commitments involve great willingness, determination, and discipline—so much that a person often follows through in a great way. But self-commitment is not enough for Christ. There has to be a total commitment *to the Son of Man*, abandoning all of self and all of the world for Him and His cause.

Thought 6. Some go across the street, across town, across the country, and some across the ocean to minister to the world; but commitment to the Son of Man and His pattern of life is demanded.

Thought 7. Note that the extremities to which the Son of God subjected Himself are pointed out in this passage. He did not even have a place to lay His head. (See outline and notes—Ph.2:5-8.)

> **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor...." (2 Cor.8:9).**

Thought 8. The pattern of Jesus' life teaches us the vanity and emptiness of material possessions and worldly wealth (1 Jn.2:15-16; cp. Ro.12:1-2).

Thought 9. We should count the cost before making a commitment (Lk.14:28-30). We should make the right choice.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:19) **Scribe**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(8:19) **Master** (Greek: didaskolos; Hebrew: Rabbi): means teacher in both the Greek and Hebrew.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(8:20) **The Son of Man**: Jesus is not only what an ordinary man is, a son of man; Jesus is what every man ought to be, the Son of Man Himself. He is the Ideal Man, the Representative Man, the Perfect Man, the Pattern, the Embodiment of everything a man ought to be. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (cp. Jn.1:14; Col.2:9-10; Heb.1:3. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16.)

The title also means the Ideal Servant of man. It stresses His sympathy for the poor, the broken-hearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (cp.Lk.4:18). Jesus is the Pattern, the Model, the Perfect Example of concern and caring. He served and set a perfect example of how every man ought to serve other men.

Jesus calls Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It is His favorite term. The title "Son of Man" is probably based upon the Son of Man in Daniel (Dan.7:13-14). Scripture also gives a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man (1 Cor.15:45-47). Each serves as a Representative Man for the human race in God's plan for world history.

> **"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).**
>
> **"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?...And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:13, 16).**
>
> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:26-27).**
>
> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn.6:53).**
>
> **"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him" (Jn.13:31-32).**
>
> **"And [Stephen] said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56).**
>
> **"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks [churches]; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Rev.1:12-13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(8:20) **Discipleship**: Jesus is saying He does not even have the normal luxuries that people have and take for granted. Jesus demands total abandonment of self. He demands first place in a person's life; the surrender of all material goods and things under His control. A slave's will and possessions must be subjected to his lord. The Christian is a slave who follows the Lord Jesus as absolute Lord or else he does not follow Him at all (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:27-28).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

3 (8:21-22) **Discipleship—Self-Denial**: the average disciple was attracted to Jesus. The call of God came to this man, yet he hesitated. Note three facts.

1. His hesitation was legitimate. Caring for parents is essential. His father was either already dead or on the verge of death. He was legitimately needed.

2. His problem was divided attention. When he felt God's call, he looked at his situation and did not yield immediately. What happened is what so often happens. The man's circumstances and problems overwhelmed him. He wanted to wait and to handle them. Then as soon as the problems were handled, he would go and follow Jesus.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time" (Mk.10:28-30).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:2-4; cp. 2 Tim.2:24-26).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim.4:5).

3. Jesus demanded more. He saw through the man's partial commitment. He saw his lack of trust in God. Christ expects us to care for our parents (1 Tim.5:3-8); but He demands an immediate response, an immediate loyalty, that we put Him first and follow Him with a sense of urgency.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Ro.13:11-12).

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (1 Cor.7:29).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).

"Stir up the gift of God which is in thee" (2 Tim.1:6).

Thought 1. Some reject and subdue the call, using their parents as the excuse. These are warned and the words to them are serious: they are "not worthy of me," Christ says (Mt.10:37-39).

Thought 2. All excuses are inadequate. God knows what He is doing when he calls a person. What He wants is trust, total trust. Think about it: there is no better time to call a person than when he faces some unusual trial or circumstance. What better time for a person to demonstrate and to be taught complete trust?

Thought 3. Note two critical matters.

1) A called person can use anything as an excuse to delay God's call. That is the point of recording this disciple's experience. His excuse was the most legitimate excuse possible: to care for his family. All other excuses carry less weight.
2) A called person is to let the world take care of worldly matters (2 Tim.2:4). He is to follow Christ immediately with a great sense of urgency.

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(8:21-22) **Discipleship**: the words of this disciple show that he sensed *a call* from God. He is characteristic of many who call Jesus Lord with their mouth but fail to make Him Lord of their lives. They have heard the call of Jesus and have a desire to follow Him, but they put off the actual act of obedience. They allow other concerns to prevent immediate discipleship. They deceive themselves, thinking there will be a more convenient time later on. It is possible that this man's father was living, but elderly, needing his son to care for him. He was merely asking Jesus to wait until his father died and no longer needed his attention—a commendable request. The element of abandonment and complete trust was simply missing. When there is movement within a person's heart to follow Jesus, the moment must be grasped.

	E. Jesus Calms a Storm: Conquering Fear & Nature, 8:23-27 (Mk.4:35-41; Lk.8:22-25)	25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.	**4 A desperate approach: Lord, awake—save us**
		26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.	**5 A challenging question** a. Why are you so fearful?[DS2] b. Why so little faith?
1 A basic fact: True disciples follow Him no matter what	23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.		
2 A fearful experience: A great storm arose[DS1]	24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.		**6 A strong, powerful deliverance: A great calm**
3 A terrifying discovery: Man is not able to handle the situation		27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!	**7 A marvelous purpose** a. To prove who He is b. To strengthen faith c. To demonstrate His care for all

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

E. Jesus Calms a Storm: Conquering Fear and Nature, 8:23-27

(8:23-27) **Introduction—Messiah—Messiahship**: What was the purpose of this experience? Why was a storm allowed to arise on the sea with Christ in the boat? The answer is given in v.27. And what a marvelous purpose it was: to stir His people to ask, "What manner of man is this?" He proved again that He is the Messiah! Calming the storm did three things.

1. It demonstrated who He is: the Sovereign Lord who has all power—even power over nature.
2. It strengthened the belief of His followers: belief in Him as the Messiah and in His personal care as their Savior.
3. It gave to all generations a picture of His care and power—His care and power to deliver through all the storms of life (trials and fearful experiences).

It does not matter what the storm or trial is nor how terrifying it may be, Christ is able to deliver and bring about the most assuring calm. Few trials could be as terrifying as being caught in a life-threatening storm at sea. In this experience, God demonstrated His wonderful care and power to deliver believers through the storms of life.

1. A basic fact: true disciples follow Him no matter what (v.23).
2. A fearful experience: a great storm (v.24).
3. A terrifying discovery: man is not able to handle the situation (v.24).
4. A desperate approach: Lord, awake—save us (v.25).
5. A challenging question (v.26).
6. A strong, powerful deliverance: a great calm (v.26).
7. A marvelous purpose (v.27).

1 (8:23) **Discipleship—Self-denial**: a basic fact—true disciples follow Jesus no matter what. The words "His disciples followed Him" are significant. His disciples followed Him wherever He went. They had made a genuine commitment; they were now committed to following Him regardless of the circumstances and the cost. We have some idea of the sacrifice His disciples made through a glimpse into Peter's family (Mt.8:14-17). Remember, Peter and the others had left home, seldom to return, at least for any length of time. Just imagine the cost, the enormous sacrifice it was for them and their families!

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

Thought 1. How many are willing to follow Jesus regardless of circumstances, cost, and the sacrifice demanded?

> **"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:37-38).**

Thought 2. Not everyone follows Jesus. It was only a short distance around the lake (twelve miles) and only eight miles across. Jesus could have easily walked around the lake, but He chose to go by sea in order to rest and to

share this experience with the disciples. But note: there is nothing said about the multitudes following Him now, not like they were following after the Sermon on the Mount (8:1). Why were they not following?

1) The extra distance? (The effort required to follow Jesus was just too demanding.)
2) The potentially dangerous storms as one journeyed? (The journey to follow Jesus involved too many storms of abuse and ridicule, persecution and questions.)
3) The cost of passage? (The cost of following Jesus required too much sacrifice, the denial of too many creature comforts.)
4) The unbelief and dislike of His miracles and claims?

2 (8:24) **Trials—Trouble—Afflictions**: a fearful experience—a great storm arose. This was a most fearful experience; the apostles' very lives were threatened (v.25). The waves were covering the boat (v.24). It was, so to speak, a trial of trials. If Jesus could teach them His care through this experience, they would know He could take care of them through any storm or trial.

Note three things.

1. The storm arose immediately, unexpectedly: "Behold, there arose."
2. The storm was great: the waves were covering the boat.
3. The storm was life-threatening: "we perish" (v.25).

> **"Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7).**
>
> **"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1).**
>
> **"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow" (Ps.116:3).**
>
> **"For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity" (Eccl.2:23).**
>
> **"We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" (Jer.8:15).**

Thought 1. We face many storms throughout life, fearful storms (see note—Mt.7:24-25 for a list of the storms of life).

1) Some storms swoop down upon us totally unexpectedly. There is no warning, no sign of their coming. But they come, and as long as we follow Jesus, they will come.
2) Some storms are great. Their waves and repercussions slash against us. They overwhelm us and threaten to engulf us.
3) Some are life-threatening. We see no escape, no way out, no deliverance. There seems to be no way to carry on, not in the present circumstances.

Thought 2. Nature itself can appear calm and secure; it can seem serene and safe. But its storms can arise quickly, unexpectedly. Some persons are frightened by the storm's billowing clouds rolling in upon one another, the roar of thunder, the flash of lightening, and the torrent of rain. It is dangerous and life-threatening to anyone who is not sheltered and protected.

The picture is also true with some of the trials of life—trials which everyone has or will have. What we need is the shelter and protection of Jesus Christ Himself.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:24) **Sea of Galilee**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.1:16.

3 (8:24) **Helplessness—Weakness**: a terrifying discovery—man is not able to handle the situation. The terrifying discovery was twofold.

1. They, the seasoned and self-confident fishermen, were unable to handle this particular storm. Note these facts about the disciples and the storm.
   a. They were seasoned fishermen. They knew the sea and the boat; they knew how to handle themselves in the midst of any situation or trial. The same is true with many of us. We are seasoned at living and in handling the storms of life. We feel that no trial or situation can swoop down upon us beyond our control. We are completely self sufficient, or so we think and feel.
   b. They were face to face with a storm so severe that they were not able to save themselves. No doubt they had faced storms before, but they had never confronted a situation as terrifying as this severe storm. Everyone of us will face a *storm that terrifies* us some day. The *terrifying storm* will be beyond our control. We will not be able to save ourselves.
   c. They were frightened and terrified. They were completely helpless and hopeless, left to themselves. When the terrifying storm hits us, it will leave us fearful, helpless, and hopeless.
   d. They apparently had tried to handle the storm without Jesus until the situation got out of control (cp. v.25). This, of course, is the root of the problem in many of our situations: lack of trust and faith in Christ and failing to call upon Him soon enough to prevent desperation.
2. They were without the immediate help of Jesus. To them, He was asleep. Jesus was present, yet He seemed so far away; He seemed asleep. He was out of reach, unaware of their desperate plight, unconscious of their need—so the disciples thought. How often our lack of trust and sin cause us to feel that the Lord is unaware and out of reach and untouched by our need.

"O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee" (2 Chron.20:12).

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that built it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps.127:1).

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).

"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (Jn.3:27).

"...without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Ro.7:18).

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5).

4 (8:25) **Seeking God**: a desperate approach—Lord, awake—save us. Why did the disciples call upon Jesus now? Why not earlier?

- ⇒ The situation was totally *out of control*, beyond their ability to handle.
- ⇒ They were about to perish and die.
- ⇒ They had waited and waited, tried and tried to handle the situation themselves. They were prideful men: big, sturdy, capable, seasoned, and prideful in their profession. They had always handled every situation before; they could handle this one, or so they thought.

In the final analysis, the disciples confessed their need. They broke through their pride and came to Jesus. But note: they had almost waited too late, humanly speaking (v.24-25). Jesus *stirred Himself* and heard their confession.

Thought 1. Note these significant lessons.

1) Imminent danger can drive us to Christ, but we need to remember three critical things.
   a) We can wait too long. We can die and slip into eternity before we know it.
   b) We run a terrible risk in waiting. We overlook something: a person who decides to wait until the last minute is not all that sincere about Christ, and Christ knows it.
   c) We waste a lifetime of *living—really living in all the fulness of life*. Abundant life comes only through Christ—the life that brings unbelievable confidence and assurance, security and self-worth, love and joy, peace and rest.

> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**

2) There is one ingredient so often missed in asking Christ to save us—one ingredient that determines whether we are heard or not: a true sense of need—a desperate plea for help beyond ourselves—a crying out to the Lord Himself—a diligent seeking.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

3) Their cry included the steps necessary for Christ to save them and us.
   a) They believed He could save them: so they came to Him.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**

   b) They confessed their need to be saved, that they were perishing.

> **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).**
>
> **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).**

   c) They cried out in desperation for Christ to save them.

> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9-10).**

4) A desperate cry that will not quit will awaken the Lord to our need. No matter what it may be, persevering in prayer will awaken Him and bring the answer (see outline and notes Mt.7:7-11).

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).**

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Ps.61:2).

"Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

5 (8:26) **Fear—Unbelief**: a challenging question. The disciples were going through two human experiences, but *they were aware of only one*: the experience of terrible fear. What they failed to see was completely hidden to them. They were experiencing the root cause of fear: little faith. Their trust in Christ (that their lives were completely in His keeping and under His care) was lacking. Their trust was incomplete and immature. They were not sure that He was aware of their desperate need. But He was, just as He is aware of all needs—always. He was the One who asked, "Why are ye fearful?" It was as though He was shocked at their lack of faith. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:26.)

"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain [trial], Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph.6:16).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:5-6).

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) Christ was not disturbed with their calling and interrupting His sleep. He was disturbed with their fear and lack of trust. He is never disturbed with our crying out to Him.
2) There is no excuse for a disciple's fear. Of all people, believers are supposed to be the persons trusting Him, knowing that He is looking after their lives. Believers are to know His supernatural strength; they are supposed to walk through all things courageously, even death.
3) The disciples neglected Christ. They could have prevented much of their problem if they had gone to Christ earlier. As pointed out earlier, they were trying to handle the situation by themselves, confident of their own ability. How often we walk in self-confidence, not paying enough attention to the Lord and His care. We *always* need to be calling upon Him, not waiting until the last moment, expecting Him to step in and meet our emergency (1 Pt.5:7; Eph.6:18).
4) Christ rebukes fear and unbelief. Fear and unbelief dishonor Him. It says to the world that Christ is not enough. He is not strong enough and does not care enough and does not love enough to look after us in our trouble and sin. How foolish we are (Jn.3:16; 1 Pt.5:7; Mt.11:28-30)!
5) Faith is to be several things.
   ⇒ Faith is to be the foundation of our lives, not a beam for emergency support.
   ⇒ Faith is to be the flow of our behavior, not the serum for emergencies.
   ⇒ Faith is to be the permeating thought of our mind, not the sporadic thought aroused by need.
   ⇒ Faith is to be the constant plea of our heart, not the occasional cry of desperation.
6) Storms and trials can lead to terrible discouragement and fear...
   - fear that one has gone too far for recovery.
   - fear that no one really cares.
   - fear that one is a stumblingblock and a burden to others.
   - fear that there is no real reason for living.

But there is hope—*in Christ*. He is *The Great Deliverer* from fear. In fact, He is The Great Deliverer from all trials and temptations.

"Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:20).

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps.23:4).

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps.27:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:26) **Fear**: fear can be a good thing as well as a bad thing. Fear sometimes causes us to respond with more vigor and strength, intelligence and wisdom, well beyond ourselves. Fear can make us face three things.

1. Fear can make us face the reality about ourselves: what we really are; who we really are; why we are here.
2. Fear can make us face our desperate need: that we are not perfect nor completely self-sufficient, self-contained, or adequate for all things. We are not the summit of existence nor the epitomy of what man should be. Humanism and humanistic philosophy (that man is all) are not the crowning glory of behavior and thought. We desperately need to face the fact. No matter how well we behave or how high we think, we still have terrible storms that swoop down upon us, and they engulf us like waves of the ocean rolling in one upon another. And then the final wave that no man can handle, the great tidal wave of death, drowns the breath of life out of us. We must face the fact...
   - that there are desperate needs that must be handled.
   - that we are incapable of handling them ourselves.
3. Fear can make us face our need for help beyond ourselves.

In facing death we are as helpless as the disciples were. We cannot stop death. When it is time, we die. Note this fact as well: just like the disciples, we need help all the time. We may not confess our need, but the *need for Christ* is always hounding us whether we recognize it or not. We may walk day by day in our own strength and ability, but there would be a tremendous difference if we trusted Christ to save us.

1. Things would go much better.

   "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

2. Life would be so much smoother and more peaceful.

   "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

   "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

   "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

3. Life would bear so much more fruit.

   "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

4. Assurance and confidence and hope would flood our hearts and minds so much more.

   "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:5; cp. 5:1-5).

   "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:6-8).

   "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).

   "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God" (1 Jn.3:21).

6 (8:26) **Deliverance—Jesus Christ, Power**: a strong, powerful deliverance—a great calm. Christ is the Sovereign Lord over all nature. He can do what He wills for any of us. He arose and rebuked the storm—then there was an instantaneous calm. But note this: the disciples misread both the situation and Christ's presence. When they awoke Christ, Christ pointed out their fear immediately—even before He arose and answered their need.

This says something of critical importance: all the problems of the world are known by Christ and providentially overruled by Him. He does not have to rush to meet them. Problems are not a danger or threat to the child of God. This does not mean that we shall not suffer or die, nor that we do not have to bear terrible trials. The disciples had to experience this storm and they had to experience many other storms. But Christ was with them, and He is always with us. He will strengthen and carry us through all the storms of life. In fact, as with the disciples, God uses the storms of life to teach us more and more trust in Him. If there were no trials, there would be no need to trust Him.

How often we misread the presence of Christ, thinking He is out of reach. And how often we misread the storm, thinking it is out of His control. The problem is, we are not walking close enough to Him to be conscious of His presence and care. He will speak and calm the storm at the very best time, after everyone has learned what they are supposed to learn through the storms.

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud" (Job 26:12).

"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps.115:3).

"Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?" (Is.43:13).

Thought 1. Christ arises when He is called upon. When we really mean what we pray, He arises to His feet in our behalf. He stands and confronts the situation head-on, meeting our needs beyond what we ask, in the very best way possible.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

Thought 2. Note two things.

1) Christ can calm any storm of life for us.
2) Christ can strengthen us to go through any storm of life.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor.1:3-4).

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13).

7 (8:27) **Power**: a marvelous purpose. The disciples marvelled; they had never seen anything like it—even the winds and seas obeyed Him. (See note—Mt.8:23-27.)

1. They now knew more about what it meant to call Him "Lord." He was the sovereign Lord who possessed all power over nature—the same power that the prophets of old proclaimed for God.
2. They also knew more about what it meant to trust Him and His Word. He was able to control even the elements of nature. They could now depend upon His power to do whatever was needed. In Him, the power was available to control all things and to do all things.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (Jn.14:12).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Ph.2:9-12).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

	F. Jesus Casts Out Demons: Saving Men,[DS1] **8:28-34** (Mk.5:1-20; Lk.8:26-40)	31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.	
1 Jesus went where no other men would go a. Among the evil possessed b. Among the dead c. Among the fierce	28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.	32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.	**2 Jesus saved those whom no other men could reach**[DS2] a. The power of His word: "Go" b. The result: Demons were expelled & exorcised
d. Among the defiant	29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? are thou come hither to torment us before the time?	33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.	**3 Jesus was rejected again by covetous men** a. The covetous heard of the Lord's presence and behavior
e. Among the malicious—the devourers—the destroyers	30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.	34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.	b. The covetous felt nothing in common with Him: "When they saw Him" c. The covetous rejected and expelled Him

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

F. Jesus Casts Out Demons: Saving Men, 8:28-34

(8:28-34) **Introduction—Evil Spirits—Messiah**: Jesus was doing two things in this experience.

1. Jesus was demonstrating His power to deliver men from the darkest forces imaginable—men possessed by "devils" (demons, evil spirits). He wanted the world to know that He had now combatted and conquered the forces of evil.
   a. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against *principalities*, against *powers*, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).
   b. On the cross, Christ "spoiled principalities and powers"; Christ "made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" (Col.2:15; cp. Heb.2:14-15). What this means is...
      - that the depth of evil was *openly* seen by taking the life of God's Son.
      - that by suffering death on the cross God's Son *openly showed* just how evil the principalities and powers are.

      But contrary to what they expected, while He was on the cross, Christ bore the sins of the whole world, "triumphing over" the forces of evil (1 Pt.2:24; see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3 cp. Mt.5:17-18).
   c. He was "raised from the dead, and placed at [God's] own right hand...far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come" (Eph.1:20-21).
   d. He now proclaims the most glorious hope for man.

      "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth" (Mt.28:18).
      "[He] is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:10).

   e. Why does He not just take over now? Why has He not assumed His sovereign reign over the universe yet?

      "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9; cp. these verses 3:3-4, 8-18).

2. Jesus was demonstrating that He searches for men everywhere. He wants all men to be saved, even those who are *the most wild and mean*. And He wants everyone to know that He is out to save all, even *the worst of men*. Therefore, He set out to save two men who were as *possessed with devils* as could be. We may avoid the wildest and meanest and have little to do with those in bad conditions, but Christ longs to save them.

1. Jesus went where no other men would go (v.28-31).
2. Jesus saved those whom no other men could reach (v.32).
3. Jesus was rejected again by covetous men (v.33-34).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:28-34) **Evil Spirits—Demons—Satan**: the Bible teaches that there are beings in the spiritual world who are evil just as there are men in this world who are evil. The Bible calls these beings "*evil spirits*." Note that the very word *evil* is used in

their name which describes exactly what their nature and mission are. "Evil spirits" apparently have a leader called *the evil one*. He is sometimes called by other names describing the terrible work he is out to do in defiance of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9 for more discussion) .

Some deny a *force of evil* in an unseen world, whereas the person who accepts the Bible as the authoritative Word of God accepts what the Bible teaches about their presence.

Those who deny evil spirits feel that a civilized and scientific society knows better; it is just too intelligent to accept *evil beings* in an unseen world who have the power to possess, obsess, and oppress men. Three primary reasons lead to this conclusion.

1. The existence of evil spirits in an unseen world cannot be scientifically proven.
2. The behavior of what is called *evil spirits* seems to exist more and to be more marked in unscientific societies that tend to stress evil spirits.
3. The behavior of those *possessed* is thought to be nothing more than mental illness.

There are huge problems with the denial of an evil spirit behind the seen world. The denial just leaves so much unanswered.

1. How can *mental illness* explain such behavior as is witnessed so often upon the scene of human history? Consider Hitler and other mass murderers and the many other inhuman atrocities committed against people. Realistically, several facts militate against all inhuman behavior being assigned to mental illness.
   a. There is the fact that so many who did so much evil were nurtured in the arms of a mother or someone else who did care. Mental illness points out deviations from healthy rearing. But realistically, the deviations can come nowhere close to matching the terrible atrocities. And the deviation from normal behavior does not always vary that much until the terrible atrocity is committed.
   b. A human being who is mentally ill cannot move among sound people for too long without being found out. True mental illness cannot fake that much and that often. Its behavior deviates often enough that others know that a person is acting extremely abnormal. A mentally ill person can be detected and reached out to by caring people.
   c. A person who is mentally ill cannot move among a large number of sound leaders and convince them all to commit atrocity after atrocity. Realistically, there has to be more than mental illness behind inhuman behavior that is deceiving (blinding) and so terribly destructive.
2. The claim that *demon-like behavior* exists more in unindustrialized societies has two faults.
   a. Such a claim is disputable, although probably true. But the point is this: a scientific society that is dominated by unbelief is bound to ascribe abnormal behavior to whatever it feels causes the defect. Therefore...
      - abnormal behavior is always ascribed to mental illness.
      - severe abnormal behavior is marked up as unexplainable or due to a complete diverse (split) personality.

      However, claiming that something is unexplainable or coming up with a new name does not do away with reality, the truth of what actually exists. (There is not that much difference between the psychological belief in two complete personalities within a body and scriptural belief which also says that two persons can *possess* a body—the man himself and an evil spirit.)
   b. The Bible claims that the evil spirits of the unseen world are highly intelligent and deceptive.
      ⇒ When a man thinks he "walks in light" (is enlightened or scientific), the Bible says the evil one fashions himself into an angel of light and uses strategies of light. Therefore, men would naturally call abnormal behavior by some natural or humanistic term as *mental illness* (2 Cor.11:14-15; Eph.6:11).
      ⇒ When a person believes in evil spirits and opens his life to such spirits, the evil one uses the strategies of what men call *dark spirits*.

1 (8:28-31) **Jesus, Mission**: Jesus went where no other men would go.

1. Jesus went among the evil possessed. These two men were as possessed with evil as any have ever been. (Cp. Mark and Luke to have a complete picture of their plight.) They were so possessed and acted so insane that no man would dare reach out with a helping hand. In fact, no man dared go near them. Yet God cares for all and cares equally. He cared for these as much as He cared for any. And He wants His people to care and to reach out to all no matter how bad their condition. Christ was to demonstrate such care for all succeeding generations, so He went where no men dared to go. He went among those who were the epitomy of men *possessed with devils*.
2. Jesus went among the dead. Note two things.
   a. These men lived among the tombs, in the grave yard.
   b. These men represented *the living dead*—all men without Christ are "dead in their sins." The difference between the two possessed men and all others is that they were the picture of the worst of the living dead. They show just how far away some can slide from God and from their families and friends. They can be so possessed with evil that they are completely cut off from both God and man, living as though among the dead (cp. Eph.2:1-3; 5:14; Col.2:13).

"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (Lk.15:32).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev.3:1).

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead" (Pr.21:16).

Thought 1. Note two things.

1) Where the depth of evil can lead: "among the dead."
2) How far a person can go in giving himself over to *evil* or *devils*: he can literally ruin his life. We all know some who have given themselves over to evil so much that they have fallen into the pits. They have become so cut off from others that they live as "among the dead."

3. Jesus went among the fierce. Some men are dangerous; they are so given over to evil that they are a threat to everyone. The two possessed men were "exceeding fierce." They threatened any who passed by.

Thought 1. Why were the two possessed men fierce? Why do men become fierce and dangerous?

1) Some give themselves over to evil step by step. They grow more and more evil. They walk so long in pride and envy, selfishness and lust that they rebel against giving of themselves. They react with malice and revenge against any who wish equal treatment. Sensual stimulation and material things—wealth, recognition, and power--and things within the world become the ambition of their lives, and they focus their attention accordingly. They walk so long therein that they become obsessed and possessed; they react with anger against any position or relationship that does not grant their desire.
2) Some become so self-centered and selfish, walking so long therein, that they react violently if they do not receive the attention and recognition they desire or get what they want. They behave so selfishly that they become "possessed with devils."
3) Some give themselves over to evil so much that they become possessed with evil. They are capable of acting and reacting so coldly that everyone becomes nothing but pawns to do their bidding. If anyone expresses a different position, they become an immediate threat.
4) Some are ignored, neglected, rejected, and abused so much that they withdraw and become subject to being possessed with the negative reactions of evil: self-centeredness, self-pity, anger, hostility, malice, bitterness, revenge, and on and on.

   When the heart is not filled with God, it is filled with self and evil, and it sometimes becomes angry and fierce against people and positions. There is no exception; everyone without God experiences some anger and fierceness during their journey without God. Some go so far as to become possessed with *an evil spirit of fierceness*.

4. Jesus went among the defiant. Men rebel against God; rebellion in God's eyes is defiance, that is, rejection of Him and His will. These men rebelled and were as defiant as men can be. Note three facts.

a. They protested Jesus' presence: "cried out" in defiance against His presence. How many of us protest and have times that we do not want His presence?
b. They recognized Him as the Son of God. They recognized something that many today refuse to acknowledge.
c. They acknowledged a day of torment, of judgment yet to come. They did something many try to deny.

Thought 1. Note several important lessons.

1) It is not the knowledge that God exists that makes a person a child of God. It is love: love of God and love of man. The person who truly reaches out for God and for man is born of God.

"Thou believest that there is one God; Thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (Jas.2:19).

"Beloved, let us love one other: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 Jn.4:7-9; cp. v.10-11).

2) Evil spirits have nothing to do with Christ. Christ did not come to save fallen angels, but fallen men. Christ went to a graveyard to save these two men. He will go anyplace to save anyone. How much more should we be willing to go anyplace to reach fallen men?

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).

3) Some men react against Jesus Christ just as these evil spirits did.
   a) They can call Jesus Christ the Son of God and have nothing to do with Him.
   b) They can acknowledge a day of torment and still have nothing to do with Him.
   c) They can reject Him, protest His presence, oppose His right to control their lives, rebel against His interference, even hate Him and feel animosity toward Him.

4) Some men may be nagged with the question: Do we have anything to do with God? Man is the concern of God, and the fact that a person may be nagged with the question is a good sign. Such a man can find God and find deliverance if he will diligently seek God.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all you heart" (Jer.29:13).**

5. Jesus goes among the malicious, the devourers, the destroyers. The evil spirits are said to be the ones speaking here. They recognized Jesus' sovereignty. Note how the *evil spirits* thought and worked.

a. They were indwelling and hurting these men physically, mentally, and spiritually.
b. They wished (if exorcised from human bodies) to hurt other men by damaging and destroying their property.
c. They wished (if exorcised) to keep other men from Christ by destroying their property and having them blame God for the devastation and loss.

> **"The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**
>
> **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:3-4).**
>
> **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).**
>
> **"...him [the devil] that had the power of death" (Heb.2:14).**

Thought 1. Jesus Christ went where no man would go. He went to those who were malicious and would devour and destroy. And because He went, He was able to deliver two men.

(Note: the following verses apply to the whole note, outline note 1.)

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

2 (8:32) **Salvation—Spiritual Cleansing**: Jesus saved those whom no other men could reach.

1. There is the power of His Word. The devil's power may be great, but the Word of Christ is omnipotent (all-powerful).

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).**
>
> **"If God be for us, who can be against us" (Ro.8:31f. Read this whole passage for a descriptive picture of the Lord's love and power.)**

2. There is the result of His Word. The men were saved and the evil spirits were cast out of the men. Christ has the power to deliver and save. All He has to do is say, "Go," and whatever evil dwells in a man is gone. The man is delivered from all evil—its presence, guilt, and consequences. The man is "saved to the utmost" (Heb.7:25).

> **"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (Jn.17:2).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb.7:27).**

Thought 1. Some may seem hopeless to us. They may rage, rebel, and defy God; but Christ can and will reach them. We just need to go to them in the name of our Lord, for He has the power to deliver and save. This is the very purpose of this experience. It is a demonstration of His power to save men who are gripped by the depths of darkness.

Thought 2. The power of Christ is able and all sufficient, sufficient enough to meet any need. The evil spirits were two of the worst ever described, yet they were expelled and the men were delivered.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:32) **Evil Spirit**: a question needs to be asked about the swine that were killed (Mt.8:30-32). There were about two thousand of them (Mk.5:13). Why were they killed? As this is discussed, it should be noted that Christ did not kill them. He, of course, knew they would be killed; but the evil spirits were the ones who drove them wildly over the cliff. Why did Christ allow the owners to suffer such a great loss?

There are several possible answers.

1. It was a visible sign that the two possessed men were truly saved and freed from the evil spirits. Everyone knew beyond question that the two were possessed. Only a dramatic act could give unquestionable proof.
2. It was to convince those who did not believe in evil spirits that there are most definitely evil spirits who do possess bodies. (Unbelievers such as the Sadducees and other liberal thinkers of the day needed to see the truth.)
3. It was to teach obedience and holiness. It was against the law for a Jew to own and eat swine (Lev.11:7; cp. Is.65:3-4; 66:17). If the owners were Jews (and they probably were), they were sinning against the law. Jesus was thereby teaching that His presence demanded holiness and obedience to the law.
4. It was to teach the value of a human soul. The two possessed men were of far more value than any amount of material wealth, and even more so if the wealth were gained by illegal means.
5. It was to attract the attention and open the door for the evangelization of the surrounding district. No doubt the news of the Messiah's presence and power would spread and stir people to open their hearts and receive the message of the healed demoniacs (Lk.8:38-40).
6. It was to drive home Jesus' holiness and to arouse the people to acknowledge it; thereby, the seeking and honest heart would be open for salvation (Lk.8:38-40).
7. It was to awaken covetous men to the fact that they were gripped by greed. They were doomed unless they forsook their material possessions and turned to the Messiah (Mt.19:16-26). This could have been the best way and the only chance for them to be awakened to their need and to the power of Christ to deliver them.
8. It was to show and reveal the true nature of evil spirits (see outline and note, pt.3—Mk.5:8-13).

3 (8:33-34) **Covetousness—Jesus Christ, Response—Rejection**: Jesus was rejected again by no other than covetous men (see note—Mt.8:32).

1. The covetous heard of the Lord's presence and behavior. The herd-keepers ran into the city to report what had happened. Note: the whole city went out to meet Him, and all reacted against the loss of the wealth. Nothing was acknowledged of the good done.
   a. There was good in that a great deliverance had taken place. Two hopeless men had been healed and delivered.
   b. There was good in the truth about the swine. Whatever was behind the destruction of the swine, it was for the good of all involved (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:32).
2. The covetous felt nothing in common with Christ. "When they saw Him," they saw only a man standing there who had destroyed their property. They were blind to the glorious work and deliverance of the two possessed men. Salvation was not on their mind—business was. Their thoughts were engulfed in their material loss, not in heaven's gain.

Thought 1. When the covetous see the Lord, they experience an immediate response: they feel nothing in common with Christ and His demand for self-denial (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

Thought 2. The Lord's attitude and demands toward material possessions are stringent (see outline, notes, and thoughts—Mt.6:19-24; 6:25-34). A covetous man is forced either to repent, that is turn from all material seeking, or to outrightly reject Christ (Mt.19:16-22).

3. The covetous rejected and expelled Christ. The covetous did not come to be saved by the Messiah but to expel Him. They expelled Him who had the power to expel all the evil forces that had gripped their lives and that was leading them down the road to material destruction.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).

	CHAPTER 9		
	G. Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man: Forgiving Sin,[DS1] **9:1-8** (Mk.2:1-12; Lk.5:17-26)		
1 Jesus left Gadara & entered His own city—Capernaum	And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.	4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?	**lently accused of blasphemy**[DS3,4]
2 Jesus' power to forgive sins was demonstrated a. The friends' deep care: They brought their disabled friend to Jesus b. The friends' great faith c. Jesus' compassion: Forgave the man's sins[DS2]	2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.	5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?	**4 Jesus' power to forgive sins was proven** a. He revealed something: He knew their rejection b. He suggested something: A test c. He did something: He healed the man[DS5]
3 Jesus' power to forgive sins was questioned: Si-	3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within them selves, This man blasphemeth.	6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.	d. He commanded something: Go
		7 And he arose, and departed to his house.	
		8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.	**5 Jesus' power to forgive sins brought glory to God**

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

G. Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man: Forgiving Sin, 9:1-8

(9:1-8) **Introduction—Jesus Christ—Compassion—Faith, Persistent**: Jesus was deeply touched by men who diligently sought Him and persevered in that diligence. These men could not reach Jesus because of the throng of people, but the friends would not give up. They removed the roof and lowered the sick man down to Christ (Mk.2:1-12).

This persistent act gave Christ the opportunity to show His love and power to forgive sins and to demonstrate that He was beyond question the Messiah.

1. Jesus left Gadara and entered His own city—Capernaum (v.1).
2. Jesus' power to forgive sins was demonstrated (v.2).
3. Jesus' power to forgive sins was questioned: He was silently accused of blasphemy (v.3).
4. Jesus' power to forgive sins was proven (v.4-7).
5. Jesus' power to forgive sins brought glory to God (v.8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:1-8) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Forgiveness**: note several things about this experience.

1. The experience must have embarrassed the sick man. His friends had not waited their turn, and the sick man was unable to stop his friends. He was probably expecting a rebuke. The wording of Jesus' response indicates embarrassment and fear: "Son, be of good cheer."
2. The experience touched the heart of Jesus in a very special way. It revealed a persistent faith that would not be stopped until it had experienced its end. The friends had a faith that would not quit, no matter what.
3. The experience caused Jesus to reveal and speak the thoughts that are ever on His mind: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee." His words are words of compassion, affection, endearment, sympathy, encouragement, assurance, and forgiveness.
4. The experience gave Jesus the unique opportunity to prove His Messiahship: that He is the Son of Man. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Son of Man*—Mt.8:20.) Note that Jesus did not say "I," but "the Son of Man has power [authority] on earth to forgive sins." The people were familiar with the title "the Son of Man" (cp. Dan.7:13-14). Every phrase is important.
   a. The Son of Man is given "authority," that is, dominion and power over a kingdom, a kingdom that is open to all people (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of Heaven*—Mt.19:23-24).
   b. The Son of Man is "given power [authority] over earth" now as well as in the future.
   c. The Son of Man's power includes the power to forgive as well as the power to rule and reign.

1 (9:1) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: Jesus left Gadara and entered His own city, Capernaum. The Gadarenes had asked Him to leave (cp. Mt.8:34). There is no record of his ever entering their coasts again. He obeyed their wish.

Thought 1. Jesus' experience with the Gadarenes is a warning to every man, city, and nation. He will not force Himself upon any person or society. What a contrast with the people of Capernaum and the paralyzed man of this story.

2 (9:2) **Jesus Christ, Power—Forgiveness**: Jesus' power to forgive sins was demonstrated.

1. There was the friends' deep care. They brought their disabled friend to Christ. Note four facts.
   a. The man was disabled. He was helpless; therefore, he was without hope. But his friends cared and cared deeply for him.

b. The friends had a very special care, a care that was deeper than the care of mere friendship (Mark and Luke show this). They were obsessed with *the mission* to get this disabled friend to Jesus. They not only went to him and made his bed as an act of ministry and service, but they went to him, made a pallet, and then *brought him to Jesus*.

c. The friends acknowledged Jesus' power to help. They knew He could help, and they did not question His power. It was not a spirit of *maybe He could*, but He *could* and *would* help.

d. The friends persisted even to the point of rudeness (Lk.11:5-10; 18:1-8). They would not be stopped (cp. Mark and Luke).

> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**
>
> **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).**
>
> **"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I search out" (Job 29:15-16).**
>
> **"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Pr.31:20).**
>
> **"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Lk.10:33-34).**

Thought 1. All men are disabled and sick spiritually. Therefore, we must possess the same three qualities as the friends of the disabled did:

1) We must be obsessed with the mission of getting the disabled to Christ. We must cling to the helpless and hopeless until we can get them to Christ.
2) We must acknowledge Christ's power to help—beyond any question.
3) We must persist and persevere until we get the disabled to Christ.

Thought 2. We cannot save our friends. No man can forgive another man's sins or heal a man, but we *can bring a man to Christ* for salvation and deliverance.

2. There was the friends' great faith. Note the words, "Their faith": it was *their faith* that saved this man, both the faith of the man and his friends. *Their faith* was great and persistent. What is a great faith?

a. A great faith is focusing one's belief on Jesus Christ. It is centering one's attention and conviction on Christ; that He alone is the answer to the needy and the helpless of the world, no matter who they are.

b. A great faith is acknowledging that a need does exist and must be met.

c. A great faith is doing all one can do to meet the need. These men did all they could do. They went to great effort. They went to the disabled friend's house, made a pallet, and carried him to Jesus.

d. A great faith persists until the need is met.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).**
>
> **"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).**

Thought 1. Jesus will never fail to acknowledge persistent faith. He saw the faith of these men; He could not miss it. Their faith had caused them to persist—quitting was unthinkable. They persisted until they reached Him.

Thought 2. The faith of friends has a bearing and carries some weight upon the salvation of the hopeless and helpless. It was "their faith" that saved this man. We must go out of the walls of our churches and homes and bring the helpless and hopeless to Christ. Christ will honor our belief and trust in Him. He will save those whom we bring.

Thought 3. Note: the act of these men spoke much louder than words. These men said nothing as far as it is known. They just brought the man to Christ. When the act or behavior is present, there is no need for words. What a lesson in faith! Faith is not profession; it is possession. Faith is not words; it is action (Jas.2:20; cp. 2:17-26).

3. There was Jesus' compassion. The greatest need this crippled man had was to be forgiven his sins. This was the first thing Jesus did: He forgave the man's sins. This was the most important thing. But note that these friends and the disabled man already had faith. Faith is necessary for one's sins to be forgiven.

> **"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).**

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"In whom we have redempiton through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

Thought 1. Jesus has compassion for all men—even the rude. Jesus has enormous compassion on a faith that genuinely seeks and believes in Him. What He looks for and sees in a man is *faith*, faith that causes a man to seek after Him with all his heart.

1) These men had been as rude as possible by breaking into line. They were probably thought selfish and self-centered by pushing ahead. But their hearts were crying out in desperation for their friend.
2) The disabled man was probably as embarassed as he could be, but he was desperate, so he was willing to bear the embarrassment.

Thought 2. Jesus did not conduct His services by ceremony and ritual. These men interrupted whatever He was doing. Why? Because they had need and were desperately seeking His help. Ceremony and ritual can never replace compassion. The church needs to keep itself open to the message of compassion, and compassion should always supersede ceremony and ritual. Need should always be met before ceremony and ritual. This is a known fact but a revolutionary practice.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:2) **Forgiveness**: see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28.

3 (9:3) **Jesus Christ, Power**: Jesus' power to forgive sins was questioned. He was silently accused of blasphemy. Note: it was the religionists who *thought* that Jesus could not forgive sins, and the thought was whispered among themselves. Many think this even today. In the inner recesses of their hearts, they do not think Jesus can really forgive sin. They have the *thought* and perhaps *whisper* to their spouses or close associates that He is not really the Son of God, the One who has the power to forgive sins.

Thought 1. The innermost belief of many today is a paradox.

1) Many do not believe that Jesus Christ is truly living, that He is the Son of God, God incarnate in human flesh, who arose from the dead and is seated at the right hand of God.
2) Many who disbelieve, however, do accept Jesus Christ to be one of the greatest teachers who ever lived. The paradox with this position is that it makes Christ the biggest fraud in all history, for He did claim to be the Son of God and to possess the power of God to forgive sins.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor.5:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:3) **Scribes**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(9:3) **Blasphemy** (blasphemia): to blaspheme, slander, insult, rail at, revile, reproach. Jesus was claiming to do what only God could do—forgive sins.

4 (9:4-7) **Jesus Christ, Power**: Jesus' power to forgive sins was proven. Note four steps.

1. Jesus revealed something: He knew the rejection of the religionists. The Scribes' *evil* was their thinking that Jesus, the Son of God, was not of God, and that He did not have the power to forgive sins (v.4). The crowd at least recognized His power as being the power of God, but not the Scribes and religionists. In their pride and hardness of heart, they rejected Him, refusing to ascribe any authority to Him. He knew exactly what they were thinking.

Thought 1. Christ knows all our thoughts. No thought and no imagination are hid from Him (cp. Mt.12:25; Lk.6:8; 9:47; Jn.2:25).

Thought 2. Thoughts that deny Jesus' deity are evil. Jesus has but one question for the unbeliever: "Wherefore think ye *evil* in your hearts?" (v.4).

2. Jesus suggested something: a test. It is much easier to say something than to do something. Therefore, Jesus suggested that He be put to the test, that He prove His deity by act and not just by word. Note two things.
   a. Jesus was acknowledging that *profession only* was inadequate evidence for a claim. Action is also needed.

b. Jesus' purpose was to demonstrate that the Son of Man has power to *forgive sins*. God has committed all judgment into the hands of Jesus, a judgment that either forgives or condemns a person.

> **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:22-23).**

Thought 1. It is much easier to say something than to do something. Jesus proved that He was not just speaking words, not just professing to have the power of God to forgive sins. He forcefully spoke, and the man arose.

3. Christ did something: He healed the man. Christ proved His deity and Messiahship. This miracle and all others miracles prove two things.

a. His miracles prove exactly what He was claiming: that He is truly the Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of the living God. He has the power to forgive sins.

b. His miracles prove that God does care: He cared enough to send His only Son into the world to heal and to save the needy and the hopeless.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps.103:3).**
>
> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**

Thought 1. Note that Christ did not argue. His purpose was to heal and save the needy, not to argue who He is and by whose authority He possesses the power of God.

1) He revealed His Divine knowledge, His omniscience: "Why think ye?"
2) He revealed His Divine power, His omnipotence: "Arise, take up thy bed, and go...." What a lesson for pastors and denominations today! How we need to cease arguing and begin carrying out the real mission God has called us to do.

4. Christ commanded something: go to thy house. Why did Christ send the man to his house? Our homes are to be the first recipients of our witness. But the very opposite is too often true; our homes are often overlooked and neglected. Note two facts about the saved man that can teach us a clear lesson.

a. He had been a burden to his loved ones.

b. He could now be a servant who could minister to his loved ones.

> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(9:6) **Son of Man**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20.

5 (9:8) **Jesus Christ, Power**: Jesus' power to forgive sins brought glory to God.

> **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).**
>
> **"Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel" (Ps.22:23).**
>
> **"Let the people praise thee. O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps.67:3).**

Thought 1. Two things should stir us to glorify God.

1) The demonstration of Jesus' power.
2) The salvation of people whose sins are truly forgiven.

Thought 2. Two things should stir unbelievers to glorify God.

1) The fact that the Messiah has really come: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).
2) The fact that unbelievers can be forgiven their sins, that is, saved: "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

Thought 3. Note several warnings.

1) A person can glorify God and still not be saved. The multitudes glorified God, yet they did not receive forgiveness of sins.
2) A person can marvel at Christ, but he may fail to believe that Christ is truly the Son of Man.
3) A person can believe that Jesus Christ was only a man who was given the power of God while on earth, but this person will never be saved as long as he denies that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn.3:16; cp. Mt.10:33).

	H. Jesus Calls Matthew: Receiving Sinners,[DS1] **9:9-13** (Mk.2:14-17; Lk.5:27-32)	with him and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?	& his sinful friends b. The religionists questioned Jesus' fellowshipping with sinners
1 The sinner who needed a Savior a. Jesus saw a man b. Jesus called the man c. The man's one act: He arose & followed Jesus	9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.	12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.	**3 The Savior who saved the sinner: His mission** a. He came to be where the spiritually sick are b. He came to have mercy, not to gain sacrifice[DS2] c. He came to call men to repentance[DS3]
2 The sinner who introduced his sinful friends to the Savior a. He entertained Jesus	10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down	13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.	

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

H. Jesus Calls Matthew: Receiving Sinners, 9:9-13

(9:9-13) **Introduction—Matthew—Tax Collectors**: this is one of the most heart-warming and touching scenes in all the Bible. It is Matthew's personal testimony.

Imagine his sitting and writing about the experiences of so many others that we have just read about in Chapters 1-8. Now he comes to his own personal experience. He was a man bitterly opposed, talked and gossiped about and hated, not by just a few, but by everyone. He was so detested that he was classified with the worst of sinners (Lk.15:1). He was a tax collector for a conquering nation. He had become wealthy by extortion, so wealthy that he was able to own a house large enough to handle a huge crowd and a large feast. He was immoral, unjust, money-hungry, and worldly-minded. He cared more for possessions and wealth than for people. Through the years he had become unloving, hard, difficult, bitter—and worst of all, without love, purpose, meaning, and significance in life. There is, of course, so much more; yet he covers all in these few simple verses.

What is so heart-warming and touching is that he shares his own personal conversion in one simple verse, and then he moves on to share how Jesus came to save sinners such as himself. He does not talk about himself nor about the details of his sin and shame, but He lifts up Jesus and the glorious salvation Jesus came to bring. He emphasizes not his own conversion, but the fact that Jesus came to save all tax collectors and sinners such as himself.

1. The sinner who needed a Savior (v.9).
2. The sinner who introduced his sinful friends to the Savior (v.10-11).
3. The Savior who saved the sinner: His mission (v.12-13).

(9:9-13) **Another Outline**: The Power of Jesus

1. Jesus' power to give a cause (v.9).
2. Jesus' power to spiritually heal people (v.10-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:9-13) **Matthew—Tax Collector**: Jesus "saw a man," a sinner who needed a cause. The people saw not a man, but Matthew, a tax collector for the Romans. They hated him and all other tax collectors. There are three reasons why tax collectors were so bitterly hated.

1. They served the Roman conquerors. Most tax collectors were Jews, but in the people's eyes they had denied their Jewish heritage and betrayed their country. They were thus ostracized, completely cut off from Jewish society and excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges.

2. They were cheats, dishonest and unjust men. Most tax collectors were extremely wealthy. The Roman government compensated tax collectors by allowing them to collect more than the percentage required for taxes. Tax collectors greedily abused their right, adding whatever percent they wished and felt could be collected (see note—Ro.13:6). They took bribes from the wealthy who wished to avoid taxes, fleeced the average citizen, and swindled the government when they could.

3. They were assuming rights that belonged only to God. In the eyes of the Jews, God and the ruling High Priest were considered to be the head of Jewish government. Therefore, taxes were to be paid only to God and His government. To pay taxes to earthly rulers was an abuse and a denial of God's rights. Therefore, tax collectors were excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges. They were accursed, anathema.

1 (9:9) **Matthew—Conversion**: the sinner who needed a Savior. Note Matthew's conversion.

1. Jesus "saw a man" named Matthew. Jesus saw where he was sitting and what he was doing. He saw everything about Matthew. He saw his heart, his mind, his thoughts, his hurt, his pain, his loneliness, his lack of purpose and meaning in life. He saw a useless life, a life's being wasted. He "saw a man," a man who needed a Savior, a Savior who could meet every need of his existence.

2. Jesus called the man. He dramatically said, "Follow me." It was forceful and to the point. There were to be no questions asked, no hesitations, no buts, no allowances, no half-heartedness, no delayed decision.

It was forceful and to the point. The man was to follow immediately without hesitating. It was immediate and total commitment or nothing (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; see outline and notes—Mt.8:18-22).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-30).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hos.6:1).

3. The man's one act: he arose and followed Jesus. He got up and left all to follow Jesus. Of course sometime after this immediate encounter, he acted responsibly and took care of his business affairs by resigning his position in a responsible manner. But when the call came, he immediately began to follow Christ. He left all and committed himself totally to Christ.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:35-36).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

Thought 1. Matthew was a working man, a very industrious man. He was not a lazy or slothful person. Apparently he was dissatisfied with his profession, but he was working, and working hard. Jesus has no room for the lazy and soft.

Thought 2. A dramatic change took place in Matthew.
1) Jesus' call was clear and forceful, unequivocal: "Follow me."
2) Matthew's response *was* clear and forceful, unequivocal: he arose and followed Christ.

Thought 3. It is hard for rich men to enter heaven because they are so attached to the material world. Matthew was one of the few who had been willing to give up all in order to follow Jesus. Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven became his (Mt.19:23-26; cp. 19:16-26).

Thought 4. Matthew committed himself totally to Jesus. Once he began to follow Jesus, he *never turned back.*

Thought 5. Matthew's conversion shows that Jesus saves anyone who will truly follow Him:

⇒ the hated	⇒ the unjust	⇒ the traitor	⇒ the one without purpose or meaning
⇒ the bitter	⇒ the dissatisfied	⇒ the thief	
⇒ the non-religious	⇒ the lonely	⇒ the immoral	

Matthew represents all these and more.

2 (9:10-11) **Witnessing**: the sinner who introduced his sinful friends to the Savior.

1. Matthew entertained Jesus and his sinful friends. The very first thing Matthew did was witness to his friends. He arranged a "great feast" for Jesus to share with his sinful friends (Lk.5:29). The witnessing session was apparently very fruitful: "there were many, and they followed Him" (Mk.2:15).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

Thought 1. All the apostles set a *dynamic example in witnessing*. They all began to witness immediately upon their conversion (see outlines Jn.1:35-49 for a clear illustration of this). How often we fail and come short in witnessing to our sinful friends.

Thought 2. A new convert should not boast in his past, but *in* Jesus. However, this is too often not the case. Many emphasize their past sins—sins such as wealth, immorality, drunkenness, and pride—instead of Jesus. But note that Matthew does no writing about his former life. He lifts up Jesus Christ, not his past life and wealth. He does not even mention his wealth or his house nor his plans for a "great feast" for Christ and his sinful friends. Mark and Luke are the ones who tell us this. What a lesson in modesty and humility!

Thought 3. Note several important lessons.

1) Jesus went where the sinners were. He did not avoid or shy away from them. He sought them out.
2) Sinners felt comfortable coming to Him. They did not shy away nor feel unwelcomed.
3) Jesus had meals with sinners, immoral people whom society and religionists rejected and avoided.
4) Jesus and sinners were close friends. Look at the scene here: there was a large feast and a party of immoral characters, and Jesus was right in the midst of them. Of course, the purpose of the feast was for Jesus to bear witness. This is important: we are to be out in the world witnessing to sinful men, but we are not to be of the world.

2. The religionists questioned Jesus' fellowship with sinners. They (the Pharisees) "saw it"; that is, they saw Jesus' sitting and eating with sinners. It is almost like they were watching, looking for wrong-doing so they could pounce on Him.

The religionists did not speak to Jesus Himself, but to His disciples. They would not dare approach Him personally, but they readily attacked Him through those closest to Him. Perhaps there was an attempt to turn His followers away from Him as is often the case in day-to-day life.

Thought 1. Many love to hear news that is bad, tragic, or immoral. In fact, the more immoral and unjust, the juicier the attack, the talk, and the gossip in their minds.

Thought 2. The temperate, the disciplined, the moral, the strict, the law-abiding, the religionist so often find it difficult to understand and forgive those who fail. They just cannot understand how a person can be so undisciplined and live such an immoral life. How often we convey thoughts that God has nothing to do with sinners.

Thought 3. The self-disciplined and religious are sometimes the most judgmental and censorious. A judgmental and censorious spirit does more to hurt people than any other single thing. But note what God says: the person who judges and censors others shall be shut out of the Kingdom of God (Ro.2:1-3).

Thought 4. The religionists felt they were better and more acceptable to God because they were more moral and disciplined than those who had sinned. They failed to see that all men are sinners and stand in need of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. (See note—Ro.5:1 for discussion.)

3 (9:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: this point can be entitled "the Savior who saved the sinner" or "the mission of the Savior." Two things are being said in these two verses.

First, Matthew was testifying that he, the sinner, and his sinful friends were spiritually sick and needed the mercy of God. They needed a Savior, and they believed that Jesus was that Savior. They believed that Jesus had come to save them.

Second, Jesus was warning the religionist and those who think they are more acceptable to God than others...

- Jesus warned that He came to be where the spiritually sick are. He had come to earth for the same purpose that a physician enters a home: to help the sick. However, just like the physician, He can minister only to the sick who call Him to come into their homes to heal them.
- Jesus warned that He came to have mercy and not to lead people to make sacrifices. What He wants is not the sacrifices of the righteous, but the lives of those who need His mercy. Sacrifices offered in religious worship are not what He came for. He came to show and bestow mercy upon sinners—any person who knows that he is a sinner and desires the mercy and acceptance of God.
- Jesus warned that He came to call sinners to repentance. If a person does not know that he needs changing (repentance), Jesus cannot help him. But if he knows he is a sinner and wants to be changed, Jesus can lead him to repentance (to change).

Note that the threefold purpose of Jesus is given.

1. Jesus came to be where the spiritually sick are.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

Thought 1. Sin is a sickness. All have sinned (Ro.3:23); therefore, all are spiritually sick and need healing by the Great Physician. But a man must acknowledge his sickness and ask the physician for help if he wishes to be healed.

Thought 2. Sin, the sickness of the spirit, is always curable (Ro.10:13). It is fatal if unchecked, but no one need ever die from it.

Thought 3. How foolish to have a fatal disease that is curable and not seek the cure!

Thought 4. Many are walking about with the fatal disease of sin, but they are...

- ignoring it
- neglecting it
- feeding it
- denying it
- abusing it

2. Jesus came to have mercy, not to gain sacrifice.

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam.15:22).

"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:16-17).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

Thought 1. God's call is to mercy, not to sacrifice. A person can make sacrifice after sacrifice and gift after gift and still not please God. What God wants first of all is a person's life. God wants to cleanse the person, making him acceptable for heaven. Once God has the person's life, He has all he is.

Thought 2. Sacrifice and gifts are wanted by God, but they are not enough. God demands all that a person is and has. He wants to have mercy, to forgive and to cleanse and to make the person acceptable for heaven.

3. Jesus came to call men to repentance (see note—Mt.4:17 for discussion).

"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent,ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezk.18:31).

"Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips" (Hos.14:2).

"Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).

Thought 1. Jesus does not call the self-righteous and the self-satisfied. They feel that they are *good enough* to be acceptable to God. Jesus calls the sinners to repentance, the ones who are deeply aware of their need for a Savior (1 Tim.1:15).

Thought 2. The call of Jesus is to repentance: to a changed life (2 Cor.5:17).

Thought 3. Note the person whom Jesus calls.
1) The person who is spiritually sick.
2) The person who needs mercy.
3) The person who is a sinner.
4) The person who needs repentance.

Thought 4. Jesus receives the following persons (a close reading of the Scripture will reveal these facts):
1) The person who knows that he is a sinner.
2) The person who acknowledges that he is a sinner.
3) The person who confesses that he is a sinner.
4) The person who truly repents.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:13) **Prophetic Reference**: Hos.6:6.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:13) **Repentance**: see note—Mt.4:17 for discussion.

	I. Jesus Answers the Question About Fasting: Ushering In a New Age & Covenant, 9:14-17 (Mk.2:18-22; Lk.5:33-39)	when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.	c. His death shall bring fasting
1 John's disciples a. Questioned Jesus about fasting b. Received three illustrations from Jesus	14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?	16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.	**3 The new cloth: A stronger life and age**[DS2] a. The new is stronger b. The old is weaker
2 The Bridegroom: A new life & age of joy a. His presence brings joy b. His prediction: Death[DS1]	15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come,	17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.	**4 The new & old wine: A new life & age of more power**[DS3] a. The new would burst the old bottles b. Both are to be preserved

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

I. Jesus Answers the Question about Fasting: Ushering in a New Age and Covenant, 9:14-17

(9:14-17) **Introduction—Fasting—New Age—Covenant—New Life—Jesus Christ, Bridegroom**: the question of fasting had already been answered by Jesus (Mt.6:16-18). John's disciples just were not aware of it. It is important to see a little of the background of this passage in order to understand what is really happening.

1. John was in prison and the threat of capital punishment hung over his head. His disciples were naturally concerned. They were fasting often in his behalf asking God to deliver him, and they could not understand why Jesus and His disciples had not joined in fasting for John's release. John's disciples had been taught by John to fast and to fast often (Jn.11:18). They were also deeply steeped in Jewish religious practices which demanded much fasting. Jesus seemed to break the traditional ritual of fasting; therefore, they could not understand how He could be the Messiah and be so irreligious.
2. What Jesus did was enlarge the question of fasting to include all religious ceremony and rituals, rules and regulations. He used three illustrations to show that He was ushering in a new life, a new age, and a new covenant between God and man. The truth of the old religion and its practices were to be preserved; they were not to be done away with (v.17). However, now there was to be a greater truth, a truth that superseded all former truth. He had been *sent by God* to bring a new life to man. Note that the focus of this new life was His presence, the presence of the Bridegroom. Christ is the Bridegroom of the new age, the new life, and the new covenant. He is the Bridegroom of the church.

1. John's disciples (v.14).
2. The Bridegroom: a new life and age of joy (v.15).
3. The new cloth: a stronger life and age (v.16)
4. The new and old wine: a new life and age of more power (v.17).

1 (9:14) **Fasting**: John's disciples questioned Jesus about fasting (see note above—Mt.9:14-17 for discussion). Note two things.

1. John's disciples were criticizing, grumbling, and complaining. Why? Because Jesus' disciples were not doing what John's disciples thought they should. Jesus' disciples were not fasting in prayer and asking God to deliver John from prison, nor were they fasting two times a week like all religionists were supposed to do. Simply stated, Jesus' disciples were living *loose lives*. They were not following the rules and regulations of religion.

> **Thought 1.** How often we criticize those who veer away from the traditions and rules that we practice and often find easy to keep. Most men are disciplined in some areas and undisciplined in others. It is easy to criticize a man's weakness while overlooking our own. (Cp. Mt.7:1-5.)
>
> **Thought 2.** Why is it that those who are criticized and murmured against the most are those who are so often serving the most? They are the very ones doing the most. How much division and damage is done by murmuring among God's people!

2. Jesus answered the question about fasting by giving three illustrations.

2 (9:15) **New Covenant—New Life—New Age—Jesus Christ, Bridegroom**: the first illustration was that of the Bridegroom. The Bridegroom pictures a new life and age of *joy*. The illustration is clear. During the marriage festivities of a bridegroom, as long as the bridegroom is present, his attendants rejoice. It is a joyful, festive time. Jesus was teaching several lessons.

⇒ He is the Bridegroom (cp. Jn.3:29). The children are the attendants or children of the bride-chamber.

⇒ His presence was an occasion of joy and rejoicing. His presence is what makes the difference in a life. If He is present, there is no reason to mourn. He brings joy and rejoicing to life (Ps.16:11; Jn.15:11; Ph.4:4; 2 Cor.6:10).

⇒ His presence was going to be removed; then His disciples would mourn and fast. The absence of His presence would be cause for mourning and fasting.

Note three significant points.

1. Jesus' presence brings joy. The age of the Messiah was often pictured as a joyful occasion. It was often compared to the festivities surrounding a marriage feast. Jesus was saying that He was the Bridegroom who was ushering in the Messianic Age. The Messiah brought a *new age* and a *new life* to man, an age of joy and liberation (salvation). It is a new age and life that supersedes the mechanical and external rituals and ceremonies of religion. It is an age that brings God's presence down to man and lays the emphasis on God's presence, not on ritual and ceremony. (See note—Mk.2:19.)

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

Thought 1. The presence of Jesus Christ gave the disciples a sense of God's presence. His presence filled them with love, joy, and peace (Gal.5:22-23). It infused them with a conviction and confidence of living forever in God's presence. Therefore, they had no need to be fasting in order to gain a closer walk and a deeper consciousness of God's presence. They were already walking close to Him.

The same is true of us. When we are aware of the Bridegroom's presence and walking close to Him, there is not as much need to be fasting. It is a time of praise, rejoicing, and service. But when the Bridegroom seems to be far away and we are not so conscious of His presence and are not walking as closely as we should, then we need to fast and seek His presence and power (see outline and notes—Mt.6:16-18).

Thought 2. The believer's joy or sorrow is determined by his sense of the Lord's presence. This is true with the Bridegroom and his immediate attendants. It is true with us today.

2. Jesus' prediction was that He would die. Jesus was predicting His death by violent means. He was to "be taken from them." Note several things.

a. His death enabled His Spirit to be present with all believers around the world (Jn.14:16-18).

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).

b. His death brought sorrow to the heart of any who saw it and understood it. But it brought joy soon after, for there was the knowledge that He lives forevermore.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (Jn.16:20-22).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

c. His death and its cleansing power can be *forgotten* (2 Pt.1:9).The Lord's presence can fade from a person's consciousness. A person can become so busy and preoccupied with the affairs of the world that he loses his sensitivity to the Lord's presence. At such times, the person needs to get alone with God. His concern should be so great that neither food nor sleep matter; nothing matters except regaining the consciousness of God's presence.

"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Pt.1:9).

3. His death brought fasting.

Thought 1. His death caused the first disciples to fast. It ought to cause us to fast.

1) His death should cause us to fast when we first learn of His death and what it really means.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

2) His death should cause us to fast when we are forcibly reminded that He died for us. Such times should be heartrending times, precious times of prayer and fasting for believers.

3) His death should cause us to fast when we allow His presence to slip out of our mind for some length of time. At such times, we need to get alone and meditate upon His death allowing nothing to interfere, including food.

> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).**
>
> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Ro.8:26-27).**
>
> **"The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us" (Ezra 8:22-23).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(9:15) **Jesus' Death**: see note—Mk.2:20.

3 (9:16) **New Covenant—New Life—New Age**: the second illustration is that of the new cloth. The new cloth illustrates a stronger life and age. Jesus was saying two things.

1. He was ushering in a new life and age which was stronger than the old life and age.
2. He could not take His teachings and patch up the old teaching. It would not only *detract* from the good of the old, it would cause a *tear* that would be greater than what was going to naturally happen. There was going to be a tear in the old religion and teaching, a natural tear that occurs when any new age or movement is launched in a major way. But the tear would be greater if He attempted to patch up the old. The followers of the old would react even more violently and quickly than what they would have (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9).

> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).**
>
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**
>
> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).**

Thought 1. There was a tear, a pulling apart between Jesus and the *old religion* with its rituals and ceremonies. He was saying that the tear would have been much greater if He had adopted the old and reformed it. Both the new and old would have been useless, no good for any man to wear. The true religion would have been drastically torn and unsuitable to clothe a man (cp. such passages dealing with righteousness as 2 Cor.5:19-20; Ph.3:4-16, esp.5-7, 9).

Thought 2. Many are attached to *formal religion,* putting their trust in its ceremonies and rituals. Going through the mechanics of religion is what is thought important. A person feels he is acceptable to God just so he worships God. Anyone who says otherwise or attempts to change the tradition of religion is considered radical and fanatic.

Thought 3. The following statements are tragically true.

⇒ Many worship tradition, not God.
⇒ Many worship ritual, not God.
⇒ Many worship religion, not God.
⇒ Many worship ceremony, not God.
⇒ Many worship fellowship, not God.

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:16) **Jesus' Life—Reformation**: see notes—Mk.2:21; 2:22.

4 (9:17) **New Covenant—New Life—New Age**: the third illustration is the new and old wine. The new and old wine illustrates a new life and age of *more power.* Christ was saying two things.

1. The new wine would burst the old bottles. The new life and age which He ushered in had too much gas, energy, and power for the old bottles. The pressure would burst the old bottles. There was just too much power.

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph.1:19-23).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col.1:11).

2. The answer to handling old and new wine is to preserve the good of both. The old religion was not to be cast aside. It had some strengths and some benefits. The answer was not to reform it but to fulfill it by ushering in a new life and age. The old bottles (restrictions) were not strong enough to contain the new life which Christ was bringing.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph.4:22-23).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

Thought 1. The new wine would have been lost if it had been put into the old bottles of religion. There would be no new life or age, no hope for man whatsoever (2 Cor.5:17).

Thought 2. One of the biggest mistakes made by men is their pouring new ideas and new methods into old bottles, that is, into the old restrictions and ways of doing things.

Thought 3. We must not let the traditions of the old way bring about our death. Our rituals, ceremonies, and religion will die apart from the new life in Jesus Christ. Even we ourselves will die apart from His new life. Our traditions, our religion can keep us from Him by focusing our attention upon them instead of God.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:17) **Covenant**: the new life and age is the new covenant Christ came to establish between God and man. (See notes—Mk.2:21; 2 Cor.3:6. Cp. Ro.9:4; 2 Cor.3:12-16.)

J. Jesus Heals Several People: Meeting Man's Desperate & Hopeless Needs,[DS1] 9:18-34
(Mk.5:21-43; Lk.8:41-56; 11:14-15)

1 The hopeless cry for life (Part 1)
- a. The man: A ruler & a father
  - 1) Hopeless: Death
  - 2) Attitude: Worship
  - 3) Request: Touch her
  - 4) Faith: "Shall live"
- b. Jesus' response

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.

2 The secret hope for health
- a. The woman[DS2]
  - 1) Hopeless: Ostracized
  - 2) Attitude: Unworthy
  - 3) Faith: "I shall be whole"
- b. Jesus' response
  - 1) "Turned": Responded to her touch
  - 2) "Saw": Compassion
  - 3) Called her "Daughter": Adopted her
  - 4) Made her "whole": Exerted His power

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

3 The hopeless cry for life (Part 2)
- a. The trying delay: Jesus finally arrived
- b. The atmosphere: Noisy
- c. The strong demand
- d. The daughter's death
- e. The mourner's reaction: Scorn
- f. The power of His hand
- g. The result of His power

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

4 The unceasing cry for sight
- a. The men followed Him
  - 1) Acknowledged His Messiahship[DS3]
  - 2) Cried for mercy
  - 3) Fought after Him
- b. Jesus' response: A readiness to help
  - 1) His question
  - 2) His touch
  - 3) His power: Based on faith
- c. Jesus' instruction: Focus on me, not on the miracle nor on self

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

5 The quiet approach for sanity & speech[DS4]
- a. A demon-possessed man brought by others
- b. Jesus' response: He healed

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

6 The reaction to Jesus' power
- a. The people: Amazed
- b. The religionists: Called Jesus devil-possessed[DS5]

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

DIVISION V

THE MESSIAH'S GREAT AUTHORITY AND POWER REVEALED IN WORD AND WORK, 8:1-9:34

J. Jesus Heals Several People: Meeting Man's Desperate and Hopeless Needs, 9:18-34

(9:18-34) **Introduction**: this passage includes four examples of people who had desperate, hopeless needs. They demonstrate two things: Christ is beyond question the Messiah, "the Son of David" (v.27); and Christ has the power to meet our desperate, hopeless needs, even the need of conquering death.

1. The hopeless cry for life (Part 1) (v.18-19).
2. The secret hope for health (v.20-22).
3. The hopeless cry for life (Part 2) (v.23-26).
4. The unceasing cry for sight (v.27-31).
5. The quiet approach for sanity and speech (v.32-33).
6. The reaction to Jesus' power (v.33-34).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:18-34) **Faith**: the thing that God wants from men is the very same thing a parent wants from a child—faith and trust, love and dependence. God wants a man to believe and trust Him, to love and depend upon Him. This is clearly seen throughout this passage.

1. God responds to true faith. God does whatever good a person asks if that person really believes in Him and His power. And amazingly, the request can be *in behalf of another person*. God will touch the life of another person because we pray in faith (cp. Mt.8:5-13).
   a. The daughter was raised from the dead because of the father's faith (Mt.9:18, 25).
   b. The hemorrhaging woman was healed and saved because of her own faith (Mt.9:21-22).
   c. The two blind men received their sight because of their own persistant faith (Mt.9:29-30).

d. The dumb man possessed by an evil spirit was delivered and received his sanity because of the faith of others (Mt.9:32-33).

2. Our faith is only as strong as *the object of our faith*. The power of faith does not rest in a person's own faith but in God and in God alone (Mk.6:30). Christ can do anything no matter what it is, but the question is, will He? It always depends upon two things.

a. Is the request good? Is it good for all, both for the people involved and for the world? And is it good for God Himself and His glory? Only God can know if a request is good; that is, does it embrace good for all persons involved. This is what is meant by asking according to His will. But note this: a great deal of what is good (His will) is already revealed to us in His Word. We can ask according to His Word and He will answer—if we truly believe.

b. Is the request really asked in faith? Do we really believe that God can and will do the good that we ask?

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

1 (9:18-19) **Hopelessness—Seeking Jesus**: there was the hopeless cry for life (Part 1). The man who cried for help was a ruler and a father. Luke says that the ruler's name who oversaw the administration of the synagogue at Capernaum was Jairus. The synagogue ruler was an elected position among the religious leaders. The person was highly respected, both capable and popular, a person who wielded great power. He determined who was to teach in the synagogue worship and supervised the whole operation. He was one of the most important men in a community.

Jairus' daughter was only twelve years old. Jairus was a man of strong love, a man who loved his daughter ever so deeply; and he was a man of strong courage. He showed remarkable courage in approaching Jesus, for he went against the tide of the other religionists who were violent in their thoughts against Jesus. The other religionists were bound to react against Jairus. Only the sense of desperation would stir him to approach Jesus, and then he would approach Jesus only as a last resort. It was the desperate need of his daughter that drove him to Jesus.

1. Note four things about the man and his desperation.

a. His hopelessness: he was so hopeless he interrupted Jesus while Jesus was preaching and teaching. His little daughter was dead, gone forever. He loved his daughter, and he apparently loved her more deeply than most. He stood up against the world, that is, against the censoring and hostility of his peers. He was an elected official by the religious elders; therefore, he was probably risking his position by coming to Christ. Only an unusual love and belief would have driven him to approach Jesus in the face of so much opposition (cp. Mt.9:34).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Lk.9:24-26).

Thought 1. One thing should always receive priority over all else—the cry of a hopeless and helpless person. When the hopeless and helpless approach us, we should immediately stop and go to them, doing what we can. Prayer, study, preaching—all are to take a back seat to helping those who have need. Note: the need Jesus met was immediate and urgent. There was not even time to say a word. Jesus was silent. He simply responded by arising and going as requested.

b. His attitude: he worshipped Jesus; he fell down at the Lord's feet. Remember this was a distinguished man, an elected official who oversaw the administrative responsibilities of the most important institution in a Jewish city—the synagogue. He was a dynamic example of how leaders should approach Christ: in humility, worship, and faith.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).

Thought 1. We will never know the mercy of Christ until we humble ourselves and become as little children (Mt.18:3).

Thought 2. Too often, the desperate needs of loved ones drives us into a state of helplessness and hopelessness, of depression and self-pity. The need may be severe illness, terrible trouble, or death. However, despair is not the answer to desperate needs. The answer is to lift up our heads to Jesus for the salvation of our loved ones. We are to come before Christ, asking Him to help us. He never turns away.

c. His request: he asked Jesus to come and touch his daughter.

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

Thought 1. We must ask Jesus for *His touch*—to *touch us*, to *touch our need*—and He will.

d. His faith: "She shall live." This man was a man of great faith. He believed that if Jesus would just come, his daughter would live. He believed Christ could raise her from the dead.

Thought 1. Note two lessons.

1) This is the very same faith, a great faith, that we must have.
   a) We must believe that Jesus can meet our desperate needs.
   b) We must believe that Jesus can raise us up from the dead (Jn.6:39-40, 44, 54; 1 Cor.15:12-58; 1 Th.4:13-18).
2) This man was driven to Jesus by a tragic event. God uses tragedy to drive us to Jesus. Every man should approach Jesus in tragedy, but he should approach in a spirit of worship and belief—truly believing and trusting that Jesus will help.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

2. Note Jesus' response to the father's desperation. Jesus arose and acted by following the man, by going to his house where the need was. There was no hesitation whatsoever.

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

Thought 1. Note three lessons.

1) The ruler was so desperate that he interrupted Jesus while Jesus was preaching and teaching. Jesus did not stop him nor rebuke him. He said nothing. He simply *responded to the man's* desperate and hopeless cry. Jesus always receives and responds to a man...
   - who is desperate
   - who confesses his hopelessness and helplessness
   - who acknowledges his need and believes that Jesus can help
2) Jesus never turns from a desperate man who comes to Him. In fact, He does not even hesitate to help the man. He will not even take the time to speak. He will arise and follow the desperate man to meet his need. Jesus is ever ready to help. He longs to help.
3) Note that Jesus will visit us wherever our need is. In this event, Jesus left his meeting and the opportunity to preach and teach in order to meet the desperate need. What a lesson for us! How much we need to learn what the priorities really are!

2 (9:20-22) **Hopelessness**: there was the secret hope for health by a woman. She had been hemorrhaging for twelve years (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:20). She was desperately hopeless, feeling ashamed, embarrassed, and unworthy. According to the law, she was not to be in the crowd surrounding Jesus at all. She was supposed to be isolated, but her desperation drove her to Jesus. She felt that Jesus would never touch her because she was unclean, but she had heard so many wonderful things about Him: if she could only touch His garment, He would never know, and she would be healed. Imagine her great faith! Jesus' response was fourfold.

1. *Jesus turned* to the woman. There was no way Jesus could have felt the touch to His robe. He was being pressed and thronged by the crowd, yet when she stepped up behind Him and touched His robe, He knew. How?

a. Her faith touched Him. It is faith that touches Jesus. Faith will never go unnoticed nor be ignored by Jesus.

"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Commit thy way unto the lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

b. Virtue (power and life) went out from Jesus into her. When a person places his faith in Jesus and His power, it touches Jesus, and Jesus infuses His virtue (His power and life) into that person. That is what life and salvation are all about: the infusion of God's virtue, power, and life into the spirit of man.

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?" (Mk.5:30).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4; cp. Jn.17:2-3).

Thought 1. Jesus stopped and turned to the woman. To Jesus the most important work in all the world is meeting a person's need. The more desperate the need, the more Jesus wants to stop and face the need. Nothing will keep Jesus from stopping and turning to a person who comes to Him in desperation.

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Mt.8:17; cp. Is.53:4).

2. *Jesus saw* the woman. He saw her desperation, her confession of hopelessness, her need, her faith; and His heart went out to her from the depths of compassion.

Thought 1. The Lord cares for all, no matter how rejected, cut off, or ostracized. A person may be considered unclean, dirty, polluted, contaminated, lost forever; but that person is precious to our Lord. His heart goes out in tenderness and care to the greatest of sinners.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

3. *Jesus adopted* the woman. He called her "daughter" and adopted her into the family of God. He spoke to her in behalf of the Father and gave her the assurance that she was accepted by God. The fact that God would help her was conveyed to her immediately. Note also that Jesus said, "be of good cheer." She experienced the consolation and assurance of God immediately.

Note: When a person really comes to God in desperation, God immediately gives a knowledge of adoption and comfort. He gives such a release from pressure and desperation that the person's spirit sighs and revels in the new found peace.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Ro.8:15).

"And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:18).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

4. *Jesus made* her whole. His virtue (power and life) was infused into her, and she was saved and made whole. She had feared facing Jesus because she feared being rebuked. She was wrong. Jesus longed to heal the desperate among the people. No person is too dirty for Him. In fact, the more unclean a person is, the more He wants to cleanse and make him whole. Imagine such a Savior!

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt.9:12-13).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(9:20) **Man, Rejected—Religion, Rejected By**: the woman afflicted with an uncontrollable hemorrhage was considered unclean. No one could touch her or anything she touched. She was ostracized and cut off from society and excommunicated from religious observances. If she were married, she was to be divorced (cp. Lev.15:25-27). The fact of this woman's uncleanness had sunk deeply into her mind, for she had been cut off from society and family—left all alone for twelve years. She had gone to every doctor she knew or had ever heard about, and not one was able to help her (Mt.5:26). She was now poor, for she had spent all she had seeking to find a cure. She had daily experienced the pit of loneliness, unacceptance, and low self-esteem. She was nothing even in her own eyes. Therefore, in approaching Jesus she felt both embarrassment and unworthiness. Her hemorrhaging was a personal and initmate matter that was too embarrassing to be discussed before people, and she felt Jesus would never touch her because of her uncleanness. She was too unclean. However, she had exactly what it takes to get help from God: a desperation and a belief that Jesus Christ could help. We can picture her wondering, "What am I to do? He will not greet me; I am unclean." But all of a sudden she knew: "If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole." And she was. Her faith made her whole (See notes, *Faith*—Mk.11:22-23; Jn.2:24; Ro.10:16-17; Heb.10:38). Symbolically, her disease is a clear picture of what sin does. It cuts a person off from

God and from true fellowship with believers (Is.59:2). The only means of restoration is to come to Jesus even as she did.

In contrast to what men do when they are confronted with the unclean, Jesus responds; He does not ostracize. Jesus calls; He does not divorce. Jesus adopts; He does not excommunicate.

3 (9:23-26) **Jesus Christ, Power**: there was the hopeless cry for life (Part 2). Again, this desperate cry was by the ruler and father in behalf of his daughter. There are several significant facts to note.

1. The trying delay (v.20-22). Why did Jesus allow the woman to delay Him? No need is greater than the need arising from death. Jesus knew that the ruler's desperation was bound to grow more uneasy by allowing the woman to delay Him. But He also knew that the ruler's confidence and assurance would be strengthened by seeing Him meet the woman's need. Perhaps the man needed to be strengthened. Whatever the reason for allowing the delay, Jesus knew.

> **Thought 1.** Jesus always knows what is best for us and when to meet our need. We should not become fearful, questioning and unbelieving when our needs are not immediately met. Jesus is going to meet the need of anyone who approaches Him in humility and faith.

2. The atmosphere in the ruler's house. The atmosphere was noisy, the grief loud.

> **Thought 1.** Note two lessons.
> 1) Loud noise and grief do not create the proper atmosphere for Jesus to work and meet our needs. We should rid ourselves of such distraction—get quiet, meditate, pray, and trust the Lord to do His work.
> 2) The world suffers loud noise and grief because it has no hope over death. But the Lord longs to meet the grief of the believer's heart with the quiet assurance and hope He has given. Assurance is the promise given to the believer who truly hopes in the Lord (Tit.2:13).

3. The strong demand. Jesus demanded a quiet, prayerful atmosphere. He said, "give place," depart, go, be gone with the noise and loud grief. There is no room for this behavior in the face of faith.

> **Thought 1.** We are seldom conscious of Jesus' attempting to comfort us in the midst of noise and loud mourning.

4. The daughter's death. She was dead, and Luke says unmistakably that the people *laughed Jesus to scorn* "knowing that she was dead" (Lk.8:53). Mark says that certain ones even came to meet the ruler and said, "thy daughter is dead" (Mk.5:35). Men dread and fear death, so they soften its thought by calling it *sleep* (see note—1 Th.4:13).

5. The mourners' reaction. They scorned Jesus. They knew what death was. They were around death all the time, especially the paid mourners. It was the practice of the wealthy to pay professional mourners to grieve over the death of their loved ones. There was no question she was dead and not asleep. There is also the possibility that they scorned Jesus to discourage the ruler from allowing Jesus to help. They knew somewhat of Him and His power because Capernaum was His home, the center of His ministry. If He raised his daughter, they would lose their work and payment.

> **Thought 1.** Most men scoff at the idea of Jesus' raising the dead (cp. 1 Cor.15:12f; 15:35f; 2 Pt.3:3f. These passages will show clearly the questions that cause men to scoff.)
> 1) Men often mock and scorn what they do not understand.
> 2) We must believe and trust and confess with Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Ro.11:33).
>
> **Thought 2.** The people were put out. Scorners are not worthy to witness the Lord's power. Only the meek and receptive are.

6. The power of His hand. The description of our Lord's power is both beautiful and assuring.
   a. "He went in." He will always *come in* to us wherever we are, if our hearts will only reach out to Him as the ruler's heart did. We may be disabled, but He will come to help us.
   b. He "took her by the hand." He reached to infuse His power and life into her. He will infuse His power and life into us if we will only call upon Him.
   c. He raised her up: "she arose." Jesus will raise us up, meeting our desperate needs on this earth, and He will also raise us up in the last day. (Cp. Jn.5:22-30.)

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**

> **Thought 1.** Jesus' power can and will touch any need.
> 1) He can touch the most desperate needs of all—the needs arising from the death of loved ones.
> 2) He can touch the desperate needs of people through our intercession. Our loved ones may be helpless even as this young daughter was, but if we will pray, Jesus will use His sovereign power to touch their need.

7. The result of His power. Jesus' fame was spread abroad. The raising of the dead was proof that Jesus was the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.9:18-34; cp. Mt.10:9; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; note—Jn.11:37f). The people talked and

talked about His power, but note how many still did not believe. They still refused to commit their lives to Him. How precious are those of succeeding generations who have not seen, yet believe.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn.20:29).

4 (9:27-31) **Seeking Jesus—Persistence**: there was the unceasing cry for sight. This cry came from two blind men who were apparently sitting beside the road begging. In Jesus' day, most blind men were beggars. These two blind men overheard what had been happening. A chord was struck in their hearts, so they began to follow after Jesus, crying out as fast as they could shout, "Thou Son of David, Have mercy on us."

1. Note that they took the very steps necessary to have their needs met.
   a. They acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world. This is seen in the title they used for Jesus, "Thou Son of David" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.9:27; Lk.3:24-31 for more discussion).

      Thought 1. The men were blind. They could not see what Jesus was doing. They could only hear.
      1) The lost are blind. They cannot see; they cannot understand.
      2) The lost can only hear.

      "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Ro.10:17).

      Hearing the gospel is the only hope for the lost. It is imperative that we go and proclaim the Word to them.

   b. They cried for mercy. These men did what we must do if we wish God to have mercy upon us.
      ⇒ The blind men "believed the report" about the Messiah (Ro.10:16). They could only hear the report; they could not see what was happening.
      ⇒ They personally cried out for mercy, accepting and confessing that Jesus was the Messiah.

      "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).

      "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

      "Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Ps.38:9).

      Thought 1. God is rich in mercy (Eph.2:4-5). He will have mercy on any who genuinely cry to Him for mercy.

   c. They fought their way to him. They persisted and went after what they wanted (see outline and notes—Mt.7:7-11). Note that Jesus did not stop immediately. He knew their hearts just as He knows everyone's heart. He knew they needed to grow in desperation. They needed to be so desperate that they would just cast themselves upon Him totally. They had apparently not reached that point. So He, who is all-wise, walked on as though He did not hear them. And all the while they clawed their way through the crushing crowd, shouting at the top of their voices, becoming more and more desperate and more and more ready to take the great leap of saving faith.

      Thought 1. Note three lessons.
      1) The men persisted and kept after Jesus. They followed Him right up to His house and somehow gained entrance. The point is, they would not give up until He helped them.
      2) Persistence, a true cry for help, is not rudeness to Jesus. How many have been interrupted in their homes and counted it rudeness? How we need to learn that the first order of the day is to minister!
      3) The two men helped each other. They began together and fought together to get to Jesus. What a lesson for us when we confront need! Believers with common needs can help each other reach Jesus.

      "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:8).

      "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

      "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

2. *Jesus' response* was compassionate and forceful. There was an unmistakable readiness to help. This is seen in three acts.
   a. Jesus questioned the two blind men: "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Jesus stands ready to help—always. There is never a time when He is not ready to help, but there is a prerequisite to His helping. There is one qualification: "Believe ye that I am *able to do this*?"

      Thought 1. Many balk at the question of faith: "Believe ye that I am *able to do this*?"
      1) Some do not believe at all.

2) Some doubt that Jesus has the power or interest to help.
3) Some ignore and could care less.
4) Some follow after Jesus and even ask for mercy, but they never *commit their lives* in faith to Christ. They believe mentally, but they never believe with their lives, that is, commit their lives to what Jesus claims—that He is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Thought 2. Some call Jesus *Lord*, but they lack the one essential: doing what they profess. They have never turned over their lives to the One they say they trust. A person has not trusted Christ unless he has entrusted his life into Jesus' keeping (see outline and notes—Mt.7:21-23).

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).**
>
> **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).**
>
> **"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).**

b. Jesus touched the two men. Note the tender touch of Jesus. These men could see nothing; they had a special need so Jesus met their need in a special way.

Thought 1. Jesus always meets every facet of our need. He touches all who sincerely come to Him in whatever way they need to be touched. This fact should make every man come to Him. There is no need, no special problem existing that He cannot meet.

> **"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

c. Jesus exerted His power: He healed them, but it was based on their faith.

Thought 1. Note four lessons.
1) Their *faith in Christ and His power* wrought their healing.
   ⇒ It did not take works, but faith.
   ⇒ It did not take health, but faith.
   ⇒ It did not take money, but faith.
   ⇒ It did not take friends, but faith.
   ⇒ It did not take social acceptance or position, but faith.
2) Jesus knows our faith, and He knows how to grow our faith. Note how He grew the faith of these men. Whatever we need to develop a strong faith, whether trial or test or immediate blessing, God will bring that experience into our lives (Ro.8:28f; Ph.1:29; 1 Pt.4:12-13).
3) What a blessed thought! Jesus receives our faith, accepts it, and does what we believe.
4) This is a warning: no man is dealt with according to his profession. He is dealt with according to his faith: "But without faith, it is impossible to please Him...." (Heb.11:6).

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

3. *Jesus' instruction* to these men was a charge that is often needed. It is especially needed by believers who experience the miraculous touch of Jesus' power. The charge was, "see no man know it"; "be humble." Christ wanted these men to set a dynamic example in humility. Therefore, Jesus charged them to keep quiet. He knew the inner recesses of their hearts and minds just as He knows all men. Apparently, they had a heart that would tend toward boasting in their miracle and in the change wrought in their lives.

Thought 1. Note two lessons.
1) There was danger in being so blessed by Jesus. Pride and self-importance could easily set in. They could think of themselves more highly than they ought to think.
2) There is a fine line between honoring Jesus and honoring oneself in a testimony. The heart makes the difference and only God knows the heart. *But He does know.* How often we boast and glory in such phrases as...
   - what a change has been wrought in my life.
   - but for the grace of God there go I.
   - what a terrible sinner I was.

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:27) **Jesus Christ, Son of David—Names—Titles**: see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.3:24-31.

5 (9:32-33) **Jesus Christ, Power—Seeking Jesus**: there is the quiet approach for sanity and speech. Note how quietly this event is placed in the midst of the other miracles, but the lessons are pointed.

1. There was the man.
   a. He was brought by others. (See note—Mt.9:2 for more discussion.)
   b. He needed help desperately: he was demon-possessed, possessed by an evil spirit.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

Thought 1. Note four lessons.
1) Many have to be brought if they are ever to come. They are too weak in spirit, mind, or body to come on their own. They will not come unless they are brought.
2) We must go after the needy in order to bring them. Many would come...
   - if we would simply visit and go after them.
   - if we would make friends and nurture them along the way.
3) Some are possessed by the wrong spirit, not by God's Spirit. Spiritually, they are dumb in their knowledge of Christ. They have no awareness, no consciousness, no understanding whatsoever of the delivering power that is in Christ. The fact that there is a Savior is totally foreign to them.
4) Some are gripped by the deepest form of evil, demon possession. They desperately need to be brought to Christ (see outlines and notes—Mt.8:28-34. See Lk.8:26-40.)

2. There was Jesus' response. He healed the man.

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

Thought 1. Note how much power Jesus has.
1) He can touch the life of a person because of the faith of another. Intercessory prayer and faith are God's way for many to be reached.
2) He can break the greatest of bondages—even the grip and power of Satan when Satan totally possesses the life of a person.

Thought 2. The enormous power of Christ should...
- stir us to bring our needs to Christ all the time.
- stir us to bring others to Christ all the time, even if they are gripped by the severest forces of darkness.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(9:32-34) **Evil Spirits**: see outlines and notes—Mt.8:28-34; Lk.8:26-39.

6 (9:33-34) **Jesus Christ, Reaction Against**: there was the reaction to Jesus' power. The people were amazed. They witnessed what they called the wonderful work of God, wonder after wonder. But note: not all believed. Despite the amazing work of God, only a few truly trusted Him.

The religionists hated Christ. They were hostile toward Him, vehemently so (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22). They were guilty of the unpardonable sin (see note—Mt.12:31-32).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(9:34) **Satan**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9.

	VI. THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42 (Mk.6:7-13; Lk.9:1-6)	ease among the people. 36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.	of the Kingdom 2 **His compassion**[DS2] a. Crowds fainting: Weary & bewildered[DS3] b. Crowds scattered[DS4] c. Crowds as sheep without a shepherd
	A. The Mission of the Messiah, 9:35-38	37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is	3 **His vision** a. A great harvest
1 **His ministry** a. Method: Went forth b. Place: Everywhere c. Work: Teaching, preaching,[DS1] & healing d. Message: The gospel	35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every dis-	plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.	b. A great need for laborers c. A great need for prayer d. A great force of laborers

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

A. The Mission of the Messiah, 9:35-38

(9:35-38) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Mission**: the mission of the Messiah was threefold. (Also see outline and notes—Mt.4:12-17; note 2 and DEEPER STUDY # 3—4:23.)

1. To minister (v.35).
2. To demonstrate compassion (v.36).
3. To call men to the greatest of all visions (v.37-38).

1 (9:35) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Ministry**: the mission of Jesus Christ was to minister. Four things are covered about His ministry in this verse.

1. Jesus' method. Jesus Christ had but one method in reaching people: He "went out" after people. He did not sit back, waiting for people to come to Him.

> **"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Lk.19:10).**

Thought 1. We are foolish to sit back and wait for people to come to us. The vast, vast majority will not come. They do not know to come; we have to go out after them.

Thought 2. The very same method is given to us in the Great Commission.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Mt.28:19-20.)**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (Jn.20:21; cp. Lk.19:10).**

2. Jesus' place of ministry. Jesus literally went everywhere: in all the cities and villages (Mt.9:35), in the countryside (Mt.5:1), in the synagogues (Mt.9:35), on mountains (Mt.5:1), by the seashore (Mt.4:18), in boats (Mt.8:23f), by graveyards (Mt.8:28f), and in homes (Mt.8:14; 9:10). There was no place where Jesus did not go to minister.

> **"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage" (Mt.22:9).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Is.45:22).**

Thought 1. Note three striking lessons.

1) How much more *we* should go everywhere! How much more we should not neglect mansion or slum.
2) Christ taught in the synagogues, in the existing establishments when they were open to Him. Note two things.
   - ⇒ He made use of what was available, *the existing establishment*, although they violently opposed Him.
   - ⇒ He went where there was a ready audience when He had the opportunity.

3) There are places where some believers will not go: the small town, the obscure village, the mill-town, the country, the foreign country, the north, east, west or south, the lower class, the upper class. But not so with Christ; He went everywhere.

3. Jesus' work: teaching, preaching, and healing. Jesus had a threefold work that should serve as the primary guide for believers.

a. He preached. He proclaimed the good news of the King, God Himself. He brought the glorious message of salvation and redemption to man.

b. He taught. He rooted and grounded all who would receive the message. Hearing and receiving the good news were not enough. People needed to be taught (see outline—Acts 11:19-30).

c. He healed. He met the physical, mental, and emotional needs of those who hurt and suffered.

> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 10:38-39).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**
>
> **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**

Thought 1. Note three lessons.

1) What is preached needs to be taught and lived. Talking and preaching are not enough. What God has to say He wants taught so that men may know how to live.
2) Every believer is to proclaim, teach, and heal. Jesus never intended for the minister to do the job alone. He has commissioned every believer, and He expects every believer to be about the business of reaching and helping people.
3) Men need to hear the message, but they also need to be taught the details of the message and how to apply it to their lives. The only conceivable way men can know how to live day by day is to be taught the details of the message.

Thought 2. When dealing with preaching, teaching, and healing, there is a danger with each that must be guarded against.

1) *Preaching only* will feed only the major points of God's message to people. *Preaching only* will leave a person with a huge gap in his spiritual life. He will not know how to apply the will of God in his life day by day. Teaching is needed as well as preaching.
2) *Teaching only* leads to four errors.
   a) It only leads a person into a discussion of God's Word and its details. It misses out on the proclamation of the overview and great subjects of the Bible.
   b) It shortchanges a person in the experience of worshipping around the proclamation of the King's message.
   c) It shortchanges a person in the experience of the Holy Spirit's working through preaching (1 Cor.1:18, 21).
   d) It minimizes God's chosen method to save men. It often leads a person to feel he grows into becoming a Christian because he learns the details of God's Word. Preaching (that is, proclamation) is needed as well as teaching (that is, discussion).

> **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor.1:18, 21).**

3) *Healing only* leads to an emphasis upon the needs of the flesh and a de-emphasis on the needs of the Spirit. It can lead to a minimizing of salvation, to stressing healing over salvation. Preaching and teaching are needed as well as healing (see outline and notes—Mt.4:17; 14:3-4).

4. Jesus' message: the gospel of the Kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for discussion). Jesus Christ was the herald of the King's proclaiming the good news of His kingdom.

a. There is a King—God Himself.

b. There is the kingdom where the King dwells. It is called heaven, which is another dimension of being, another world. The King—His reign and power and sovereignty—rules everywhere in both heaven and earth, both the seen and unseen worlds, in both the spiritual and physical dimension of being.

> **"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (cp. Col.1:16).**

c. There is the *true* herald of the King sent by the King Himself. Jesus Christ is the herald who is the perfect representative of the King. He proclaims the good news about the kingdom, a message without any falsehood, full of truth and hope, the hope for eternal salvation.

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:19-21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(9:35) **Preaching** (euangelizo): to proclaim, preach, herald, publish. The preacher is a herald who comes in the name of the King and who represents the King (cp. 2 Cor.5:20). He comes to proclaim the message of the King and *only* the message of the King. He has no message of his own. If and when he begins to proclaim his own message, he is no longer the herald or the spokesman of the King.

2 (9:36) **Jesus Christ, Compassion**: the mission of Jesus Christ was to show compassion (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:36). He was to express and demonstrate God's compassion, the kind of compassion all men are to have for all other men. Jesus "saw the multitudes." He saw those following Him—those in the villages, in the cities, in the countryside, in the synagogues, on the mountains, by the seashore, by the graveyards, in boats, and in homes—and He "was moved with compassion." Jesus was moved over the physical needs of men: their hunger, pain, and suffering. He was moved over the spiritual needs of men: their being lost and dead to God; their emptiness and loneliness and bewilderment; their having no purpose, meaning, or significance in life. He saw them all, and He observed and studied them. No one escaped the eye or the heart of Jesus, and as He looked, He saw three things.

1. Jesus saw the crowds fainting (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.9:36). They were weighed down and ready to collapse.
   a. Life weighed them down. Life was cruel, hard, impoverished, empty, and without real purpose. Life too often seemed hopeless and worthless.
   b. Religion weighed them down.
      1) Religion lay burden after burden, demand after demand upon them. It required endless rituals, ceremonies, and rules.
      2) Religion also misled them into beliefs that really did not lead them to God. Therefore, they were not spiritually satisfied. They were *dead to God*.
   c. Sin weighed them down. They were not taught the truth, but rather the ideas of religionists. Therefore, they were still dead in their sins (Eph.2:15). The weight of their sins still rested upon their hearts and preyed upon their minds, weakening whatever confidence and assurance they had. Their sins made them uncertain of the future.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:28-29).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

Thought 1. The crowds fainted, for they were deceived by their leaders, teachers, preachers, and priests. They had great confidence in them, but their leaders misled and deceived them. Therefore, they followed and lived in error, a road that leads to an empty destiny. They were empty, weary, perplexed, and unsatisfied.

2. Jesus saw the crowds scattered (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.9:36). They wandered about, not knowing which direction to go. They stopped here and there trying to find something that satisfied, but to no avail. They were without meaning, purpose, or significance. Many turned...
   - to restrictive religion (Judaism) or philosophy (the Stoics).
   - to loose religion (polytheism) or philosophy (Epicureans).
   - to no religion (atheism) or philosophy (humanism).

However, nothing filled their inner being; nothing really satisfied, not spiritually. The human soul still ached for the truth of God.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:12).

3. Jesus saw the crowds as sheep without a shepherd. They went astray, just as sheep. They had no leader who had the courage to surrender to the truth and to live by it. There was no one to teach the truth. Practically every teacher seemed to be out to fleece the sheep, to secure his own position and build a following of his own ideas. Few led the people to God; many led the people away from God. The people were as sheep without a shepherd.

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Mt.18:12).

"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace" (Jer.50:6).

"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Ezk.34:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:36) **Compassion** (splanchnistheis): to be moved inwardly; to yearn with tender mercy, affection, pity, and empathy. It is the very seat of a man's affections. It is the deepest movement of emotions possible, being touched with the deepest feelings possible. It is being moved within the deepest part of a person's being.

"Who shall separate us from the love [compassion] of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again" (Ps.78:39).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (Lam.3:22).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:36) **Fainted** (eklelumenoi): to faint, grow weary, lose heart, lack courage, be fainthearted, bewildered. The word is used when a person has struggled and struggled against sin, or stood against the barrage of insult after insult until he can stand no more. It means that a person has undergone trial after trial until he is ready to collapse (Heb.12:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(9:36) **Scattered** (errimmenoi): to be cast out, laid low, thrown down, prostrated, dejected and hopeless. Being scattered may come from experiences such as drunkenness, or struggling and fighting within and without, or being so weary that a person is just cast down. It is being prostrated by forces within oneself or laid low by forces outside of oneself.

3 (9:37-38) **Vision—Jesus Christ, Vision of**: the mission of Christ was to share the vision of a world in desperate need. The vision of the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest challenge known to man.

1. The vision of a great harvest. All men everywhere are fainting, weary, bewildered, and scattered. They are as sheep without a shepherd. But note a critical point: the Lord's vision is not only world-wide; it involves the changing of every human life on the globe (1 Pt.3:9; 2 Cor.5:17).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-36).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).

Thought 1. The harvest is *needful work.*

1) It is great, that is, plenteous. There are fields and fields of people growing in the valleys and hills of the world (Mt.9:36).
2) It is a ripe harvest, ready and desperate to be reaped (Mt.9:36).

3) It has to be reaped in its season, that is, in its generation. There is only a short time when it can be reaped; otherwise, it will rot and die in the field where it grew.

Thought 2. Every generation has to be reaped in its generation.
1) Everyone has only a certain season (generation, life-span) when he can be reaped. His season for being reaped is short, ever so short.
2) Everyone has a peak season, a time when he is really at his peak and ready to be harvested. It is so much more fruitful and joyful to harvest a man in his peak season than to try at other times.

Thought 3. The harvest is plentiful.
1) A harvest of children needs to be reached and taught.
2) A harvest of young people needs to be reached and grounded in the Word.
3) A harvest of women needs to reached and taught the confidence and protection of God's love.
4) A harvest of men needs to be reached and taught the strength and security of God's direction and care.

Thought 4. There is a world of opportunity out in the harvest. There are fields and fields of localities, nationalities, classes, professions, health, abilities, appearances, emotional states, and mental conditions—and all are lost, spiritually sick, and unreached. There is no end to the fields of harvest.

2. The vision of a great need for laborers. Christ needs people, that is, believers: men, women, boys, and girls. Laborers are few. He needs many laborers, and He needs them *now*. Unless there are reapers to go forth, the harvest will die and rot upon the earth.

> **"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Mt.9:37).**
>
> **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Ro.10:14-15).**
>
> **"Ye have not, because ye ask not" (Jas.4:2).**

Thought 1. There is an unlimited amount of work to be done, but there are so few to do it.
1) The harvest will never be reaped unless laborers go forth (Mt.28:19-20; Jn.20:21; cp. Lk.19:10).
2) The harvest will rot in the field where it grows (the earth).

Thought 2. Laborers are desperately needed for every generation.
1) The harvest is always great. The harvest is every man, woman, and child within a generation.
2) The harvest must have enough reapers to reap each living person during his or her season, that is, life-span. Just imagine—the whole population of the earth changes about every hundred years!

Thought 3. Why are there not more laborers?
1) Some reject the call of God.
2) Some postpone the call of God.
3) Some deny the call of God; they close their minds entirely.
4) Some seek a profession, a position, or a livelihood instead of really reaching out and ministering to people.
5) Some preach false gospels. They seek to propogate their own rationale and ideas instead of the truth of God.
6) Some just lack enough commitment to reach out and minister.
7) Some are satisfied with the traditional ritual and approaches of religion.
8) Some are more concerned with the bureaucracy than with laboring, more concerned with carrying things on as they have always been.

3. The vision of a great need for prayer. Laborers are needed, but they must be the laborers of God, for the harvest is God's. It is totally inadequate to humanly select the laborers, lay human plans, and send laborers forth in human strength. Such human action will not get the job done. God's call and God's appointment are needed. Christ is saying, "Pray that God will raise up enough laborers to reach your generation, the generation for which you are immediately responsible."

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).**

Thought 1. Note three significant facts.
1) Christ Himself prayed all night before choosing the first laborers and before sending them out on their first missionary journey (Lk.6:12-13).
2) The number of laborers for any generation depends upon the prayers of God's people in that generation. If God's people are concerned for their generation, they pray for laborers to reach and minister to it. If they

lack concern, they do not pray and laborers are few. Compare the *deadness of religion* in Christ's day and the shortage of true laborers there had been for some four hundred years.

3) Christ first of all gives this charge to His apostles and ministers. They are to take the lead and to teach the absolute necessity of praying for laborers.

Thought 2. Note two things.

1) The harvest is the Lord's. He knows the harvest, every stem and blade of it. He knows everyone—every body and mind, act and thought, need and provision (Mt.10:30). He knows the heart, and knows what must be done to harvest the field in the most efficient and effective way.
2) Therefore, the laborers must be chosen, called, and enlisted by Him. Christ is the One who must send forth laborers.

Thought 3. Three things should drive us to pray for laborers with all fervency.

1) The good news, the gospel of the kingdom (Mt.9:35; see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).
2) Compassion for the souls of men, for those who have fainted and are scattered and are without a shepherd.
3) Love for Christ and appreciation for what He has done (2 Cor.5:14).

4. The vision of a great force of laborers. The harvest is so plentiful and ready that a great force needs to be sent forth and *sent forth now*. Note several truths in the Scripture.

a) God is "the Lord of the harvest." He is "the Husbandman" (Jn.15:1). The harvest is "the vineyard of the Lord of hosts" (Is.5:7). The world is His. He can see that it is reaped if there are enough laborers.
b) "We are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry" (1 Cor.3:9). God labors and we labor; we both have a part. What a glorious truth and challenge, God needs us! What a glorious privilege—we are to labor side by side with God!

Thought 1. Note several significant lessons.

1) God desires every generation to have a great force of laborers. He wills for every man, woman, and child to be reached with "the gospel of the kingdom" (Mt.9:35). He wills for none to be lost (2 Pt.3:9).
2) It is God who is to send forth laborers, not men. He is to do the selecting, calling, ordaining, and sending. Our task is to pray for laborers, and when God raises them up, we are to support them by utilizing every means possible.
3) God raises up people with very special gifts to harvest the fields.

> **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph.4:11)**

4) The harvest is God's. It is to be harvested as He says and wills, not as we may wish. No man has the right to harvest by using his own message and ideas. Christ has clearly instructed and demonstrated that "the gospel of the kingdom" is to be preached.

Thought 2. The harvest is God's. He can reap the harvest if several conditions exist.

1) If there is enough *concern* within our generation for the multitudes of people who are lost.
2) If there is enough *prayer* for laborers.
3) If there is enough *commitment* to surrender to His call to go.
4) If there is enough *dedication* to follow Him day by day and hour by hour.
5) If there is enough *faith* to believe Christ and the truth of the Scripture.
6) If there is enough *conviction* to stand true and firm through all.

	CHAPTER 10 **B. The Messiah's Call to His Disciples, 10:1-4** (Mk.3:13-19; Lk.6:13-19; Acts 1:13)	2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;	**3 They were twelve in number**[DS4] **4 They were made apostles**[DS5] **5 They included three sets of brothers**[DS6]
1 They were called "to Him"[DS1] **2 They were given power & authority**[DS2,3]	And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.	3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.	**6 They were organized two by two for ministry**

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

B. The Messiah's Call to His Disciples, 10:1-4

(10:1-4) **Introduction**: the apostles were called earlier to be "fishers of men" (Mt.4:18-22; 9:9; Jn.1:35-51). Each one had been called in his own special way from his environment. Christ was now calling the apostles to go forth in the fulfillment of their first call. In a sense, we may say they were *called twice* (cp.Mk.3:14; Jn.12:26).

1. They received their *commitment call*. They were to receive formal training, learning how to become "fishers of men."
2. They received their *commissioning call*. They were to receive practical training, actually go out to "fish for men."

There are several important facts given about their commissioning call.

1. They were called "to Him" (v.1).
2. They were given power and authority (v.1).
3. They were twelve in number (v.2).
4. They were made apostles (v.2).
5. They included three sets of brothers (v.2).
6. They were organized two by two for ministry (v.3).

1 (10:1) **Apostles—Discipleship**: the disciples were called "to Him" (Christ). There are three steps in the call of the disciples to the ministry.

1. *The discipleship call*. They heard about Christ, went to hear Him, and began to follow Him just as many others did (cp. Jn.1:35f).
2. *The commitment call*. There were multitudes of people following Christ, but He noticed the unusual commitment of these twelve men. At this point, He called them to the ministry: to leave all and to begin a period of special training in order to preach and teach professionally. Note Lk.6:13 where Jesus called His disciples to Him, and from among the many whom He called, "He chose twelve whom also He named apostles."
3. *The commissioning call*. Christ commissioned them to go forth with the message of salvation.

Thought 1. The disciples who had been *with Jesus* for some time had touched, talked, shared, communed, prayed, meditated, and fellowshipped with Him. They had shared and been taught the Scriptures by Him and probably had been taught how to preach and teach. They certainly had witnessed His preaching and teaching and how He went about both. Several lessons can be learned from this.

1) Every believer needs to be *with Jesus*. We must all learn to quietly meditate and study His Word, communing with Him in prayer.
2) Every servant needs to go through a period of preparation and training before being sent forth. A servant must first be proved (1 Tim.3:10).
3) A personal relationship, *being with Jesus day by day*, is essential for ministry. There is no substitute for the training a person receives at the feet of Jesus studying His Word, learning from His Spirit, and communing with Him in prayer.

Thought 2. Note three lessons.

1) A person must first be trained, then he can become qualified to serve.

> **"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them" (Mt.5:1-2).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**

2) The major prerequisite for ministry is to be "with Jesus," learning from Him and His Word, communing with Him in prayer and in quietness.

> **"But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Ps.1:2).**
>
> **"Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps.46:10).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps.145:18).**
>
> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**
>
> **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).**

3) Public ministry requires two forms of preparation or training.
   a) Private preparation with Christ: *being with Him* all alone (2 Tim.2:15).
   b) Public preparation or formal training: observing and learning from Christ as He ministers through others (Mt.5:1f; 2 Tim.2:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:1) **Call—Discipleship**: the call of the disciples is a precious study. Jesus called them "to Him"; He chose them "to be with Him" (Mk.3:14). They were called out from among many followers (Lk.6:13).

2 (10:1) **Call—Discipleship**: the disciples were given power and authority. The power to heal and cast out demons was given to prove that Christ was truly the Son of God (Mt.9:6; Jn.10:25-26). The apostles were given the same authority and power because they were being sent in His name. They were proclaiming Him and His message to be true; they were proving it by the power given them.

> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).**

The major thing that the miracles teach is this: God truly loves and cares for us here and now, physically. His care is not only for the future and for our spiritual welfare, but His care is for our deliverance in the here and now (the Great Redeemer).

> **"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Lk.10:19-20).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).**
>
> **"And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10).**
>
> **"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:19).**
>
> **"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).**
>
> **"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:6-8).**

Thought 1. Note three lessons.
1) A servant's power is derived from his master. The believer's authority is derived from his Lord.
   ⇒ This is great assurance. The Lord's servant does not face the world alone. He has supernatural authority and power behind him, the very power of the Lord Himself.
   ⇒ This is great responsibility. The Lord's servant has no right to strike out and act alone. He is to carry the message and deeds of the Lord, not his own message and behavior.
2) The authority and power given by the Lord *concerns ministry* not position, wealth, fame, or earthly dominion. The Lord's servant is given power to *reach and help people*. What a lesson for the motives and actions of God's servants, both lay and clergy!
3) The power given by the Lord is directed against the devil and evil spirits that control men. It is a spiritual warfare, fought against the evil that possesses the minds and hearts of men.
   ⇒ There is the evil of false teachings and doctrines or beliefs that are always so prominent among mankind (1 Tim.4:1).

⇒ There is the evil of deceptive and fleshly behavior that has always enslaved men (2 Tim.3:1-7, 13).
⇒ There is the evil of some who rebel so much that they are given over to walk almost exclusively after the flesh (2 Pt.2:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(10:1) **Power—Authority** (exousia): the Greek word means authority. Christ was giving *His own authority* to His messengers. They were sent forth by Him on His special mission; therefore, they were given His authority and power to minister.

Notice that the power to save or convert the lost is not given. Why? Only God can save and penetrate the spiritual world or dimension. Man's authority is limited to the physical world and dimension.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(10:1) **Unclean Spirits—Evil Spirits**: evil spirits are spirits of unholy, polluted, immoral, and unjust behavior; they are spirits belonging to the ungodly realm of darkness. Two things need to be said about evil spirits at this point.

1. Christ accepts and teaches the presence and reality of evil spirits. He sent His apostles forth with the authority to cast them out.
2. Throughout human experience, most beliefs have extremes that arise and surround the truth of the belief. Note several facts that every thinking and honest person knows about this fact of human experience.
   a. The extremes of a belief range from extreme liberalism (denial) all the way over to extreme conservativism (superstition).
   b. The fact that some carry a belief over into superstitious behavior does not mean that there is not truth in the belief. It does not mean this any more than the denial of a belief means the belief is untrue.
   c. The fact that some may and probably do misread and carry the belief in evil spirits over into the area of the superstitious does not mean there are not evil spirits. Christ did accept their presence, and He taught the fact of their existence to His apostles. (See outlines and notes—Lk.8:26-40; Mt.8:28-34.)

3 (10:2) **Discipleship—Apostles**: the disciples were twelve in number. A teacher, including Christ, can adequately teach only so many. Note that Christ taught some things to the multitudes; then He taught more to a much smaller number (Mary, Martha, Lazarus, and some others); and finally He taught all things to a small band of men (the twelve apostles). We might say that He taught all He could to a small band of disciples who were to carry on His life's work (cp. Jethro's advice to Moses, suggesting that Moses organize the people into groups of ten for more efficient rule, Ex.18:17-26).

There are two thoughts at this point.

Thought 1. How much we need to heed this method that Christ followed—the method of making disciples out of a few while ministering to the many. And note: the twelve were not to be administrators for Christ. They were to be ministers for Christ, men who would do the same work of ministry that He did. They were to carry on the ministry He had begun.

Thought 2. What would happen if every minister and teacher (lay and religious) discipled just twelve persons in their lifetime, twelve who would carry on some kind of ministry? How long would it take to reach the world with the gospel?

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(10:2) **Apostles**: why did Christ select twelve special apostles instead of some other number? There are several possible reasons.

1. There were twelve tribes of Israel. Israel had been the first called to be the people of God (Gen.12:1-5). Christ wanted to reach out to Israel first and to give them a last chance. Therefore, He wanted an apostle to represent each of the twelve tribes, to equal the twelve patriarchs of Israel, that is, to equal Jacob's sons. The number twelve was symbolizing that He was making an attempt to reach all Israel.
2. The Jews had been the first called by God (Gen.12:1-5). Therefore, they were to be the first called by God's Son. The twelve apostles were to be the representatives of Christ who were to bring Israel's twelve tribes to God the Father. Note an important fact: Christ said the twelve apostles were to judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt.19:28; Lk.22:29-30).
3. The twelve apostles were to be the patriarchs, the heads, the apostles of the new Israel (Rev.21:14; Jas.1:1; cp. Gal.6:16; cp. Ro.2:28-29).

4 (10:2) **Discipleship—Apostles**: the disciples were made apostles (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Apostle*—Mt.10:2). Note several things.

1. Christ Himself is called an apostle; that is, He was the messenger of God sent by God Himself. (Cp. Heb.3:1.)
2. These twelve men were also to be called apostles; that is, they were to be the messengers sent by Christ Himself.
3. There is a sense in which the ministers of every generation are the Lord's apostles, His very special messengers. They are the men who are sent forth by Christ to be His representatives. There is a lesson here in that God's people should respect the Lord's messenger as His special apostle.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn.1:6).
"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer.3:15).

"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:4).

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:17).

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pt.5:2).

"Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me" (Is.48:16).

DEEPER STUDY #5

(10:2) **Apostle** (apostolos): to send out. An apostle is a representative, an ambassador, a person who is sent out into one country to represent another country. Three things are true of the apostle.

⇒ He belongs to the One who has sent him out.

⇒ He is commissioned to be sent out.

⇒ He possesses all the authority and power of the One who sends him out.

The word "apostle" has both a narrow and a broad usage in the New Testament.

1. The narrow sense. It refers to the twelve apostles and to Paul as an apostle (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor.9:1). In this narrow sense, there were at least two basic qualifications.
   a. The apostle was a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (cp. Mt.10:1-2; Mk.3:13-14; Lk.6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; 13:2; 22:10, 14-15; Ro.1:1). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.
   b. The apostle was a man who had been an eye-witness of the resurrected Lord (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor.9:1).
2. The broad sense. The word "apostle" refers to other men who preached the Gospel. It is used of two missionaries: Barnabas (Acts 14:4, 14, 17) and Silas (1 Th.2:6), and two messengers, Titus (2 Cor.8:23) and Epaphroditus (Ph.2:25). There is also a possibility that James, the Lord's brother (Gal.1:19), and Andronicus and Junia (Ro.16:7) are referred to as apostles.

In the narrow sense, the gift of an apostle was bound to die out because of the unique qualifications to receive the gift. But historically, in the broad sense, there is perhaps a sense in which the qualifications and gift itself are still given and used by the Lord. The Lord's servants of all generations must *see* the Lord and know Him intimately. Similarly, we must personally *see and experience* the power of the resurrection. Certainly there are some in every generation who have *so seen* the Lord Jesus and who *so know* and *so experience* the power of the Lord's resurrection. Perhaps the Lord Jesus endues some with the very special gift of an apostle to be used in a very special way throughout His most precious domain—the church.

5 (10:2) **Disciples**: the disciples included three sets of brothers (see DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mt.10:2). Note the influence of families upon children. Six of Christ's apostles, one half of the inner circle, were apparently from *closely knit* families. The brothers respected each other enough to listen and follow one another (cp. Jn.1:40f).

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(10:2) **Disciples**: the disciples who were brothers were Simon Peter and Andrew, James and John (the sons of Zebedee), and the other James and Lebbeus. (See note—Lk.6:14-16.)

6 (10:3-4) **Disciples—Discipleship**: the disciples were organized two by two for ministry.

Thought 1. Christ seemed to arrange the apostles two by two; note how Matthew groups them by two's. Several lessons can be immediately drawn from this.

1) We need each other, someone with whom we can be close in fellowship and ministry.
2) We need to go forth together two by two.
3) We need to organize for ministry.

Thought 2. Note the humility that Matthew teaches. He is the writer of this great Gospel, yet he demonstrates the ingredient so necessary for the servant of Christ (Ph.2:3-4; cp. Ro.12:10).

1) He mentions Thomas, his partner, before himself. The other two gospel writers place him before Thomas.
2) He again mentions his terrible past—that he was a publican and a traitor to the Jewish nation (see Introduction and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.9:9-13).

Thought 3. The presence of Judas Iscariot, a betrayer, did not permanently affect the others. Christ can and does overrule, working all things out for good (Ro.8:28).

	C. The Messiah's Commission to His Disciples, 10:5-15 (Mk.6:7-13; Lk.9:1-6)	neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.	b. Seek only to be adequately cared for
1 Jesus sent forth His disciples, commanding them	5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:	11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.	**6 Fifth, seek a worthy host**
2 First, go to Israel: To the lost of one's own house[DS1]	6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.	12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.	**7 Sixth, plan your ministry & your visits** a. Approach cordially
3 Second, preach: The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand[DS2,3]	7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.	13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.	b. If accepted, share your peace
4 Third, minister, sharing freely	8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.	14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.	c. If rejected, leave & symbolize judgment
5 Fourth, receive compensation a. Do not seek material gain	9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, 10 Nor scrip for your journey	15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.	d. Rejectors are to be judged[DS4]

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

C. The Messiah's Commission to His Disciples, 10:5-15

(10:5-15) **Introduction**: this is the commission of our Lord to His apostles. It was the very first expedition they had been sent out on all alone. Note how carefully Jesus instructed them and the clear implications for His followers in every generation.

1. Jesus sent forth His disciples, commanding them (v.5).
2. First, go to Israel, to the lost of one's own house (v.6).
3. Second, preach: preach the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (v.7).
4. Third, minister, sharing freely (v.8).
5. Fourth, receive compensation (v.9-10).
6. Fifth, seek a worthy host for lodging (v.11).
7. Sixth, plan your ministry and visits (v.12-15).

1 (10:5) **Commission—Call—Ministers**: Jesus sent forth His disciples, commanding them. Note that Jesus did not send forth every disciple who was following Him. Only a few were chosen to serve as special messengers who were to devote *all their time* to preaching and ministering (see outline and notes—Mt.10:1-4). Most other disciples were to be witnessing for Christ in their work and in their other daily activities.

Thought 1. A person is sent forth by Jesus; he does not choose to go forth. If he does, he goes forth in his own strength and power. He cannot expect the power of Christ.

Thought 2. The ministry is not a profession; it is a commission. Christ calls and commissions. The man who chooses to be a minister without a true call and commissioning of the Lord experiences four things.

1) He finds himself ministering primarily in his own strength.
2) He often finds his heart void and feels the constant pressure of having to come up with *human ideas* and *human programs*. He has difficulty maintaining a sense of meaning and purpose for both himself and his people.
3) He senses a real void and shortcoming in proclaiming the gospel and in doing the work of the ministry.
4) He often wonders what *good* is really being done. He just lacks the sense of a real call within; therefore, there is no *outside godly connection* to comfort and assure him that he is in God's will. He is left to seek comfort and assurance only from himself or from some other human source. There is no supernatural Spirit or power to encourage him.

2 (10:6) **Commission—Witnessing**: first, go to Israel; that is, do not go to the lost of the world, but to the lost of one's own house (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:6). The offer of salvation was to go to Israel first; now it is to be offered to the whole world (Ro.9:30; cp. Ro.10:13).

Thought 1. A man is to go to his own house first.
1) He is to demonstrate love for his own family and friends first. If he does not love those of his own household, how can he love those whom he does not know?
2) He is to learn how to bear witness with those who are more likely to respond instead of react. Such knowledge better prepares him to face the world and its negative responses.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:6) **Israel**: Jesus had several reasons for sending His messengers to Israel first. (1) Israel held a very special place in God's plans. The nation was to be given first opportunity to hear the Gospel (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22). (2) The disciples needed to concentrate their efforts right where they were lest their efforts be scattered. (3) God's method is always for a person to reach his own home and his own people first. A person is to begin his witness and work immediately right where he lives.

> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

A word needs to be said about Israel. Jesus was pointing out several things.
1. Israel has a very special place in God's heart (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22). Therefore, the gospel was to be preached to Israel first.
2. Israel is as a lost sheep: "My people hath been lost sheep" (Jer.50:6). Note that the Gentiles are also called "lost sheep" (1 Pt.2:25).
3. Israel's people were lost because their shepherds (teachers) let them scatter. Their teachers had not adhered to the truth (see outlines and notes—Mt.9:35-38).

> **"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Mt.9:36-38).**

3 (10:7) **Preaching—Kingdom of Heaven**: second, preach—preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Note the message is a *given* message, given by the Lord Himself. The disciples were not to proclaim their own ideas nor the ideas of others. They were to preach the message *given* by the Lord. No matter the generation, the message needs to be repeated and repeated.
⇒ It is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb.13:8).
⇒ It was the message of Christ (Mt.4:17, 23).
⇒ It was the message of John (Mt.3:2).
⇒ It was the message of the apostles and ministers of Christ.

> **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).**

Thought 1. The Kingdom of Heaven necessitates repentance. The apostles preached repentance as they went out (Mk.6:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(10:7) **Kingdom of Heaven**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(10:7-8) **Ministers—Ministry**: the major areas of service for the apostles were twofold—the area of preaching the gospel and the area of ministering. Preaching is set off by itself as a major area (v.7), and ministering is set off by itself as a major area (v.8).

The apostles were to minister and to share freely. Christ gave them His authority and power freely; therefore, they were to minister freely, not charging *special fees for special ministries* (note this is not referring to *compensation* for special ministries, but to *special fees* for special ministries, v.10). Their ministry and sharing were in four primary areas.
1. They were to heal the sick. Many had physical needs; they were ill, hurting, and suffering. Some did not have enough to eat or wear and did not even have a place to live. Some were weak and had lost the will to fight. They were hopeless and helpless, discouraged and depressed. They needed the message of the gospel.
2. They were to cleanse the lepers. Leprosy was considered a form of pollution; therefore, it was a symbol of sin. The apostles were to cleanse the lepers. They were to cleanse those who had the actual disease, and they were to preach the power of Christ to cleanse a life polluted with sin.
3. They were to raise the dead. There is no record of the apostles' raising the dead before the resurrection of Christ, but the apostles were used by God to raise many to spiritual life. The Bible says men are "dead in sins" (Eph.2:1; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27). Therefore, the disciples were to preach the power of Christ to raise men to life eternal.

4. They were to cast out devils. Demon-possession means that a person is gripped by evil forces. When a man is gripped by an evil spirit, he is no longer in control of his life; he is controlled by the forces of evil. The disciples were to preach the power of Christ to deliver men from the spirits of evil.

4 (10:8) **Ministers**: third, minister—sharing freely (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.10:7-8). Two things always need to be remembered about the apostle's unusual power.

1. Their power was a given power. It came from the Lord Himself. God gives His servant the gifts and power to preach and minister as He has called him (1 Cor.12:28f; Eph.4:11-13). The gifts and power are of God, not of the man himself. The gifts and the power of a man come freely from God; therefore, he is freely to give all he has. All the energy and all the toil necessary are to be poured into preaching the gospel and into ministering to people.
2. Their power was to confirm that God does love and care for the world and that the message being preached was actually from God (see note—Mt.10:1).

Thought 1. Ministering to the needs of people shows two things.
1) God loves and cares for people.
2) The minister is a minister of love and care.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**

5 (10:9-10) **Ministers—Stewardship**: fourth, receive compensation. In financial matters, Christ expected two things from His apostles and His people. First, His apostles and servants were not to spend their own money on the ministry; and second, His people were to adequately support His apostles and servants.

> **"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor.9:14).**
>
> **"Let him that is taught in the word communicate [give] unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal.6:6).**
>
> **"Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction" (Ph.4:14).**
>
> **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim.5:17-18).**

Thought 1. The apostles, God's servants, were forbidden to accumulate estates *through the ministry*. But they were not to spend their own money on the ministry. There were several reasons for this.
1) Their minds and hearts were to be centered on preaching the gospel and ministering to people, not on buying and selling and accumulating.
2) They were to trust God for their needs and by such example to teach dependence upon God (Mt.6:24-34).
3) They were to teach and depend upon God's people to provide for them (cp. 1 Cor.9:13-14).
4) They were to allow God's people the privilege of sharing in the ministry through their giving. God's people were to learn more and more trust by depending upon God to help them raise whatever funds they needed to support the ministers.

Thought 2. God's servant or laborer is worthy of being financially supported. In fact, Paul taught that God's servant was to be "counted worthy of double honor" (salary, compensation, financial support). (See notes—1 Tim.5:17-18; pt.2—1 Cor.16:5-9; cp. Lk.10:7; Ph. 4:11-14.)

Thought 3. God's people were to support the Lord's apostles. The people were to allow the apostles to give their full time to the ministry and not be forced to labor in a secular job.

6 (10:11) **Hospitality**: fifth, seek a worthy host. In every city and place, there are some who have good reputations and some who have bad reputations. Several factors determine a worthy host.

1. A worthy host was a person with a good reputation concerning morals. Living with a person of evil and unjust morals would cause the apostles' own morals to be questioned. They were to reach out to the immoral, even as Christ did, but not to fellowship and live with them. They were to be careful in choosing their close friends.

2. A worthy host was a person with a good reputation concerning God. Some would have a spiritual interest and some would not.

3. A worthy host was a person with a good reputation concerning hospitality. Some would willingly care for strangers; others would not.

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).

"[Christian widows should be] well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good word" (1 Tim.5:10).

"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" (Tit.1:8).

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb.13:2).

"Use hospitality one to another without grudging" (1 Pt.4:9).

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) The apostles were to seek out the worthy host. They were not to seek out the wealthy and leading citizens of a community, nor were they to seek out the best accomodations.
2) Paul sought out God's people when he went into a new and strange place (Acts 28:14).
3) The good people of a place are usually known. All the factors that make up the quality of a person are usually known: honesty, decency, kindness.
4) Note the lesson about the believer's close friends. His close friends are to be God's people—people counted worthy by God.

Thought 2. God's messenger was to stay with the same host throughout his stay in a place. He was not to seek more comfort and luxury as he came to know a place. There are several reasons for this.

1) Such action might indicate favoritism and cause jealousy.
2) Such action might indicate a materialistic and selfish and soft mind, leading to the questioning of a person's commitment.
3) Such action distracts from a person's purpose and ministry.
4) Such action hurts and often alienates the first host.

7 (10:12-15) **Ministry**: sixth, plan your ministry, your visits. The Lord sent His messengers forth, that is, out visiting in the houses of the city. They did not sit back waiting on the people to come. They went out carrying the gospel to the people.

Note the Lord told the apostles how to visit. Precise plans were laid.

1. The apostles were to approach a house cordially (v.13). Saluting, that is, approaching cordially, does several things.
   a. It communicates a friendliness and kindness which encourages an open reception.
   b. It opens the door to more conversation which the messenger can turn into a presentation of the gospel.
   c. It tells immediately whether a person is receptive or not.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col.3:12).

"Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col.4:6).

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous" (1 Pt.3:8).

Thought 1. The messenger is to salute and be courteous to people, not forceful, demanding, forward, or ugly.

2. If the people accepted the apostles, the apostles were to share peace (v.13). The greeting of *peace* was to be given to every home and place they approached. If the people were worthy, the messengers were to continue their message of peace. If the people were unworthy, they were to let the salutation lie alone. They were to say nothing else. They were not to continue the message of peace. They were to take the message of peace and leave without sharing it.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

Thought 1. The witnesses of the Lord must discern and make a judgment about the people to whom they are witnessing.

1) Are they kind and gracious or cold and hard?
2) Are they just shy and bashful or really disinterested?
3) Are they truly receptive or just kind and gracious to everyone?
4) Are they spiritually sensitive or just interested in religious questions?

Thought 2. The Lord's witness must not waste time. He must discern as quickly as possible who is worthy and receptive.

Thought 3. The greeting of the day was "Peace be unto you." The apostles were to use the greeting as the basis of their message. They were to expand it. Their message was to be peace—*peace with God and the peace of God* (see note—Jn.14:27).

Thought 4. Note this: when a true messenger visits a family and does not share the message of peace, it is a warning to them. Their behavior, unkindness, or disinterest stopped the sharing.

3. If the people rejected the apostles, the apostles were to leave. The Lord's messenger and witness could expect to be rejected by some. When rejected, the messenger was to do two things.
   a. He was to leave the house or city.
   b. He was to shake the dust off his feet. This was to be a symbol that...
      - they had lost their opportunity.
      - their wickedness was so detestable that it polluted the very ground upon which their house or city sat.
      - God would reject them even as they had rejected Him.

Thought 1. Note that some *do* reject. They reject two things.
1) The messenger himself.
2) The messenger's words.

Thought 2. Note that whole cities reject the gospel, not just some households.

Thought 3. When rejected, the messenger is not to argue or force the gospel upon the person. Christ expects His messenger to leave. Note the words: "When ye depart."

4. Rejectors were to be judged (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.10:15). Rejection of God's messenger and of the gospel condemns a person to a terrible fate. The person's judgment is to be more severe than even the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrha. Why? Because the person rejects God's very own Son. Sodom and Gomorrha never had the opportunity to hear God's Son. Our responsibility is much greater because our privilege to hear God's Son is much greater.

> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).**
>
> **"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pt.3:7).**
>
> **"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(10:15) **Sodom and Gomorrha**: these two cities and their citizens are used as examples of the worst sinners (Dt.32:32; Is.1:10; Ezk.16:46; Mt.11:23-24; Lk.10:12-13; 17:29; Ro.9:29; 2 Pt.2:6; Jude 7; Rev.11:8). The cities were destroyed by fire (Gen.19:24-25) and are said to be "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

	D. The Messiah's Warning of Persecution, 10:16-23	same hour what ye shall speak.	
		20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your	b. God's Spirit will speak in you[DS1]
1 **Two facts must be kept in mind**	16 Behold, I send you	Father which speaketh in	
a. Are commissioned	forth as sheep in the midst of	you.	
b. Are as sheep among wolves	wolves: be ye therefore wise	21 And the brother shall	5 **Counsel 4: Know that**
2 **Counsel 1: Be wise & harmless**	as serpents, and harmless as doves.	deliver up the brother to death, and the father the	**families will be divided[DS2]**
3 **Counsel 2: Beware of men**	17 But beware of men: for	child: and the children shall	
a. The persecutors: The state & the religionists	they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;	rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.	
		22 And ye shall be hated of	6 **Counsel 5: Endure to the**
b. The reasons you will be persecuted	18 And ye shall be brought	all men for my name's sake:	**end**
1) For the Lord's sake	before governors and kings	but he that endureth to the	
2) To be a testimony	for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.	end shall be saved.	
		23 But when they persecute	7 **Counsel 6: Flee persecution**
4 **Counsel 3: Do not worry about a defense**	19 But when they deliver	you in this city, flee ye into	
a. God will meet your need	you up, take no thought how	another: for verily I say unto	
	or what ye shall speak: for it	you, Ye shall not have gone	
	shall be given you in that	over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.	

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

D. The Messiah's Warning of Persecution, 10:16-23

(10:16-23) **Introduction**: there is one thing true disciples must know as they go forth for Christ. They are as sheep in the midst of wolves. They can expect to be persecuted, severely persecuted. They must "beware of men" (v.17).

What Christ did in this passage was warn His disciples of persecution, and as He warned them, He counseled them on how to deal with persecution. (See outlines and notes—Mt.5:10-12; Lk.21:12-19; 1 Pt.4:12-19; 4:14 for more discussion.)

1. Two facts must be kept in mind (v.16).
   a. Disciples are commissioned: sent forth.
   b. Disciples are as sheep among wolves.
2. Counsel 1: be wise and harmless (v.16).
3. Counsel 2: beware of men (v.17-18).
4. Counsel 3: do not worry about a defense (v.19-20).
5. Counsel 4: know that families will be divided (v.21).
6. Counsel 5: endure to the end (v.22).
7. Counsel 6: flee persecution (v.23).

1 (10:16) **Persecution**: two facts must be kept in mind as the disciple faces persecution.

1. The disciple is commissioned and sent forth by Christ. Note the words, "I send you forth." It is Christ, the Son of God, who sends us forth. There is great comfort in this fact, for Christ knows what is to face the disciple. He is fully aware of the persecution that lies ahead, yet He still sends His messenger forth. Why? Because the Son of God is able to use our persecution for several ends.
   a. He is able to teach us about God's care as He protects and delivers us.
   b. He is able to teach us more and more trust, maturing us as believers.
   c. He is able to take our suffering and touch the hearts of the persecutors, leading them to surrender their lives to Christ.
   d. He is able to deliver us through death itself into the very presence of God.

Christ knows the importance of the message, the gospel of the kingdom. It is essential for man's salvation. Therefore, despite the rejection and persecution by many, the message must still be proclaimed so that some might be saved.

2. The disciple is sent forth as a sheep in the midst of wolves. Being commissioned by Christ assures persecution. Christ sends His disciple forth in the midst of a world that *will* oppose the gospel; He knows that the disciple is to be persecuted. Therefore, the disciple...
   - must know and expect persecution. He must not be caught off guard when it comes.
   - must know that his persecution is but "light affliction" in comparison with the glory that lies ahead. In fact, "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

Thought 1. Every believer must know that he will be looked at askance and suffer some abuse, ridicule, and rejection.

2 (10:16) **Persecution—Disciples—Mission**: the first counsel is to be wise and harmless—as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. To be "wise as serpents" means to maneuver quietly with caution and with intelligence; to maneuver with a planned strategy; to be quick in seeing danger and quick to escape from it. It means to be a person of vision and initiative. It means to know one's resources and to know when to strike and when to withdraw. It means to strike with one's attack and message when opportunity arises; it means to withdraw quickly when danger threatens.

The disciple is also to be like a dove: to be as gentle and harmless as a dove; to cause no damage; to be known as a symbol of peace; to be as pure, unmixed, and unadulterated as doves.

Thought 1. The Lord's people and messengers are exposed to a world of evil men (wolves). Therefore, they are to do two things.

1) Be wise as serpents. In facing danger the serpent...
   - tries to escape.
   - takes shelter out of sight if possible.
   - is quiet.
   - does not expose itself needlessly.
   - seeks preservation first of all.
2) Be harmless as doves. The dove...
   - is mild and meek.
   - bears no ill or hurt.
   - is innocent and inoffensive.
   - is a symbol of peace not of war.

Thought 2. The Lord's witness is to have a serpent-like mind and a dove-like spirit.

1) He is to be wise in sensing threats and to respond without passion.
2) He is not to provoke nor allow himself to be provoked.
3) He is to guard against being wronged and to wrong no one.
4) He is to maneuver out of harm and to harm no one himself.

3 (10:17-18) **Persecution**: the second counsel is to beware of men. Two significant points need to be studied by believers.

1. There are the persecutors. The persecutors are three in number: men in general, religionists, and the state. The believer is to beware, to be on guard and to watch—always. If he lives for Christ—really lives for Christ—he is subject to being persecuted: ridiculed, rejected, disliked, hated, murmured against, abused, physically attacked, jailed, and martyred. Who will do such things to believers?

   a. Men, people just like himself, will persecute believers. Men can, will, and do turn into brute beasts when they do not like something. Their depraved, wolf-like nature begins to manifest itself. They become two-faced, deceptive, plotting, and devious. They often attempt to hurt or destroy believers either by reputation or by force. The attack may be over a job, a position, an act, or a belief.

   b. Religionists, people in the synagogues and churches, will persecute believers. The church is full of people who have not really committed their lives to God. They just do not know Him personally, not in a real and personal way. Therefore, the believer who truly lives and teaches and takes a stand for God and His righteousness is sometimes persecuted by those within the church. They do not understand God nor His righteousness. They can become two-faced, evil speaking, gossiping, slandering, reviling, and insulting. They can also scold, mock, and attack face to face. They can go so far as to try to destroy a person's reputation and life, depending on the society in which he lives. The great tragedy is that persecution can and does too often take place within the walls of God's house.

   c. Civil authorities within the state will persecute believers. Believers all over the world always have been and always will be dragged before state authorities and persecuted.

> **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:18-20).**

Thought 1. Note three lessons about the character of religionists.

1) Religionists can be so deceived that they think they do God a service by persecuting the believer (Jn.16:2).
2) Churches seldom like to be disturbed. When the gospel of God is preached or a real ministry for God is attempted, the church is sometimes so encrusted with formalism and the old way of doing things that it fails to see the truth. It persecutes the man of God.
3) Too often church members have persecuted the Lord's messenger and teacher (see notes—Mt.5:10-12). They have sometimes destroyed the messenger's ministry and reputation in a particular place. But God has always proven faithful. He has continued to use His servant—marvelously so. He will always use His persecuted servant who remains true to Him.

Thought 2. The believer is to beware of men in high positions, whether in church, state, or business. The higher the position the more persecution can be exacted.

Thought 3. Paul was scourged *five times* by religionists (2 Cor.11:24).

2. There are two reasons for persecution given in this passage.
   a. The believer is persecuted for the Lord's sake or cause. The believer tries to live for Christ and to carry out His cause. The natural man, whether in the world or church, does not understand the things of God, so he opposes them (see outline and notes—1 Cor.2:14-3:4).

> **"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Mt.5:11).**
>
> **"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt.10:22).**
>
> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**
>
> **"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).**

   b. The believer is persecuted so that he might be a testimony to the persecutors. There is no greater testimony for Christ than a believer's standing up for Christ in the face of persecution (cp. Acts 24:1f; 25:1f; 25:13f; 26:1f).
      1) Standing firm demonstrates the truth of the gospel. Its message of love and salvation is clearly seen by the persecutor.
      2) Standing firm gives the Holy Spirit a unique opportunity to reach the hearts of those standing by with the truth of the gospel.
      3) Standing firm is a testimony *against* the persecutors. It shows how deep the wickedness and evil of their hearts is. It shall stand as a testimony against them in the day of judgment.

> **"Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:45-46).**
>
> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Ro.2:5-6).**
>
> **"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" (Jas.5:10).**

4 (10:19-20) **Persecution**: the third counsel is not to worry about a defense. A believer is never left alone defending himself against persecution.

1. God gives what is to be said. Note: He gives the answer in the very hour it is to be spoken.

> **"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (Mt.10:19).**

2. God's Spirit actually does the speaking "in" the believer.
3. God stands with the believer.

> **"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Lk.21:15).**
>
> **"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:16-18).**

Thought 1. When a believer is called upon to defend himself, he is often nervous and apprehensive. He wonders *how* to speak in his defense.

1) Some may distrust their ability. They feel incapable. They have seldom if ever appeared anywhere to defend themselves (cp. Moses, Ex.4:10-12; Jeremiah, Jer.1:6, 10).
2) Some may distrust their emotions. They are nervous and extremely apprehensive about standing before people. Having to stand before others defending themselves doubles their nervousness.

Thought 2. We need to trust God for what is to be said. This does not mean we should not be praying and thinking, but it means that God is to be trusted for the defense. There is a reason for this: only God knows the hearts of the persecutors and any others who are present. Therefore, He alone knows what needs to be said to touch their hearts or else to serve as a witness against them in the future.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:20) **Holy Spirit**: cp. Jn.16:13. See outline—Jn.14:15-26; 16:7-15.

5 (10:21) **Persecution**: the fourth counsel is to know that families will be divided. A person's own family can become his greatest persecutor. Why? There are three reasons.

1. Because of the believer's commitment to Christ and His righteousness. The family often lives a worldly life and cannot understand a godly life. The family, therefore, opposes a family member who ceases to participate in certain functions and traditions (2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16).
2. Because of the family's orthodox religion or church. The converted family member may wish to change religions or churches. The family opposes such a move.
3. Because of the believer's commitment to Christ. The believer should become a dynamic witness sharing the graciousness and love of the Lord. Such an active witness is sometimes an embarrassment to a family.

> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me" (Lk.5:27).**
>
> **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).**

Thought 1. A true believer is a man of conviction, believing that Jesus Christ is truly the Messiah, the Son of the living God. He adheres to this truth, living and bearing witness to it. Such conviction and unswerving testimony are seldom understood and often opposed. Because of this a believer sometimes has to choose between obedience to Christ and obedience to his family.

Thought 2. Nothing hurts more than having our own family oppose us when we make a decision to follow Christ. When our families oppose and persecute us, it hurts us deeply.

Thought 3. In some cases the most severe opposition comes from family members. The reason is twofold.

1) They feel their influence should be respected.
2) They feel that the whole family is affected by what its members do.

These two feelings are normal for a family, but the believer knows and has committed his life to the truth of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the believer is convinced that what is needed is for the family to be converted, not for him to deny his faith.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(10:21) **Persecution**: see outline and notes—Mt.10:34-37.

6 (10:22) **Persecution**: the fifth counsel is to endure to the end. Again, the believer must expect persecution. All men of the world will oppose him. Why? "For my name's sake." The genuine believer lives and witnesses to the name of Christ which is the name of righteousness and self-denial (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). The world and its people oppose any life style that demands total self-denial.

The person who endures to the end shall be saved. Note several things.

1. There is an end to persecution. It is only temporary; it will end.
2. Endurance is possible. A believer can endure. God will bear him up through the persecution.

> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction [hostility] of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).**

3. Salvation and deliverance are waiting for the person who endures: a life of glory and reward.

> **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).**
>
> **"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:6-8).**
>
> **"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).**

Thought 1. Note the words, "*All* men will hate." This means the whole world, everyone in the world: religionists (v.17), the state (v.18), and the family (v.21).

Thought 2. It hurts to be the object of talk, ridicule, slander, gossip, and abuse. The believer must remember three facts.

1) It is for Christ's sake.
2) It assures salvation.
3) It assures a glorious reward (Jas.1:12).

Thought 3. Persecutors are mere men. They can oppose and cause trouble; they can even kill the body. However, several things need to be remembered.
1) Persecutors cannot kill the soul.
2) The body will soon die anyway. Why sacrifice eternity for what amounts to just a little more time?
3) The persecutors *are mere men* who shall die themselves. And then they shall face the eternal judgment of God (Heb.9:27; cp. Is.51:12).

7 (10:23) **Persecution**: the sixth counsel is to flee persecution. Note what Christ had already told His disciples.

1. If the disciple's message was rejected, he was to leave the house or the city. He was to get out quickly and quietly.

"And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet" (Mt.10:12-14).

2. He is to be as wise as a serpent in sensing and fleeing danger (Mt.10:16).

Now, for a third time Christ says: "When they persecute you...flee." There are at least three reasons why Christ instructs us to flee.

1. Christ cares for us, for our safety.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

2. Christ wants other people to hear the gospel. Some are receptive. It is better to minister to those who are receptive than to cast one's pearls (the gospel) before swine or to have the wolves destroy one's life.

3. Christ wants a witness against all rejectors. They need to know just how terrible their sin and shame, coldness and hardness, bitterness and enmity are against God. If they can see their true heart in this life, perhaps they will surrender to God and His love. If not, then they will see the witness of their persecution stand against them in the terrible day of judgment.

Thought 1. Courage and conviction for a cause is not a common thing, but it is not rare either. Some are courageous and some are committed to a cause; we often hear of such courage and commitment to causes. Note two significant points.

1) In life there are two types of commitment among men.
   ⇒ First, there is reasonable and rational commitment. Such commitment can be so strong that it will endure persecution to death.
   ⇒ Second, there is fanatical and hysterical commitment. Such commitment can be so unreasonable that it flings itself into martyrdom.

2) There are several things that make the believer's courage and commitment different and distinctive.
   ⇒ First, believers suffer for a commitment to *the truth* as revealed by God in His Son (Jn.3:16).

"For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it...this is acceptable with God" (1 Pt.2:20).

   ⇒ Second, believers attempt to escape persecution and to prevent it. They obey Christ and flee if possible. They do not court danger and recklessness.
   ⇒ Third, believers stand against persecution only when they cannot escape it. At that point, they stand firm for the Lord and His faith, trusting God to bear him through all.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).
"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

Thought 2. The genuine believer will accept martyrdom for his faith, but he does not seek it. He seeks life and freedom so that he can continue to proclaim Christ. His message is a message of life and the sanctity of life. How then can he invite death?

	E. The Messiah's Encouragement Not to Fear Persecution, 10:24-33		
1 The fact of persecution a. A warning: You are not above persecution b. A privilege: You are to share the sufferings of Christ c. A surety: You are more likely to suffer persecution than Christ was	24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?	28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.	**3 Do not fear men who kill the body** a. They cannot kill the soul b. God alone can destroy the soul & the body[DS1]
2 Do not fear persecutors a. The truth will be revealed b. The message must be preached 1) The message given by Christ: In secret 2) The message is urgent	26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.	31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. 32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.	**4 Do not fear—God cares[DS2]** a. He cares for the common sparrow b. He knows every injury to each sparrow c. He cares for every detail of your life d. He values you more than sparrows **5 The conclusion: Loyalty is essential** a. Confess Christ & He will confess you b. Deny Christ & He will deny you

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

E. The Messiah's Encouragement Not to Fear Persecution, 10:24-33

(10:24-33) **Introduction**: believers are often persecuted. They are bypassed, shunned, withdrawn from, isolated, talked about, ridiculed, mocked, considered strange, and joked about. The persecution can go even farther, involving physical abuse and murder, depending on the society and the laws under which the believer lives. This passage is a great encouragement to the believer in facing persecution. Christ said three times, "Fear not" (v.26, 28, 31). He was encouraging His disciples not to fear persecution. They must expect persecution, for He Himself was persecuted.

1. The fact of persecution (v.24-25).
2. Do not fear persecutors (v.26-27).
3. Do not fear men who kill the body (v.28).
4. Do not fear, for God cares—supremely so (v.29-31).
5. The conclusion: loyalty is essential (v.32-33).

1 (10:24-25) **Persecution**: the fact of persecution.

1. There is the warning: the disciple is not above persecution. No disciple is above his master; no servant is above his lord. The Lord suffered persecution, so will the disciple. The disciple must expect persecution, for he shall be persecuted even as his Lord was persecuted.

> **Thought 1.** It is impossible for a disciple to be above his master or for a servant to be above his lord. If our Master and Lord has suffered persecution, so shall we. Why? He is our Master and Lord; that is, we are His. We belong to Him. All that He is and all that He stands for is what we are and what we stand for. Whatever caused men to persecute Him, *the same is in us*. They will persecute us for the same thing and for the same reason they persecuted Him.

2. There is the privilege of persecution. The believer shares in the sufferings of Christ. Note the words, "It is enough." God has done enough for the believer. He has exalted the believer to an unbelievable height. The believer is now *just like his Master and his Lord*. God has accepted the believer as an *equal* to His own dear Son (Ro.8:16-17; Gal.4:4-7; Eph.1:5-6).

What does this mean? It means that persecution is a privilege. When we are persecuted we are walking in the highest and most noble company possible—the company of God's dear Son.

> **Thought 1.** Imagine! We are *called* by God's very own Son, the Master and Lord of the universe. To have God's very own Son as our Master and Lord is the highest privilege imaginable. Thus, it is a high privilege to suffer for Him. No higher call could come to a man. Christ calls us to live righteously in a world that does not want righteousness. The fact that the world reacts against us does not do away with our high calling. It only enhances our call and sets it even higher. The *evil* behavior of the world shows just how precious and how greatly to be desired our high calling is.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Ph.1:29; cp. Acts 5:41; 9:16; Ro.8:17; Heb.11:25).

Thought 3. Living righteously in a world that does not want righteousness assures persecution.

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12. See note—Mt.5:10-12.)

3. There is the surety: believers are more likely to suffer persecution than Christ was.

Some believers must expect harsh persecution just as Christ suffered (1 Pt.4:11-12). Note the words, "them of His household." We are of His household. If the Master and Lord was abused, His disciples and servants will be abused. If the world dragged the Master out to kill Him, they will drag the servant out to be killed. Whatever the world did to the Master of the house, they will do to us. Christ was persecuted terribly. They called Him Beelzebub, the god of flies and filth, the name given to describe the chief of devils (see note—Mk.3:22-23). Consider three things.

a. The terrible wickedness of some men: to be so encrusted in wickedness that they curse the Son of God.
b. The unbelievable patience and forebearance of Christ: that He would allow Himself to be cursed and abused.
c. The strong lesson for us: no matter how severe the persecution, Christ has gone before us. He is our forerunner; He has already suffered the depth of indignity and ridicule.

"For consider Him that endured such contradiction [hostility] of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3; cp. Heb.2:17-18; 4:15-16).

2 (10:26-27) **Persecution**: the first word of encouragement is this: do not fear persecutors. There are two major points in this statement of encouragement.

1. The truth shall be revealed; *the truth* will someday be known. God will reveal *the truth* in the day of judgment, if not before.

a. The cloak that the persecutors put upon their evil will be stripped off. The truth of their evil will be revealed. It will no longer be able to be disguised. Their true character will be revealed by God and shown to all who stand in that day.
b. The cloak that the world puts upon the believer's witness will be stripped away in that day. God will reveal the truth of the believer's witness. His testimony will be vindicated, and the persecution will be seen to have been but "a light affliction" in comparison to "the weight of glory" that will be ours (2 Cor.4:17).
c. The cloak that the world puts upon the gospel will be stripped away in that day. God will reveal that the gospel is true, and true in its entirety. The gospel will be vindicated. It will be seen and known to have been true.

The believer is not to fear what his persecutors say. He can rest assured: the day is coming when the truth will be known. The accusations, the talk, the dislikes, the cloaks, the disguises, the secrets of all men shall be stripped and unveiled for all to see (Ro.2:2, 6, 11, 16).

Thought 1. Note three lessons.

1) Believers will be vindicated. All the talk and abuse inflicted upon believers will be handled by Christ. The shunning, sneering, isolation, coldness, ugliness, abuse, and mistreatment by neighbors, fellow employees, church members, and carnal believers—all will be dealt with by God. Christ is emphatic; He speaks to the point: "Fear not persecutors: the truth is to be revealed" and dealt with.
2) We are not to fear the damage of our *character and reputation* by men. What is really in our hearts and lives—what we really are despite all our shortcomings and failures and sins—is known to God. He is going to deliver and vindicate us. He is going to restore our reputation and character and see to it that we "have [the] praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5). Therefore, we are not to fear persecutors.
3) Many believers are made *spectacles* by unbelievers both within the church and the world. But the day is coming when the truth is to be known.
   a) The true believer shall be exalted with a "far greater weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).
   b) The true believer shall "have [the] praise of God" Himself (1 Cor.4:5).
   c) The true believer shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of [his] Father" (Mt.13:43).

2. The message must be preached. The meaning of this verse is full of meaning for the messenger of Christ. Note the words, "What *I tell you* in darkness...What ye hear *in the ear*." Christ is saying three things.

a. Christ gives the message that He wants proclaimed. Christ says that it is "what I tell you" that the messenger is to hear and proclaim.
b. Christ gives His message in the quietness of being alone with His messenger. It is "in the darkness...in the ear" that Christ gives His message to the messenger. That is, Christ gives His message when the messenger gets all alone and draws close to the Lord in prayer and study of the Word.
c. The messenger is to proclaim the message "upon the housetops." Two things are meant by this.
   ⇒ The message is urgent. It is to be proclaimed loud and clear for all to hear.
   ⇒ The message is to be buzzed about, always shared and proclaimed. In the day of Christ, people sat upon their roofs (flat roofs) in the quiet of the evening and buzzed about with conversation. This is the picture Christ is painting for His disciples.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:60).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

3 (10:28) **Persecution**: the second word of encouragement is this: do not fear men who kill the body. We are not to fear men (persecutors), but to fear God. The reason is simple and understandable: men can kill only the body; God can destroy both body and soul "*in hell*" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28; DEEPER STUDY # 2—5:22).

There are several reasons why men are not to be feared.

1. Men can kill only the body, not the soul. Their power is limited, and they can go no further. They cannot touch a person's soul, a person's real being.
2. Men can only send us out of this world, not out of heaven. "To be with Christ...is far better" (Ph.1:23; 3:20-21).
3. Men can only separate us from this world, not from life. We have eternal life; death is not part of the experience of the believer. The believer does not *taste* death. Christ *tasted*, that is, experienced death for the believer (Heb.2:9). The believer has already passed from death to life and is in the process of living forever (Jn.5:24). He is merely transferred from this world, the physical dimension of being, into the next world, the heavenly or spiritual dimension of being (see note—2 Tim.4:18).
4. Men can only cut us off from worldly men and the earthly redeemed, not from the love of God and the saints in glory.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35; cp. v.36-39; Pr.29:25; Is.51:12).

Thought 1. Fearing men causes several things.

1) It causes a person to become disturbed within heart and mind: the loss of peace.
2) It causes a person to lose his fervor and his sense of commitment.
3) It causes a person to be sidetracked and to give up what he knows to be God's will: the loss of mission and meaning and purpose.

Thought 2. There are two primary reasons why we should not fear men and persecution.

1) God has given us a great and glorious cause: to reach men for Christ. Very practically, some men do not want to be reached; therefore, they rebel and react and become our persecutors. But some do want to be saved. The fact that they are saved to live forever is so glorious that it is worth whatever suffering we have to bear.
2) God has given us a great hope (see thoughts—Mt.10:26-27).

Thought 3. There is a remedy to keep us from fearing men: God. God is to be feared (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28).

1) God can destroy us, both body and soul, and put both "in hell" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22). The word "destroy" does not mean that our body and soul would cease to exist but that they would live a worthless existence—be ruined and suffer in ruin forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28).
2) Christ was speaking to believers in this passage. God is to be feared much more and much sooner than men. The terror of men pales into insignificance in comparison to God's terror. Imagine this one fact alone: man's terror is but for a short time, but God's terror is *forever*. It never ends. The point is clear: before caving in to man's persecution, we need to remember the "fear of God."
3) The destruction of the soul comes from God, not from man. The power to destroy the soul is God's power alone. How fearful we need to be of God, even we who are believers! (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28.)

"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pt.4:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(10:28) **Destroy** (apoleia): loss of one's *well-being* (not loss of one's being), waste, ruin, worthless existence. "To destroy both body and soul in hell" does not mean that a person would cease to exist, but that he would live a worthless existence. It means the loss of a person's well-being, not his being. It means that he would suffer waste and ruin forever and ever.

4 (10:29-31) **Persecution**: the third word of encouragement is this: do not fear, for God cares. Christ is clear: if God cares for the common sparrow, how much more He cares for man! He cares for every event, every detail, even the most minute matter in a man's life. Therefore, there is no need to fear.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron" (Ps.115:12).

Thought 1. There is something very precious here, yet there is a revelation of power as well.

1) There is a preciousness in the thought that every sparrow—no matter how common or forgotten or ignored—is very dear to God.

2) There is power and care in that God knows every single sparrow on the earth. Not a single sparrow falls that He is unaware of. The idea is that the injury to the sparrow causes pain and hurt which He feels.

Thought 2. Christ is pointing out five powerful yet precious facts.
1) God's providence: God sees, knows, cares and oversees all the events and happenings on earth—just as He knows all about the little sparrow that is so common and forgotten.
2) God's knowledge (omniscience): God knows every little happening and all that is, even to the most minute detail. He knows when a single sparrow falls to the ground. He knows every hair of a person's head, even the number of hairs.
3) God's power (omnipotence): God is able to control the persecution and events that happen to the believer, no matter how detailed and minute. He can control and work them out for good to such an extent that there is no need for the believer to fear.
4) God's love and care: God cares about every hurt inflicted upon the believer by persecutors, even to the most minute injury and hurt. The believer is not to fear but to put His trust in the love and care of God (1 Pt.5:7).
5) God's purpose: God is able to take all the injuries and pain inflicted by the sin and shame of men and work them all out for the good of the believer. He is able to give purpose, meaning and significance to it all (Ro.8:28f). Therefore the believer is not to fear.

Thought 3. The believer is of much more value than many sparrows, for he is God's adopted son (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.4:5-6). Just as God has His eye on the sparrow, He has His watchful eye on His "dear children" (Eph.5:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(10:29) **Fear** (phobos; verb is phobeo): fear, dread, terror. In relation to God, it means to be afraid; to show reverence, to sense a reverential fear; to stand in awe because of a holy fear. It means we fear God because He is God: holy, righteous, pure, just. It means that we fear and stand in awe and reverence of God who shall reveal His holiness and execute His justice in some future day of judgment.

5 (10:32-33) **Persecution**: the conclusion is that loyalty is essential. Note a crucial point: Christ is talking about confessing Him in the most difficult moment imaginable—while being persecuted. We are sometimes called upon to confess Christ by those who reproach, sneer, mock, curse, question, slander, abuse, and avoid us because of our witness for Christ.

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:22-23).

Thought 1. Note three double things here.
1) There is a double confession: our confession of Christ before men, and the Lord's confession of us before His Father.
2) There is a double day of glory: the Lord's day of glory when He hears us confess His name before men, and our day of glory when we hear Him confess our name before His Father.
3) There is a double privilege: our privilege in confessing the Lord before men, and the Lord's privilege in confessing us before His Father.

Thought 2. Christ can be denied in three ways:
1) We can deny Christ by word. Our words either confess or deny Christ. Our ordinary conversation either witnesses for Christ and righteousness or for evil and unrighteousness. Our words either confess or deny that Christ is our Lord.
2) We can deny Christ by act. How we behave either confesses or denies Christ. We are not to be conformed to the world but transformed by the renewing of our mind (Ro.12:1-2; cp. 2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16).
3) We can deny Christ by silence. Failing to speak up for Christ to protest evil denies Christ. Silence is probably the greatest denial of Christ committed by believers.

Thought 3. Denying Christ is the most dangerous thing we can do. Why?
1) Because there is a day coming when we will need Christ to confess us before God.
2) Because Christ has already foretold what He will do if we deny Him: He will deny us. He will tell the truth—He never knew us (Mt.7:23; 25:41).

	F. The Cost of Being the Lord's Disciple, 10:34-42	me.	worthy vs. unworthy
1 Jesus' purpose a. Not to send peace b. To send a sword	34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.	39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.	**4 Illustration 3: A person's life** a. Demand: Give up life*DSI* b. Reward: Lose life vs. find life
2 Illustration 1: A person's family a. The fact: Christ sets the believer against his family	35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.	40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.	**5 Illustration 4: Welcoming & ministering to others** a. Demand: Welcome a bel. & minister to him b. Reward: A reciprocal or equal reward 1) The presence of Christ & of God, (v.40)
	36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.	41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a propeht's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.	2) The reciprocal or equal reward
b. The demand: Must love Christ supremely c. The reward: Counted worthy vs. unworthy	37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.	42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.	3) Strongly asserted: The smallest ministry will not lose its reward
3 Illustration 2: The cross a. Demand: Die—follow b. Reward: Counted	38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of		

DIVISION VI

THE MESSIAH'S MESSENGERS AND THEIR MISSION, 9:35-10:42

F. The Cost of Being the Lord's Disciple, 10:34-42

(10:34-42) **Introduction**: in this passage Jesus is exact and uncompromising. He lays some heavy demands upon His disciples. He states clearly what it will cost a person to be His disciple, and He describes the cost by using four illustrations.

1. Jesus' purpose (v.34).
2. Illustration 1: a person's family (v.35-37).
3. Illustration 2: the cross (v.38).
4. Illustration 3: a person's life (v.39).
5. Illustration 4: welcoming and ministering to others (v.40-42).

1 (10:34) **Christ, Purpose—Spiritual Struggle**: Jesus' purpose. Jesus says He did not come to send peace on earth, but a sword. What did He mean? (Cp.Jn.16:33.)

1. He did not come to give His approval or sanction to the physical corruption and decay of the earth. The earth and all that is therein ages, deteriorates, and dies. It all wastes away. Jesus did not come to give God's peace or blessing upon a world that dies. What He came to do was to bring a sword to earth. He came to war against aging and decay and death. He came to slash out, cut away, and put to death the physical dimension of being that condemns everything to decay and death.
2. He did not come to give His approval to the sin and evil of the earth. He could never give God's peace or blessing to a world that is so full of cursing and rebellion against God and so full of selfishness and division between men. He came to bring a sword to earth: to war against sin and evil and to destroy all the evil that is both within and without man.

Jesus' presence automatically causes division. This is because the believer's godly and divine nature is so completely opposite from his fallen and Adamic nature. As certain persons heed the call of Jesus, becoming one with Him and the way of righteousness, there is suddenly a division both within and without.

a. *Within* there is division between his old fallen, Adamic nature and his new divine nature (cp. 2 Cor.5:17; Eph.4:22f; Col.3:8-10; Gal.5:13-17, esp. 16-17).
b. *Without* there is a division between Him and those who choose to reject Jesus and to follow the way of darkness (see outline and notes—Mt.5:10-12).

The division often occurs among family members and friends when one person accepts Jesus and the other person does not. The saved person becomes a totally new creature, born of God with new ideals and a righteous behavior; but the unsaved family member or friend remains in darkness, continuing to desire the things which please his flesh (see note 5 and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.10:21).

Thought 1. The world is full of hurt, pain, and suffering—not peace. The truth cannot be denied. However, we can be of good cheer, for Christ has overcome the world.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

Thought 2. Christ came to give the sword of His Word to the world. His Word, sharper than any two-edged sword, pierces the soul and spirit of a person, discerning the thoughts and intents of his heart. It convicts the person to become a follower of God and His righteousness (cp. Heb.4:12).

2 (10:35-37) **Family—Division**: the first illustration Jesus used is that of a person's family. The believer is to note three things about his family.

1. First, Jesus sets the believer against his family. It is important to see that it is Jesus who causes the division. Jesus calls a person out of the world and separates him from the world so that he can go about correcting the evil of the world. If a family member continues to live in sin and to walk ever onward toward the grave without turning to God, two things usually happen.
   a. The believer struggles to save his loved one, no matter what opposition he may face.
   b. The family member rebels against the righteousness and efforts of the believer.

> **"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three" (Lk.12:51-52).**

Thought 1. The believer is called to a life of righteousness and to a warfare against sin and evil. If a member of his family is engaged on the side of sin and evil, there is *a natural conflict* between the believer and the family member.

1) The family member is still of the earth, seeking the pleasures and possessions of the world, and still living primarily to satisfy his earthly desires. He represses and subdues the thought of God so that he can pursue his own earthly desires.
2) The believer is of the earth, but he is also of heaven. He is physical and spiritual, and he is living primarily for God and His righteousness, living to reach men with the glorious gospel of Christ.

   The two natures differ drastically. They are diametrically opposed to one another. The person of the world talks primarily about the world and lives for the world. The person of the spirit makes God the primary force of his life: talking about and living for God and His righteousness.

Thought 2. Jesus is honest with man. He means business. He *came*, and He intends for His purpose to achieve its end even if it causes division within a family. Those who will be saved and who stand for righteousness will be saved by Christ even at the expense of family unity.

Thought 3. The worst experience for the messenger of God is for his "foes to be they of his own household" (v.36). There is no experience so bitter as to have one's own family oppose and be counted among the persecutors.

2. Second, Jesus demands supreme love. Note the words, "more than me." Believers are to love their families, but they are to love God more; He is to be first and foremost. Their first loyalty is to be to God. Two terrible things happen when a family is put before God.
   a. Families cannot be what they should be without God. No family can reach its full potential without God. Without God a family will lack spiritual growth and strength, conviction and commitment, confidence and assurance, purpose and meaning for all eternity. There will be no prospect and no hope of eternal life, no assurance of anything beyond this life.
   b. Families cannot be looked after and overseen by God unless God is given His rightful place in the family. If the family takes control over its own life, ignoring God and His control, then what happens to the family is in its own hands. God is put off to the side, excluded, and shut out. He is given no voice in the life of the family. The family is left all to itself. All kinds of trouble can and usually does follow. There is a lack of spiritual strength to face the trials and crises that confront the family during its life together.

The point is this: we must love God supremely, putting Him before all others, even before our families. When we do, our families are assured of being everything they should be and of being looked after and cared for by God (Mt.6:33). Therefore, a man's decision to follow Christ, no matter the sacrifice to his family, is a wise decision; in fact, it is the only reasonable decision (Ro.12:1-2).

Thought 1. Jesus demands first love and first loyalty (see outline and notes—Mt.8:18-22).

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Mt.22:37-38; cp. Mk.12:28-30; Lk.10:27).**

Thought 2. Sometimes a man loves his family so much that he turns from Christ, choosing his family over Christ. There is usually one of two reasons for this decision.

1) The opposition against his following Christ is too strong. The division within the family is too deep (see thoughts—Mt.10:21).

2) The sacrifice demanded is too great. It may be that God is calling the man to some ministry, to some field of service, to some act of giving; but he decides the financial and emotional strain would be too much. He decides that God is demanding too much of a sacrifice for his family.

When we allow our families to keep us from serving God and from doing what we should, we are making our families the supreme love of our lives. We are worshipping them, looking after them and their welfare first instead of worshipping and putting God first. When we put our families first, we are allowing our families to become our idols.

3. Third, Jesus warns the believer that he shall either be counted worthy or unworthy of Him.
   a. There is a great reward for loving Christ supremely. If we count Christ worthy of our first love, He will count us worthy of Him. We are assured: we shall receive *the great salvation* in Him (cp. Mt.10:32).
   b. There is a terrible loss for not loving Christ supremely. If we love our family more than Christ, He will count us unworthy of Him. We are assured that we shall not receive the great salvation in Him (cp.10:Mt.33).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

Thought 1. A person's family is to be the strongest and most precious relationship among human beings. A person is to love his family as much as he loves any others on earth. However, there is one relationship that is to supersede his relationship with his family: that is his relationship to Jesus Christ. He is to love Christ supremely, counting Him more worthy than all, even more worthy than his own family. There are at least three reasons why Christ is to be counted more worthy.

1) Christ is the Supreme Being of the universe. He is the Creator, Sustainer, and Protector of life throughout the course of our walk upon earth. Our time and our care are in His hands. Our families can sustain and protect us only to a certain point and only for a short time. They do not control life, but Christ can. He is the Supreme Being of the universe; therefore, He is the only One who is worthy of our supreme love.
2) Christ is the Supreme Savior. He is the Giver and Provider of life, both abundant and eternal life. Our families can bring some happiness and pleasure to our lives, and they can protect us to some degree in this life—but not ultimately. Accidents and disease are beyond their power. They can save us in only a few situations and only for a brief time. Christ is the Supreme Savior; therefore, He alone is worthy of our supreme love.
3) With Christ we have the Supreme relationship. Christ is totally unselfish and He loves perfectly. Of course, we are not completely unselfish nor do we love perfectly, but to have the privilege of being loved perfectly and treated completely unselfishly (all the time) is the height of relationships (Jn.3:16; Mt.7:25-34).

3 (10:38) **Cross—Self-Denial**: the second illustration Christ used is that of the cross.

1. Christ again made a strong demand. Note the words "He that taketh not *his cross*." Every man has "*his cross*." The cross is the symbol of death and of execution. Every man must die to self day by day. He must count himself dead to sin and follow after Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23 for complete discussion.)

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt.16:24).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

2. The reward is again being counted either worthy or unworthy of Christ. If we do not put ourselves to death, we are not worthy of Christ. He shall deny us.

Thought 1. What Christ says is strong. A man must die to self, sacrificing his will, ambition, and desires. Whatever it is that a person wants—comfort, ease, wealth, fame, power, family—all must be placed behind Christ and His will.

4 (10:39) **Self-Denial**: the third illustration Jesus used is that of a person's life.

1. Jesus demands a person's life. Note the unique way He words this.
   a. "He that findeth his life shall lose it." The phrase "finding one's life" means that a person seeks his own pleasure and passions in life. It is a selfish life, finding out what pleases self and going after it. It is heaping and hoarding and doing as self wills. It is finding out what gives self *life* and pleasure on this earth and doing it.

But there is something wrong with this. It is selfish. We live in a sinful and evil world: a world of pain and hurt, of starvation and disease, of crime and injury, of accident and wrong-doing, of greed and selfishness, of war and death. The one thing that is needed by all is to deny self: to commit and to lose our lives in Christ, which is to combat evil and to deliver a dying world to eternal life.

b. "He that loseth his life...shall find it." The phrase "loseth one's life" means that a person seeks to lose his life on this earth in order to find God. It means that a person gives up the right to order his own life, and he lets Christ control his life. It means that a person's pursuit must be all consuming, that a person diligently seeks after God. When a person is consumed with finding God, the things of the world just fade away. But the person who refuses to relinquish this right to the Lord misses out on the life God purposed for him. He fails to experience the fulfillment of completing his mission on earth, whereas the person who gives the Lord the right to order his life experiences real life. He experiences that deep sense of fulfillment, satisfaction, and pleasure with his life—even in the face of difficulties and hardships. In addition, Christ says that he will find life, both abundant and eternal.

2. The reward is *losing* life vs. *finding* life. Life, the very thing which a person seeks, is found only in Christ. If a person never finds Christ or if he rejects Christ, he loses life. If he denies himself and follows Christ, he finds life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:39).

Thought 1. A person must not search for his life on this earth. If he finds life on this earth, he will lose his life. Why? Because all that is on this earth is corruptible: aging, decaying, deteriorating, dying. Nothing on this earth lasts. This fact clearly says something: life cannot be found on this earth; only death can be found.

Thought 2. What men call life is not real life.

⇒ The flesh, with all its goose pimples and chills and butterflies, is not life.
⇒ Wealth, with all the things it can purchase, is not life.
⇒ Recognition and fame, with all the ego it can boost, is not life.
⇒ Power, with all the rights and pomp it can give, is not life.
⇒ Pride, with all the self image it can build, is not life.

All this and all else on the earth fades and passes away. It just does not last. How can life, real life, be something that ends so quickly and leaves one so empty?

Thought 3. The world and so many in the world are desperately in need. Every person should therefore lose his life in serving God and his fellow man. One thing is sure: a person should not *hoard life*, seeking only to satisfy his own pleasures and desires in life.

Thought 4. The person who tries to save his own life and the life of his family will lose his life. Denying Christ or putting something before Christ is not the way to save anything, much less one's own life.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:39) **Life—Eternal Life**: real life is found only by giving up one's life to Jesus. The person who refuses to relinquish this right to the Lord Jesus misses out on the life God intended for him. He fails to experience the fulfillment of completing his mission on earth, whereas the person who gives the Lord the right to order his life experiences real life. He experiences that deep sense of fulfillment, satisfaction, and pleasure with his life—even in the face of difficulties and hardships. In addition, he is given that special quality of life called eternal life.

5 (10:40-42) **Receiving Others**: the fourth illustration Jesus used is that of welcoming and ministering.

1. Christ demands that we welcome and minister to all His servants. Imagine this! The person who ministers to God's messenger is said to minister to the following...

- To Christ Himself (v.40).
- To God the Father (v.40).
- To a prophet (v.41).
- To a righteous man (v.41).
- To a little one (v.42).

"And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you" (Mt.10:11-13).

"And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me" (Mt.18:5).

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt.25:40).

"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Lk.10:16).

2. The reward is astounding. The person who welcomes and receives God's servant shall receive a reciprocal or an equal reward.

a. The person who welcomes and ministers shall receive the presence of Christ and of God Himself. He reflects honor upon the Lord and even upon God Himself. In fact, Jesus says that welcoming and ministering to others is the same as entertaining Him and His Father (Mt.10:40).

b. The person who welcomes and ministers shall receive a reciprocal or an equal reward with God's servant. Perhaps a person cannot be a prophet or a shining example of a righteous man, but he can receive the reward of both. How? By simply welcoming and supporting and caring for God's servant. This is an astounding truth: the person actually shares in the work of God's messenger when he receives and helps him. Christ puts an enormous value on how his messenger is received and treated. If the messenger is welcomed, Christ will give an equal reward for the kindness and care shown to his messenger. (What a lesson for churches as to how they receive and trust their ministers!)

c. Christ declares that the smallest ministry will not lose its reward. A person will be rewarded for the smallest ministry done for God's messenger. Just giving a cup of water to a messenger is extremely significant to God. It causes God to say emphatically that a person will be rewarded for such an act. The person needs to know that he is ministering to someone who is very, very dear to God. Christ calls His messengers "little ones," which is a term of endearment.

> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile" (Ro.2:10).**
>
> **"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (Eph.6:8).**
>
> **"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col.3:24).**

Thought 1. There is great confidence and assurance here for the messenger of God. It is implied that some *will* receive and welcome the messenger of the Lord. There will be some who will open their hearts and homes to him, and they will receive his message.

	CHAPTER 11		
	VII. THE MESSIAH'S VINDICATION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP, 11:1-30		
	A. The Assurance: Given to A Questioning Disciple, John the Baptist, 11:1-6 (Lk.7:18-23)		
1 Jesus ended the commissioning of His disciples a. He sent them out b. He began to minister again—alone	And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.	in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, 3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: 5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.	**3 Jesus' assurance: He was beyond question the Messiah** a. He spoke as Messiah b. He demonstrated the power & works of the Messiah c. He fulfilled prophecies of the Messiah[DS1] d. He preached the gospel of the Messiah e. He promised both the blessing and judgment of the Messiah[DS2]
2 John's perplexity: Pictured a stern Messiah a. Jesus' works were works of love b. John questioned: Expected a Messiah of judgment, not love	2 Now when John had heard		

DIVISION VII

THE MESSIAH'S VINDICATION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP, 11:1-30

A. The Assurance: Given to a Questioning Disciple, John the Baptist, 11:1-6

(11:1-6) **Introduction**: John heard about the works of Christ. He had predicted the coming of the Messiah just as the prophets of old had predicted. In his mind, the Messiah was coming to baptize people with the Spirit of God and with fire (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11, note—Lk.7:21-23). Christ had appeared upon the scene and was baptizing people with the Spirit of God, and the people were flocking around Him as though He were the Messiah. But He was doing nothing about baptizing people with fire, the messianic fire of judgment. To John's mind, Christ was fulfilling only half of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; note—11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—Mt.22:42; Lk.7:21-23.) John was confused. Was Jesus really the Messiah? He had to know. His whole life had been given over to the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. He sent two disciples to ask, and Jesus used the opportunity to vindicate His Messiahship.

1. Jesus ended the commissioning of His disciples (v.1).
2. John's perplexity: he pictured a stern Messiah (v.2-3).
3. Jesus' assurance: He was beyond question the Messiah (v.4-6).

1 (11:1) **Jesus Christ, Ministry**: Jesus ended the commissioning of His disciples. The idea is that Jesus sent them out alone without His going along. They were to learn to minister, and the way they were to learn was through practical experience. They were to learn while they were actually out ministering. Note that Jesus began to minister again all alone. The present event happened to Him while He was alone.

2 (11:2-3) **John the Baptist**: John's perplexity was caused by his picture of a stern Messiah. John was in prison, and he heard about the works of Christ. Note two points.

1. What John had heard was that the works of Christ were works of love. He knew that the Messiah was to baptize with both the Spirit and fire—the Messianic fire of judgment. He had heard that Jesus was doing the loving works of the Spirit and that people were mobilizing around Him in huge throngs, but he had heard nothing about the fire of Messianic judgment. It seemed that Jesus was fulfilling only half of the Messianic prophecies. He was perplexed and questioning, so he sent two emissaries to Jesus for an answer. Note: despite John's puzzlement and questioning, he still believed in the truth.
   - ⇒ He believed in the promises of Scripture concerning the Messiah: "Art thou He?" (cp. Ps.118:26).
   - ⇒ He was committed to seek after God's Messiah: "Do we look for another?"
   - ⇒ He was willing to have his faith confirmed in Jesus as the true Messiah. The fact that he asked the questions shows this.
2. John was questioning Jesus' Messiahship. John was the one who sent two of his disciples to question Jesus (v.2), and it was *to John* that Jesus sent His answer (v.4). John wondered if Jesus were the true Messiah. There were several reasons for his questioning Jesus.
   a. John was perplexed. His idea of the Messiah did not match what Jesus was doing. Jesus was not mobilizing people into a great army to free Israel from Roman domination (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). He was not the stern Messiah pictured by the prophets (see note—Lk.7:21-23).
   b. John was in prison. He expected to be involved in the overthrow of the Roman conquerors and in the establishment of Israel as a free nation, yet he was languishing in prison. He could not understand why the Messiah did not free him. Had he not been the prominent forerunner for the expected Messiah?
   c. John needed assurance. He needed his faith strengthened. The saints of the Scriptures were mere men with passions like we experience. They, too, needed the Lord to occasionally confirm their faith. Even the

strongest sometimes need the word and presence of the Lord in a special way. Picture John's concept of the Messiah and his languishing in prison, and his need is clearly understood.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15-16).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jas.1:5).

Thought 1. Note several significant lessons.

1) John did not fully understand Jesus, and to be honest, we all lack understanding; yet what is needed is for us to do what John did:
   - ⇒ He trusted Christ anyway.
   - ⇒ He committed his life to proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah and continued to proclaim the message even though he did not fully understand.
   - ⇒ He sought answers to what he did not understand.
   - ⇒ He did not let his questions destroy his faith.
2) John believed the Scripture and looked for the Messiah's first coming. We are to believe the Scriptures: He has come and He is coming again (Jn.14:2-3; 1 Th.4:13f; Tit.2:12-13).
3) We should not fear nor be ashamed because we may not understand or have questions about Jesus. In fact, it is good to make absolutely sure in all matters concerning our salvation. We should seek and ask unashamedly (Jas.1:5).
4) Note a critical fact: John was not weary in looking for the Messiah. He said he would keep on looking if Jesus were not the Messiah. We must not become weary and doubting because He has not yet returned (cp. 2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-18).
5) John's questioning began when he was in prison facing great trouble and trial. It is sometimes difficult to understand why we have to go through so much trouble, especially some of us. We need to approach Christ in those times, coming to Him in His Word and in prayer (1 Pt.4:11-12; Jas.1:5; Is.1:18).
6) John had questions to arise in his mind. Even the strongest are not always strong no matter who they are (Mt.26:36-46, 69-75; Gal.2:11f). Severe trials are often a great strain upon our faith. In such times, we need a very special presence of the Lord; we need His strength and assurance.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you....But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (1 Pt.5:7, 10).

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor.1:3-4).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).

3 (11:4-6) **Messiahship—Jesus Christ, Works**: Jesus' assurance to John was that He was beyond question the Messiah. Jesus gave five assurances to John.

1. Jesus spoke as the Messiah. His words and the power of His message were evidences that Jesus was the Messiah. There were no greater words and no greater lessons than the words and the lessons Christ taught. He is recognized as one of the greatest, if not the greatest, teacher of all times. This is one of the proofs that He is beyond question the Messiah.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mk.13:31).

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Lk.4:32).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (Jn.7:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

Thought 1. Jesus spoke as one having authority: He spoke, taught, and preached as the Messiah (see outline and notes—Mt.7:28-29; cp. Jn.14:10).

2. Jesus demonstrated the power and works of the Messiah. Jesus was saying that His works and concern (love) were the works and concern predicted for the Messiah, and both are unlimited.
   a. He gave sight to the blind. The blind saw physically and spiritually. They not only knew the truth of the world but of God as well.
   b. He made the lame to walk. He caused men to walk physically and spiritually. They moved strongly about, serving both God and man.
   c. He cleansed the lepers. He made them pure physically and spiritually. They were accepted both by men and God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:1-4).
   d. He opened the ears of the deaf. He caused the deaf to hear physically and spiritually. They could hear both the voice of men and of God.
   e. He raised the dead to life. They were given life again physically and spiritually. Whereas they had been dead, they now walked as new creatures before men and God.
   f. He preached the gospel to the poor. They who had been so neglected and possessed so little were now receiving the good news of salvation from God Himself.

> **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:38).**
>
> **"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).**
>
> **"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).**
>
> **"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" (Acts 2:22).**

Thought 1. Note that Christ did not just profess to be the Messiah, He proved it (Jn.14:10-11). He proved it by ministering to people *in the power of God*. He showed that God had sent Him to demonstrate two things:
1) That God is (exists) and that He is sovereign. He is above and beyond all, and He has the power to override the laws of nature.
2) That God loves man and has provided a way for man to be saved and to live forever.

Every time Jesus ministered and healed a person, He demonstrated both things: the sovereign power and the great love of God.

Thought 2. Note a critical point. Christ's miracles are the seal of God: He is God's Son, the Messiah, just who He claims to be. His works are beyond question the works of God (Jn.5:36; 10:25f, 32, 37-38; 14:11).

3. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.3:23-38 for most of the verses dealing with the prophecies and fulfillment).

Thought 1. The works of Christ agree with the works predicted for the Messiah. No man has to wait any longer for his Savior and Deliverer.

4. Jesus preached the gospel of the Messiah. There is a much needed lesson here. Jesus went to the poor. He neither avoided nor neglected anyone, no matter their social status.
   a. This is a sign of the enormous compassion and mercy of God: that His Son would go to those so often overlooked, neglected, and despised as lazy and shiftless. (Throughout the world, some men undoubtedly are lazy and shiftless, but most certainly are not.)
   b. The poor have need. The person who senses need turns to Christ much sooner than the person who senses no need. Being self-sufficient and independent can be good in achieving goals, but when facing God, they are damning and lead to eternal doom. Only those who confess their need for God's care can expect to have God care for them and save them.
   c. This is a fulfillment of prophecy: that the Messiah would minister especially to the poor (Ps.72:2, 4, 12-13; Zech.11:11).

> **"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Mt.4:23).**

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Mt.9:35).

Thought 1. Christ preached the gospel to everyone who would listen, no matter what their social status or position.

5. Jesus promised both the blessing and judgment of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.11:6). Note the two facets of what Jesus promised—the two areas of work predicted about the Messiah.

a. The area of blessing, of the Spirit, of salvation, of God's care and love for people. This is the area Christ covered in this passage. Today is the day of blessing and of salvation (Mt.11:4-5).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

b. The area of fire, of wrath, of judgment. The Messiah is to fulfill His judgment of fire when He returns (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—Mt.22:42; Lk.7:21-23).

"But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone" (Ro.9:31-32).

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor.1:23).

"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Pt.2:8).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pt.3:7).

Thought 1. Note three lessons.

1) Jesus encouraged John not to be offended by Him. He encourages all of us not to be offended by Him but to believe and trust that He is "of a truth, the Son of God," the Messiah.
2) Many are offended by Christ:
   ⇒ by the idea and belief of miracles
   ⇒ by His death, the shedding of His blood
   ⇒ by His incarnation and virgin birth
   ⇒ by His demand for self-denial and strict behavior

   Many are unable to understand the demands of Christ and they question just as John did, but they fail to follow through like John did. They fail to make a total commitment despite questions.
3) Christ says one of two judgments awaits us. (1) The judgment of blessing, or (2) the judgment of being offended. He is the true Messiah who is to execute both. Right now is the day of blessing and of the Spirit. When He returns, that will be the day of fire and judgment.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:5) **Prophecy, Fulfilled**: Jesus was referring to Scripture here. He was telling John that He was fulfilling the predictions of the prophets (Is.35:5-6; 61:1-2; cp. Ps.72:2; 146:8; Zech.11:11). Note, however, that Jesus stressed the personal ministry and *not the political*. He omitted the phrases of Is. 61:1 that could be interpreted that He was a political leader: "proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons." He needed to get John's attention away from the wrong concept of the Messiah to the true concept. He was reaching out in the power of the Spirit to individuals, saving and restoring them, not reaching out to mobilize people for the deliverance of Israel from Roman enslavement.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(11:6) **Messiah, Judgment**: Jesus was saying that the Messianic blessing and judgment were coming. Today is the day of salvation, the day of Messianic blessing. Tomorrow will be the day of Messianic fire, the day of judgment against all those who are offended in Christ. The Messianic fire of judgment was John's concern. He did not see Christ's judging the world. But Christ assured John: "Blessing is coming; and *judgment is coming*. Do not be offended because you do not understand everything about me." (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; note—11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—Mt.22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)

	B. The Reminder: Given to a Forgetful & Fickle People, 11:7-15 (Lk.7:24-28)	messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.	**of the true King**
		11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a	**6 John was the greatest of natural men, yet not as great as the least in the Kingdom of Heaven**
1 People wondered about John's questioning	7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John,	greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.	
2 John was not a wavering reed but a man firm in his conviction	What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?	12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth	**7 John launched a violent overthrow of the kingdom**
3 John was not a man of soft raiment, but a man of discipline & self-denial	8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.	violence, and the violent take it by force.	
		13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.	**8 John was the last of an age, the age predicting the Messiah**
4 John was a prophet & more	9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.	14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.	**9 John was the promised Elijah, the one to precede the Messiah**
5 John was the Messiah's forerunner, the herald	10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my	15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.	**10 The conclusion: A person must hear**

DIVISION VII

THE MESSIAH'S VINDICATION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP, 11:1-30

B. The Reminder: Given to a Forgetful and Fickle People, 11:7-15

(11:7-15) **Introduction**: John had just questioned if Jesus were the true Messiah (see outline and notes—Mt.11:1-6). The questions had been asked in the presence of all. Some thought John was wavering in his faith, that he was weak and inconsistent.

If the people were allowed to think this, they would soon question if John were the real prophet who was to pave the way for the Messiah. Then following upon the heels of this question would be the questioning of Jesus: Was He the true Messiah? If this kind of talk and questioning had begun, it would have affected not only the crowd but also those who already believed. It would have been devastating to the Lord's mission. Note how fickle people really are and how easily people forget a prophet's real calling and pick up the news of his weak moments.

What Jesus did was reprimand the crowd. He vindicated John and his mission, reminding the forgetful and fickle that John was the forerunner, and He claimed that He was the true Messiah.

1. People wondered about John's questioning (v.7).
2. John was not a wavering reed but a man firm in his convictions (v.7).
3. John was not a man of soft raiment, but a man disciplined and self-denying (v.8).
4. John was a prophet and more (v.9).
5. John was the Messiah's forerunner, the herald of the true King (v.10).
6. John was the greatest of natural men, yet not as great as the least in the Kingdom of Heaven (v.11).
7. John launched a violent overthrow of the kingdom (v.12).
8. John was the last of an age, the age predicting the Messiah (v.13).
9. John was the promised Elijah, the one to precede the Messiah (v.14).
10. The conclusion: a person must hear (v.15).

1 (11:7) **Fickleness**: the people wondered about John's questioning (see note—Mt.11:7-15).

Thought 1. People can turn so quickly. All the good that a person is and has done can be forgotten so easily. John's experience perfectly illustrates the fickleness of people.

> **"He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light" (Jn.5:35).**

2 (11:7) **John the Baptist**: John was not a wavering reed but a man firm in his convictions. Questioning does not necessarily mean that a person is wavering in his beliefs or behavior. John was not a vacillator, a reed swaying with the winds of change. He did not sway nor weaken because of the frown and terror of Herod. He was not a man who preached with force when he had the applause of men and weakened when he had the frown of men. He was God's servant, and he knew it. He served God faithfully in His calling despite having to deal with some questions.

Despite his questioning John was still…

- believing in the Messiah
- strong in spirit
- consistent in his behavior.

As stated, John was unwavering in dealing with the problems and temptations that arose in his life: the recognition and praise of the crowds, the rage and imprisonment of Herod, the thought that Jesus was perhaps a mistaken Messiah. Despite all, John was unwavering. He held fast to two things.

⇒ He held firm to his faith in God and in God's Messiah.

⇒ He held firm to his call:

"I am not the Christ, but...I am sent before Him" (Jn.3:28 cp. Jn.1:20).

Thought 1. John did not sway with every breeze of change or trial or opposition or crowd. He stood firm in his own calling. Applause, frowns, statements of approval and disapproval, of appreciation and disagreements—so much affects too many of us and too much of our work. We must learn and learn quickly that no matter what, we are to go on for Christ and keep on going.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein" (Heb.13:9).

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:6).

3 (11:8) **John the Baptist**: John was not a man of soft raiment but a man of discipline and self-denial. John was dead to the world and its fame and power and ease. He was not worldly nor soft but disciplined and self-denying. He was not a man who was out to save what he had nor to save himself. He was not crumbling under the weight of opposition as a soft and materialistic-minded person would be. He was not a compromiser. John was a man sent by God to proclaim the truth, and he proclaimed it no matter the cost. Christ was saying, "When you look at John, you do not see a man of the world with the soft raiments of the world on his mind, but you see an ambassador for God." What a lesson on self-denial and faithfulness in the face of opposition!

Thought 1. A life of discipline and self-denial better prepares us to stand against all trials. If we live a life for God, denying ourselves, then...

- trials will work patience (endurance)
- endurance will work experience
- experience will work hope, and
- hope will not shame us (Ro.5:3-5)

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

4 (11:9) **John the Baptist**: John was a prophet and more. A prophet is a *foreteller*, a proclaimer of God's message (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Acts 11:27; 1 Cor.14:3). The message may deal with the past, present, or future. Note several things about the prophet:

⇒ He is chosen by God.

⇒ He is chosen to proclaim the message of God.

⇒ He is a man who must be trustworthy—one who will be faithful to his mission and courageous in proclaiming God's Word (1 Tim.1:12).

John was such a man. He was a prophet, but note: Jesus said that John was more than a prophet. What does this mean? Very simply, his message included more than the message of the other prophets. His message was the heralding, the actual proclamation that the Messiah had come. In this, John excelled above all the other prophets. They only *foresaw* the Messiah's coming, but John *saw* Him come. Therefore, it was his responsibility to proclaim Christ's coming.

Note that John's primacy over the other prophets had to do with duty and responsibility and not with privilege. Some are called by God to excel and to take the lead in responsibility. And note: it is duty and accountability, not privilege. What a lesson on the *need for humility and fear*—fear lest we come short!

Thought 1. John was more than a prophet: he was the subject of prophecy as well as the messenger of it.

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Is.40:3).

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.3:1).

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mt.3:1-3).

5 (11:10) **John the Baptist**: John was the Messiah's forerunner, the herald of the true King (cp. Is.40:3; Mal.3:1; Mt.3:1-3). Note this: when God chose a person to run ahead and herald the coming of the Messiah, He did not choose a King or any other person of power or fame. He chose *a simple man* and called him *to preach* the coming of the Messiah. This conveyed a powerful message: God's kingdom is not based on earthly pomp or earthly power. It is based on God's Spirit and God's power. It was not brought about by man's hands but by the hand of God. Thus, God's kingdom is a lasting, eternal kingdom, not a temporary kingdom that eventually will pass away.

Thought 1. Christ applied this prophecy to Himself; that is, He *claimed to be the Messiah* before whom John the Baptist ran and prepared the way (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.1:3). Note two things.

1) He and John were the fulfillment of prophecy. He was the Messiah and John was the forerunner who prepares the way by proclaiming His coming.
2) All believers, preachers and laymen alike, are to be preparing the way of the Lord. How? By proclaiming (1) that He has come, and (2) that He is coming again. Remember: He came the first time, so He will come the second time.

6 (11:11) **John the Baptist—Kingdom of Heaven**: John was the greatest of natural men, yet not as great as the least in the kingdom. John did not have what believers have today. In knowledge, he did not have the full revelation of salvation which God has given believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. In experience, he did not have the Holy Spirit's indwelling in the sense that New Testament believers do (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4).

1. Believers have the opportunity for more knowledge about God then John had. In the Kingdom which God is building, those who believe in Jesus have access to the full revelation of God. The believer sees the cross. He knows that the Messiah has come, died, risen, and ascended into heaven. The believer knows the full scope of salvation. He sees the cross, the symbol of the great love of God. He can know the love of God in a way that John and others before John could have never known. Just imagine! The humblest believer can know more about God than the greatest of the Old Testament saints! He can know more than Abraham, Moses, Elijah, or Isaiah! It should be noted, however, that this is not favoritism. It is a heavier responsibility for which followers of Christ shall be held more accountable.
2. Believers have the opportunity of more experience with God than John had. The basic difference between believers before Christ and believers after Christ is the Holy Spirit. Believers after Christ have the opportunity to experience God more fully through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. They also understand God's revelation more clearly by knowing the Lord Jesus Christ personally and following Him.

Positionally, both the Old Testament and New Testament believers stand justified before God. Abraham, a believer before Christ, believed God and was counted righteous or justified (Ro.4:3). The Phillipian jailer, a believer after Christ, believed God and was saved or justified (Acts. 16:31). Positionally, those in the Kingdom of Heaven today stand no more justified before God than John the Baptist. But having the opportunity to know and experience the full revelation of God, the believer of today is unsurpassed in privilege. However, for this privilege the world today stands much more responsible and accountable. (See note—Lk.7:28.)

Thought 1. In God's estimation, John was the greatest man ever born of a woman. John was neither a prince nor a king. He was not a man of wealth, fame, or power. Who was he? He was simply a man who believed in the Messiah and who totally committed his life to that belief. Note: God does not value a man by his birth or earthly attainments but by his relation and commitment to the Messiah.

Thought 2. John's eminence was probably due to two things.

1) His dedication and commitment to God were most unusual. He was self-denying in his commitment to the Messiah (see outline—Jn.1:19-28), and although there had been many disciplined people who had served God, John's heart was probably closer to true self-denial than any others. Only God (Christ) would know this. At any rate, Christ declares John's eminence over all men; and in John, we have a blazing example of self-denial and commitment to God.
2) His preaching was repentance and the coming of the Messiah. Many had preached the same message; however, there was probably a difference. John's heart was perhaps more intense and intimate with the presence of God. Only God knows, but Christ did say John was the greatest man ever born. In John, there is certainly an example of intense commitment to God's calling.

> **"For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" (Lk.1:15).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).**
>
> **"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister" (Mt.20:26).**
>
> **"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Mt.23:11).**

Thought 3. Note two points.

1) The preacher today has the privilege to proclaim the cross and resurrection. John never knew the cross and resurrection; he only knew that the Messiah had come. Yet look at how committed he was to his mission. What a lesson for preachers of all generations!
2) Man today has the privilege to know the cross and resurrection of Christ. John did not. He only knew that the Messiah had come. How much more accountable we shall be!

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2).

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor.2:12).

7 (11:12) **John the Baptist**: John launched a violent overthrow of the kingdom. This means at least three things.

1. He stirred people to storm and rush into the kingdom just as an army storms or rushes into a city. In covering the beginning of John's ministry, Luke says:

"The kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk.16:16).

2. A person must storm the kingdom to enter it. He must have the spirit of a soldier who storms a city (2 Tim.2:3-4). He cannot be half-hearted, lacking spirit or energy. He cannot be complacent, indulgent, and at ease. He cannot expect to just slip into heaven. There has to be a real interest and desire, a vigorous stirring and struggle, a diligent seeking after God to enter heaven:

"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and...diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6).

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:3-4).

3. A person who *really* wishes to enter heaven will storm it; that is, he will endure anything to enter heaven. He will deny himself and change his behavior; he will turn from sin to God (repent). He will subject his desires to God's will and alter his mind in order to enter heaven.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph.4:23).

8 (11:13) **John the Baptist**: John was the last of an age—the age predicting the Messiah. John ended the age of Old Testament prophecy. He was the last of a long line of prophets who predicted the coming of the Messiah. He was the bridge that spanned from the predictions of the Messiah to the coming of the Messiah; the bridge that spanned the Old Testament to the New Testament. He was the one whom God raised up to be the end of one era and the beginning of a new era, the era of a long line of new prophets who would introduce the Messiah.

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).

9 (11:14) **John the Baptist**: John was the promised Elijah, the forerunner who was to precede the Messiah. He was Elijah, the fulfillment of the last prophecy of the Old Testament: "Behold, I will send you Elijah" (Mal.4:5-6; cp. Mal. 3:1). Note, John was not Elijah in person, but he was like Elijah in spirit and power and work (Jn.1:21-23).

Some believe that John was the promised Elijah and some do not. It is a matter of belief. This is what Jesus was talking about: "If ye will receive it." To receive the fact means that a person also has to receive Jesus as the Messiah, the One whom John predicted.

10 (11:15) **Conclusion**: a person must hear. A man has ears in order to hear; let him hear this message.

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Mt.13:16).

"The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge" (Pr.18:15).

Thought 1. God expects us to use the faculties we have in order to receive His message: we have eyes to see His work; ears to hear His message; minds to reason the truth; hands to work His works; feet to go where He wishes. We are to be as committed to the Messiah as John was.

Thought 2. Note the warning: a man with ears can fail to hear.

	C. The Message: Given to a Childish Generation, 11:16-27 (Lk.7:31-35; 10:12-15, 21-22)	you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.	2) Because they did not repent 3) Because they ignored Christ 4) The degree of their judgment: To be greater than most
1 The childishness of this generation	16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,	22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.	b. The judgment of the most privileged city[DS3,4] 1) Because it had the greatest opportunity
a. They were contrary, mindless, playful: Fault-finders who could not be pleased	17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.	23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.	2) Because it did not repent 3) Because it neglected Christ 4) The degree of its judgment: To be the greatest
1) Accused John of separation	18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.	24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.	**3 The blindness of this generation**
2) Accused Jesus of worldliness	19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.	25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.	a. Blind to God's truth[DS5] 1) The wise are blind: self-sufficient[DS6] 2) The babes are not blind: Teachable[DS7]
b. They justified their inconsistencies[DS1]	20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:	26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.	b. Blind to God's will & purpose
2 The judgment of this generation	21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in	27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.	c. Blind to the Messiah 1) He is of God, His very own Son 2) He has been given all things 3) He is the Mediator 4) He alone reveals God
a. The judgment of two privileged cities[DS2] 1) Because they were privileged			

DIVISION VII

THE MESSIAH'S VINDICATION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP, 11:1-30

C. The Message: Given to a Childish Generation, 11:16-27

(11:16-27) **Introduction—Man, Perverse—Perversity**: every generation has its privileges. The privileges are used by some and ignored and abused by others. Since the coming of Christ, the greatest privilege in all the world has been the privilege of knowing Him personally, for it is Christ who makes us acceptable to God. And there is no greater privilege than the privilege of knowing God face to face. However, the vast majority have ignored and abused Christ; therefore, most do not know God, not personally.

When looking at His own generation, Jesus asked: "Whereunto [to what] shall I liken this generation?" And the most adequate illustration He could come up with was that of children (see note—Mt.11:16-19). He was saying that His own generation was a *childish generation*. By *childish* He meant *perverse*. His generation was a perverse generation. They turned away from that which was right and good to that which was corruptible. They acted contrary to the evidence. They were opposed to that which was right, reasonable, and acceptable; and they were obstinate in their opposition. They were just wrong-headed, mindless, and contrary. They did not want the truth, so they made excuses for not receiving the truth.

Jesus had a message for such a *childish and perverse* generation. It is applicable to every generation.

1. The childishness of this generation (v.16-19).
2. The judgment of this generation (v.20-24).
3. The blindness of this generation (v.25-27).

1 (11:16-19) **Man—World**: there is the childishness of this generation. The illustration is clearly understood. Children are playing in the market place. A few begin to play wedding music on their pipes and cry out to others, "Let's march and play 'wedding'." The others shout back, "No. We don't want to dance around today." So the first group, still wanting to play, begin to play funeral music and shout back, "Well, let's play 'funeral'." "No. We don't want to play funeral either. We don't feel like acting sad."

1. The generation is contrary, mindless, playful. They are fault-finders who cannot be pleased. They find fault with whatever is suggested. They just cannot accept and be pleased with anything that puts restrictions upon their loose play. They find fault with a separatist approach to the gospel, and they also find fault with a sociable approach to the gospel.

a. They accused John of separation. John came neither eating nor drinking. He was a separatist. He was from the desert and lived a strict, austere life, being highly disciplined. He did not associate with people or make friends. He just isolated himself and cut himself off from everyone. He withdrew from society. His message was a gospel of repentance and separation from the things of the world. Therefore, he was accused of having a *devil*, that is, of being mad and insane for choosing to live that way.

b. They accused Jesus of worldliness. Jesus was the very opposite of John. Jesus lived and preached a gospel of liberty. He ate and associated with the people, sharing in their social affairs. He moved among all sorts of people, mixing and making Himself accessible to all no matter how terrible they were thought to be. Therefore, He was accused of being a sinner Himself: a glutton, a winebibber, and an immoral friend of sinners. (It must be remembered that when Jesus moved about in the social functions of society it was for the purpose of witnessing to them, not to be a part of the worldly fellowship.)

2. The childish generation justifies its inconsistencies. John lived and preached a gospel of repentance and separation. Jesus lived and preached a gospel of liberty. The people were like children: they found fault with both and accepted neither. They just wanted to do their own thing. The final act of childishness was that they justified their inconsistency (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.11:19).

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"And I brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor.3:1-2).

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor.13:11).

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Heb.5:12).

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) There are two approaches to righteousness: the separatist approach of John and the sociable approach of Jesus. The majority of people reject both approaches. They are as children at play, fault-finders who can not be pleased.
   a) Some are playful. They are having a good time and do not want to be interrupted and bothered. They want to go on *doing their own thing*.
   b) Some are mindless and thoughtless. They do not think about the reason and logic behind God's glorious plan in the Messiah. They refuse to face the reality of truth: the evil, sin, and depravity of the world and the existence of a personal God and the desperate need for Him to save the world.
   c) Some are contrary. Their minds are made up. They are not going to listen to any other view. They have their own thoughts about the world and morality, and they are comfortable living as they wish. Therefore, they stubbornly reject any other view no matter the reasonableness of what was presented.
2) Most people reject any attempt to restrict their own play. They wish to continue doing their own thing—whether it be seeking pleasure, intellectual pursuit, secular interest, or religious commitment. Most are willing to go only so far in restricting their own desires, will, and way. Few are willing to deny self completely (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).
3) God clearly used both approaches to righteousness (cp. 1 Cor.12:6-7). Jesus did not condemn John's approach, and John did not condemn Jesus' approach. They supported each other. What a lesson for believers! There is no room for a judgmental spirit. Men have different temperments and need to be approached by different methods (see outline and notes—Ro.14:1-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(11:19) **World's Inconsistencies**: this is probably an accusing statement by Jesus. Children usually justify their *wisdom and ideas* even if their wisdom and ideas do not make good sense.

2 (11:20-24) **Judgment**: there is the judgment of this generation.

1. There is the judgment of two privileged cities, Chorazin and Bethsaida (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.11:20-22). Note why they were judged.

   a. They were privileged to have the gospel available. They had the presence of Christ, of believers and of the gospel. Such exposure condemns a person if he does not respond. Why? Because he has the opportunity to know Christ.

   b. They refused to repent. A person who continues to live as he wills and refuses to turn to God condemns himself. God demands repentance.

   c. They ignored and neglected Christ. Even in Jesus' day, most people paid no attention to Him. Note: judgment is to be based not only upon doing wrong but upon not doing right. Just sitting around doing nothing [no gross or public sin] does not free a person from judgment. God expects commitment and diligence in serving Christ.

d. The degree of judgment for the two cities is to be greater than for most. The judgment upon the two cities will be much greater than for Tyre and Sidon. Tyre and Sidon never had the opportunity of Christ's ministry. Chorazin and Bethsaida did, and they *neglected and rejected* Christ. Therefore, their judgment shall be much more severe.

2. There is the judgment of the most privileged city, Capernaum (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.11:23). The degree of judgment upon Capernaum is to be even greater than the judgment upon Sodom (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.11:23). Why? Because it was the very center of the Lord's ministry and the people still neglected and rejected Christ.

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer [earthly, revolutionary leader] to be granted unto you" (Acts 3:14).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

Thought 1. Note four lessons.

1) There is to be a day of judgment, and Christ says there are to be degrees of judgment. Some judgment is to be more "intolerable" than other judgments. Note two things.
   ⇒ There are degrees of privilege. There is much more witness for Christ in some areas than in others. People who live in these areas are much more privileged and will be held much more accountable than people who had less witness.
   ⇒ There are degrees of judgment. Our response to the message of Christ determines how severely we will be judged.

"But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whosoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Lk.12:48).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).

2) Severe judgment will fall upon all who have had the opportunity to receive Christ but did not.
3) Our eternal state is determined by our response to Jesus Christ, and our state cannot be altered. The doom of Tyre and Sidon could not be altered, neither could the doom of Sodom. Their doom was set, having been determined while they were on earth. But note: Sodom will answer for much in the day of judgment but not for having neglected Christ. How much greater shall our judgment be because we have neglected and rejected Christ!
4) God forgives sin no matter how terrible. The sins of Sodom would have been forgiven if the people had repented. Judgment can be averted and escaped by repentance of sin.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(11:20-22) **Chorazin—Bethsaida**: Jesus did many "mighty works" in these cities, yet there is no record of the works. We must always remember that what we have in the New Testament are only a small number of the miracles and works that Christ did. As John says, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (Jn.21:25).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(11:23) **Capernaum**: this was the headquarters of Christ from where He launched His ministry.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(11:23) **Sodom**: note four things about Sodom in the Bible (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.10:15).
1. Sodom is a symbol of the depth of sin and judgment.
2. Sodom could have been forgiven its sin if the people had repented.
3. Sodom was judged and destroyed because of sin. It would not have been destroyed if its people had repented.
4. Sodom and its people will answer for much in the day of judgment, but not for having neglected and rejected Christ.

3 (11:25-27) **Man—World**: the blindness of this generation. The generation was blind to three things.

1. The people were blind to God's truth. Note the words, "these things," that is, the truth of Christ that the cities missed (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Truth*—Mt.11:25-27). (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 6,7—Mt.11:25.)

2. The people were blind to God's will, to His purpose. God has purposed to save the world through His Son, Jesus Christ. He has also purposed that the wise (the wise in their own eyes, the self-sufficient) shall not see the truth, but the babe (the needful) will have the truth revealed to him.

> **"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ" (2 Cor.3:14).**
>
> **"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).**
>
> **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**

3. The people were blind to the Messiah. Note: man is blind to four facts about the Messiah:

a. Man is blind to the fact that Jesus Christ is of God. But note: Christ declares emphatically that He is of God. He calls God "My Father."

b. Man is blind to the fact that Jesus Christ has received all things from God. But note: Christ declares emphatically that He has been given "all things" by God. *All things have been delivered* into the hands of Christ. He is to oversee and rule the universe. All things have been made for God's Son.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (Jn.5:37).**
>
> **"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:22).**
>
> **"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col.1:16-19).**
>
> **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoke unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:1-3).**

c. Man is blind to the fact that Jesus Christ is the Mediator. But note: Christ declares emphatically that He is the Mediator. He alone *knows* and is *known* by the Father.

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).**

d. Man is blind to the fact that Jesus Christ alone can reveal the Father. But note: Christ declares emphatically that He alone reveals the Father. No man can know God apart from Christ. A person who wishes to see God and to see what God is like must come to Jesus Christ.

> **"I and my Father are one....If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not....though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:30, 38).**
>
> **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jn.12:49).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:9-10).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(11:25-27) **Truth—World, Wisdom of**: spiritual truth is "hid." Where? In God. God has done the logical thing. He has taken spiritual truth and locked it up in Himself. The only access to truth is to come to Him. The only key to spiritual truth is faith and trust in God.

It is reasonable. The man who considers himself wise and intelligent and sufficient enough without God never comes to God. Therefore, a personal relationship with God is never known. The man does not come to know God nor the spiritual truth "hid" in God (Ro.1:18-22). God and His presence and His plan for the ages are foreign to the self-sufficient man. The "wise" just do not believe God, not enough to come to Him. Therefore, the things of the Spirit and of the gospel are hid from him. But God's heart and truths are open to the person who comes in dependency and trust.

What Christ condemns is not intelligence and wisdom but intellectual pride and self-sufficiency. God made man to think, reason, seek, and search in order to discover and build. But God expects man "not to think of himself too highly" (Ro.12:3; cp. Ph.2:3-4). A man is to walk humbly during his short stay on earth, knowing from whom he has come and to whom he is going. He is to trust God, putting his time and destiny in God's hands.

> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(11:25) **The Wise**: those who think of themselves as wise and intelligent; the self-sufficient; the rationalists; the wise of this world (1 Cor.1:21, 25-29; 2:14). The wise are blind to the Lord of heaven and earth and to the truth. By their very nature, the proud and self-sufficient sense no need for help and refuse to receive help. They rest in their own ability and achievements. Therefore, God is helpless in revealing the truth to them.

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(11:25) **The Babe**: the humble and receptive; the teachable (Mk.10:15).

	D. The Great Invitation: Given to this Generation, 11:28-30
1 Come unto Me a. Who: The weary b. Why: *He will give rest*[DS1] c. Condition: Must come **2 Take my yoke—learn** a. Why: 1) He is meek & lowly 2) *We will find rest* 3) His yoke is easy, His burden is light b. Condition: Must take	28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

DIVISION VII

THE MESSIAH'S VINDICATION OF HIS MESSIAHSHIP, 11:1-30

D. The Great Invitation: Given to This Generation, 11:28-30

(11:28-30) **Introduction**: Christ paints two pictures in this passage. One picture is of *extreme weariness*. This is the person who has gone as far as he can; he can go no farther—he cannot take another step. The other picture is of *extreme pressure*. This is the person who is about to explode; he cannot take anymore. Christ does not say what caused the weariness or pressure (heavy burdens). It does not matter, for His invitation is open to all. It is a simple invitation, requiring so little and offering so much.

1. Come unto Me (v.28).
2. Take *my yoke* - learn of Me (v.29-30).

1 (11:28) **Salvation—Rest**: the first great invitation to this generation is "Come unto me."

1. Who is to come? The weary and the burdened—the person who is laboring and heavy laden, weary and burdened, exhausted and despairing, extremely tired and weighed down, ready to stop and collapse.

Thought 1. Some of the things that exhaust us are...

- Work; being overburdened with too much to do
- Worldliness and carnality (fleshly pleasure)
- Sin and guilt and the power of both
- Money & material possessions and the unsatisfying spirit of both
- Fame and the emptiness of it
- Power and the loneliness of it
- The rituals and traditions of religion
- Rules and regulations

Note this: not knowing the truth of life is one of the major causes of exhaustion. Searching for truth but never coming to the truth discourages, exasperates, exhausts, and burdens us. It causes us to whip ourselves in conscience, and it leaves us empty, uncertain, and insecure about the future.

2. Why should the weary and the heavy laden come to Christ? Very simply, Christ *will give them rest*. Christ will give rest to the *struggling and despairing* soul and to the empty and lonely soul—no matter how intense the struggle and despair or the emptiness and loneliness. No person has gone too far for Christ to inject His rest into him—if the person will only call upon Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.11:28-29; Heb.4:1-13).
3. What are the conditions for receiving this rest? There is only one condition: a person must simply come to Christ. Note that the answer to *rest*...
   - is not searching after truth through religion (as important as it is)
   - is not positive thinking (as important as it is)
   - is not seeking the counsel of true and reliable friends (as important as it is)

The answer to *rest* is coming to Jesus Christ. Rest is available, but we have to come to Jesus Christ in order to receive the rest of God.

> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:28-29) **Christian's Rest**: note the difference between the two rests promised by Jesus Christ. They are the two greatest *rests* imaginable. (Also see note—Heb.4:1-13 for more discussion.)

1. "I will give you rest" (v.28): first, there is the rest of salvation or justification. This is the rest of deliverance from the slavery and bondage of sin, the power of Christ to conquer the enslaving habits that damage the human body and destroy the human soul. It is the rest of conscience that comes to a person's soul when he ceases his struggle in the wilderness of sin. It is the rest of conquest and triumph which a person experiences when he conquers the enemies of sin and evil through the power of Christ—day by day. It is the rest of victory through the daily storms of life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22; 5:1; cp. Ro.4:5; 4:1-3; 4:1-25).
2. "Ye shall find rest unto your souls" (v.29): second, there is the rest of sanctification or of pleasure and satisfaction, of confidence and completeness. The rest is not a rest of inactivity, of no work, of an endless slumber, of the right to laziness. It is a rest of three things.
   a. It is a rest of refreshment: a rest of refreshing one's body, mind, and spirit.
   b. It is a rest that fits one for life: a rest that infuses a person with true purpose, meaning, and significance.
   c. It is a rest of encouragement and motivation of soul: a rest that stirs a person to live and undertake his God-given task with enthusiasm and vigor and endurance.

> **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:29).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (2 Th.1:7).**
>
> **"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev.14:13).**
>
> **"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee" (Ps.116:7).**
>
> **"And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve" (Is.14:3).**
>
> **"He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each...walking in his uprightness" (Is.57:2).**

2 (11:29-30) **Salvation—Purpose—Life**: the second great invitation to this generation is, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."

1. Why should a person take up the yoke of Christ? Why should a person begin to learn of Christ? There are three reasons.
   a. Christ is meek and lowly. Some owners of oxen were mean and harsh both in their training and in their working of the oxen, but not Christ. He was meek and lowly, considerate and understanding, mild and gentle, long-suffering and encouraging to every person who came to Him.
   b. We will find rest (v.29). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.11:28-29; Heb.4:1-13.)
   c. Christ's yoke is easy; His burden is light (v.30). The "yoke" refers to an oxen's yoke. The yoke was a wooden collar-like instrument placed on the neck and shoulders of the oxen. It was used for tying the ropes of a plough to the oxen or for tying whatever load he had to pull. It was extremely important that the yoke be fitted for the shoulders of the oxen to prevent rubbing the flesh raw and causing sores. At first the oxen might have rebelled against the yoke, but he soon learned that it eased the burden of pulling. The yoke refers to a man's *life and task* while on earth.

      The word "easy" (chrestos) can also mean *well-fitting*. Christ is saying that His yoke, His life and task, are fitted to a person. It is just what a person needs, and it is easy, the easiest life and task the person could live and undertake.

> **"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**

Thought 1. Christ is meek and lowly. He cares and looks after us; He is concerned and compassionate knowing how far we can go and how capable we are.

Thought 2. God made us; therefore, He has the right yoke (life and task) for us.

2. What are the conditions for *finding this rest*? There is only one condition. A person must simply take Christ's yoke and begin to learn of Him. This simply means that we are to learn how to live and labor under His leadership, direction, guidance, and care.

Every man has his yoke, that is, his life to live and his task to do while on earth. From birth, he learns from others how to live and how to do his task. Some teachers are hard taskmasters, and most courses in life lead to exhaustion and living under heavy burdens. The only taskmaster who can teach and assure *true rest* (of body, mind, and spirit) is Christ, and the only yoke that really fits and proves to be easy is the yoke or life and task of Christ.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing [of lasting value]" (Jn.15:5).**
>
> **"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 Jn.5:3-5).**

Thought 1. This is a command. If we wish "rest," we must take His yoke upon us.

	CHAPTER 12		
	VIII. THE MESSIAH'S DE-FENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50		
	A. Defense 1: The Messiah Is Greater than Religion, 12:1-8 (Mk.2:23-28; Lk.6:1-5)		
1 A questionable act—breaking the Sabbath law[DS1]	At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.	2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.	**dence over tradition & ritual (cp.David)**[DS2]
a. The religionists' accusation			
b. Jesus' progressive argument & defense			
2 Step 1: Need has prece-		3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;	
		4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?	
3 Step 2: Necessary work has precedence over the Sabbath, that is, over religion		5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?	
4 Step 3: He, the Messiah, is greater than the temple		6 But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.	
5 Step 4: He, the Messiah, will have a religion of mercy & not sacrifice		7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.	
6 Step 5: He, the Messiah, is Lord of the Sabbath & of religion		8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.	

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

A. Defense 1: The Messiah Is Greater than Religion, 12:1-8

(12:1-50) **DIVISION OVERVIEW:** note that Chapter 12 deals with the rising opposition to Christ both from the religionists (Mt.12:1-45) and from his own family (Mt.12:46-50). Christ confronted attack after attack, vindicating His Messiahship against each one.

Suspicion, rejection, and fear of Christ were growing at a rapid pace. He could not allow such to go unchecked lest it destroy those who were hanging on to the truth. He had to confront the arguments and denials against His Messiahship. He had to face those who did not believe and were opposed to Him. He had to continue to proclaim the truth for the sake of every generation, for He was the true Messiah, the Savior of all who would believe and surrender to God.

(12:1-8) **Introduction—Jews, Religion, Importance of—Sabbath, Law of—Tradition—Ritual—Jesus Christ, Opposition**: the disciples were not stealing the corn. A hungry traveller was permitted by law to eat a few ears of corn when passing a field (Dt.23:25). The crime was that the disciples *worked*, plucking the ears of corn *on the Sabbath day*.

This was a serious matter to the orthodox Jew. Just how serious it was can be seen in the strict demands governing the Sabbath. Law after law was written to govern all activity on the Sabbath. A person could not travel, fast, cook, buy, sell, draw water, walk beyond a certain distance, lift anything, fight in a war or heal on the Sabbath unless life was at stake. A person was not to contemplate any kind of work or activity on the Sabbath. A good example of the people's loyalty to the law is seen in the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion. They would not even walk to His tomb to prepare the body for burial until the Sabbath was over (Mk.16:1f; Mt.28:1f). It was a serious matter to break the Sabbath law. A person was condemned, and if the offense were serious enough, the person was to die.

This may seem harsh to some, but when dealing with the Jewish nation, one must remember that *it was their religion* that held them together as a nation through centuries and centuries of exile. Their religion (in particular their beliefs about God's call to their nation, the temple, and the Sabbath) became the *binding force* that kept Jews together and maintained their distinctiveness as a people. It protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other people through intermarriage. No matter where they were, they met to worship together and held on to their beliefs. A picture of this can be seen in the insistence of Nehemiah when he led some Jews back to Jerusalem (Neh.13:15-22 cp. Jer.17:19-27; Ezk.46:1-7).

All the above explains to some degree why the religionists opposed Jesus with such hostility. Their problem was this: they had allowed religion and ritual, ceremony and liturgy (and in some cases position, security, and recognition) to become more important than the basic essentials of human life: personal need and compassion, and the true worship and mercy of God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10. This is an important note for this point.)

Christ used this opportunity to show that He Himself was the Messiah and that both He and man were greater than the Sabbath or religion.

1. A questionable act—breaking the Sabbath (v.1-3).
2. Step 1: need has precedence over tradition and ritual (cp. David) (v.3-4).
3. Step 2: necessary work has precedence over the Sabbath, that is, over religion (v.5).
4. Step 3: He, the Messiah, is greater than the temple (v.6).
5. Step 4: He, the Messiah, will have a religion of mercy and not sacrifice (v.7).
6. Step 5: He, the Messiah, is Lord of the Sabbath and of religion (v.8).

1 (12:1-3) **Sabbath—Religion—Ritual**: a questionable act—breaking the Sabbath law. The disciples were hungry. As they walked along the footpath that ran alongside a corn field, they plucked some corn to eat. By law a traveller was allowed to do this. It was not stealing, but there was a problem. It was the Sabbath, and the law prohibited work (plucking corn) on the Sabbath. Note two things.

1. The religionists immediately accused Jesus, condemning Him for letting His disciples break the religious rule (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:1).

Thought 1. The religionists (Jewish teachers) corrupted God's Word (Rev.22:18-19; Pr.30:6).

1) A person corrupts God's Word by taking away from the words of Scripture. A person takes away from God's Word...
   - by denying sections that he does not like or understand.
   - by neglecting to live the whole counsel of God.
   - by interpreting some commandments too loosely.
2) A person corrupts God's Word by adding to the words of Scripture. A person adds to God's Word by interpreting and living too strictly. Such exalts the flesh and is nothing more than extreme discipline and self-control. Of course, both discipline and self-control are commendable and are qualities demanded by God's Word, but they are not an end in themselves.

God's Word is practical and leads to an abundant life, to real living. It is not cold, harsh, restrictive, monastic, unrealistic and impractical. God did not give His Word for a select group (clergy); He gave it for the common man. "His commandments are not grievous" (1 Jn.5:3).

The Sadducees were especially guilty of taking away from God's Word. The Pharisees and Scribes were especially guilty of adding to God's Word (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2).

Thought 2. Note two things.

1) There are beliefs, religious practices and traditions that are not of God. Men do add to God's Word, putting restrictions upon people that God never intended.
2) There is a judgmental and censoring spirit in the heart of religionists when their beliefs are broken.

2. Jesus defended Himself and His disciples. Jesus used the questioning of the religionists to do two primary things.
   a. To teach that human need and necessary work have precedence over the Sabbath and religion. Religious ritual and tradition are not as important as people, not to God.
   b. To proclaim His Messiahship, His right to set straight the man-made beliefs surrounding God's Word and the *unscriptural restrictions* placed upon man.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:1) **Sabbath—Sunday**: the word means rest, cessation of labor. The Sabbath is the seventh day of each week (Saturday). It was the day Israel celebrated by resting and doing absolutely no work. It was based upon the seventh day when God rested following His six days of creation (Gen.2:2-3).

So far as is known, there was no Sabbath from creation until Moses. The Sabbath was first instituted under Moses' leadership (Ex.16:23; Neh.9:13-14), thereafter it became a part of Israel's law (Ex.20:8-11).

The Sabbath was kept as a sign to distinguish Israel as God's peculiar people. It was never a day of worship or religious service. It was simply a day of complete rest for man and beast. Christ is accused of violating man-made rules encrusted around the Sabbath.

There is a difference between the Sabbath as observed by the Jews and others and Sunday as observed by Christian believers. The Sabbath is the last day of the week. It was a day when Jesus the Messiah was in the tomb, a day of great sadness for the Christian. However, Sunday is the first day of the week. It is a day of great joy, for it was the day of Jesus' resurrection, the day that He triumphed over death. It is called the *Lord's Day* and is celebrated as a day of rest and joy, a glorious day for searching the soul and meditating upon God. It is the day of worship and of Christian fellowship celebrated by believers worldwide (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor.16:2).

⇒ It was Jesus' custom to worship on the Sabbath (Lk.4:16).
⇒ It was Paul's custom to worship on Sunday (Acts 17:2).
⇒ God's people are not to neglect worship (Heb.10:25; cp. Acts 16:13).
⇒ God's people are to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (Ex.20:8; 31:14; 34:21).
⇒ God's people are promised a special blessing for keeping the Sabbath day holy (Is.56:2; 58:13-14).
⇒ Polluting the Sabbath will bring the judgment of God upon a people (Ezk.20:13; 22:8, 15; cp. Num.15:32-35; Jer.17:27; Ezk.22).
⇒ Buying and selling are not to take place on the Sabbath (Neh.10:31; 13:15).
⇒ Helping the needy is lawful on the Sabbath (Mt.12:12; cp. Jn.7:23; 9:14).
⇒ Early believers worshipped on the day that Christ arose from the dead, that is, on Sunday, the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor.16:2).

2 (12:3-4) **Need**: the first step in Christ's argument is that need has precedence over religion and its tradition and ritual. This truth is illustrated by David's eating the showbread in the tabernacle when he was hungry (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Showbread*—Mt.12:3-4). David ate the showbread. The priest gave it to him despite the religious law, and David was held blameless (1 Sam.21:1-6). Why? Because he had need. Human need took precedence over religious tradition and ritual.

Thought 1. Note two things.
1) David broke the law not to indulge a lust but to meet a genuine need. We are to meet the genuine needs of men. God's call and concern is to meet human need, not *religion* and religious beliefs, not religious practices and ritual and ceremony and rules and regulations.
2) The law which was broken to meet David's need still stood. It was a needed law for men to practice, yet it was broken to meet human need. Human need and compassion took precedence over the law.

Thought 2. There is a criteria to determine if a religious belief, law, custom, ritual, ceremony, or rule should be broken: Is it being broken to indulge a lust or to meet a genuine need? An honest answer to this question will tell a person what to do. (Cp. civil law. Speed limits are broken by ambulance drivers to rush a critical patient to the hospital or by policemen to meet emergencies.)

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:3-4) **Showbread**: the word means *the bread of the face* or *the bread of the Presence*. It symbolized the presence of God who is the Bread of Life. The showbread was twelve loaves of bread that were brought to the house of God as a symbolic offering to God. It was a thanksgiving offering giving thanks to God for sustaining food. The loaves were to be taken to the Holy Place by the Priest and placed on the table before the Lord. The loaves symbolized an everlasting covenant between God and His people: that He would always see to it that His people had whatever food was necessary to sustain them (see outline—Mt.6:25-34). The loaves were to be changed every week. The old loaves became food for the priests and were to be eaten by them alone.

3 (12:5) **Sunday—Work—Sabbath**: the second step in Christ's argument is that necessary work has precedence over the Sabbath, that is, over religion. There was always work to be done in the temple: the handling of animals, the offering of sacrifices, the handling of people, the leading of worship. The *worship of God* and *necessary work* always took precedence over rules and regulations of religion, and the religious workers were always held blameless.

The Sabbath or Sunday has two purposes: rest and worship (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sunday*—Mt.12:1). Some work is necessary to carry on the functions of rest and worship. Note two things.

1. Necessary work is any work that is needed to sustain life and worship and meditate upon God. (See note 4 and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.12:12.)
2. Sabbath or Sunday rest is not to hinder the worship of God but to give time for it and to encourage it.

"It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days" (Mt.12:12).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex.20:8).

"And if the people of the land bring ware of any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day" (Neh.10:31; cp. Neh.13:15).

4 (12:6) **Messiahship**: the third step in Christ's argument is that the Messiah is greater than the temple (cp. 2 Chron. 6:18; Is.66:1-2). The priests were allowed to work on the Sabbath because it was done for the temple. Christ was saying that His disciples were allowed to work (pluck the ears of corn) because it was done for Him (to meet His hunger). This was a unique opportunity for Christ to proclaim that He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the great source and object of the temple, its founder and the subject of its worship.

Note that Christ was standing in the corn field when He said, "In this place [the corn field] is One greater than the temple [your place of worship]." There is no question what He was doing. He was proclaiming that He is the Messiah.

Thought 1. The temple possessed only the *symbolic* presence of God. Christ possessed "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).

"But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple" (Mt.12:6).

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here" (Lk.11:31).

"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (Jn.3:31).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Ph.2:9-10).

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).

"Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb.1:4).

"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb.3:3).

5 (12:7) **Mercy—Sacrifice—Religion—Christianity**: the fourth step in Christ's argument is that the Messiah will have a religion of mercy and not sacrifice (cp. 1 Sam.15:22; Hos.6:6). The supreme law is love, not religious sacrifice—a love that reaches out to any person in need. Religious practices and rituals may help, but the first thing is love and mercy.

Thought 1. These religionists were guilty of the most serious offense.

1) They did not have a merciful heart; they were not compassionate and understanding of human need. How much mercy and compassion are needed in all our dealings!
2) They did not understand "what this meaneth," did not know the true meaning of God's heart and Word. They knew God's Word but did not know its meaning. What a message to us!
3) They judged and censored others because they did not know the meaning of God's heart and Word. God's heart and Word never allows censoring anyone.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Mt.7:1-5).

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Ro.2:1).

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (Jas.4:12).

6 (12:8) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the fifth step in Christ's argument is that the Messiah is Lord of the Sabbath and of religion. As Lord, He is the One who determines what true religion is:

⇒ It is loving God by believing on the name of His Son Jesus Christ (1 Jn.1:3).
⇒ it is loving our neighbors as ourselves—ministering to them and caring for them.

Man should not try to add to or take away from God's heart and Word. Taking away denies Him and adding to God's Word misrepresents Him, and both dethrone Him and exalt man as Lord.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

"[Jesus Christ] who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

	B. Defense 2: Man Is Greater than Religion, 12:9-13 (Mk.3:1-6; Lk.6:6-11)	What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?	a. Is an animal's welfare not put before religious rules? b. Is a man not of more value than an animal?
1 Jesus departed a. Entered the synagogue	9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:	12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.	**4 The truth stated: Doing good for man supersedes religious rules**[DS2]
b. Confronted a man with a withered hand **2 The truth questioned:**[DS1] **Is a man more important than religion—than Sabbath rules?**	10 And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.	13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.	**5 The truth demonstrated: Man & his needs are put before religious rules—man is greater**
3 The truth illustrated	11 And he said unto them,		

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

B. Defense 2: Man Is Greater than Religion, 12:9-13

(12:9-13) **Introduction**: we know nothing about the man with the withered hand. The gospels say nothing else about him. However, William Barclay tells us that there is a dramatic background given by one of the books which was never accepted into the New Testament, *The Gospel According to the Hebrews*. This gospel says that the man was a carpenter who made his living with his hands. It adds that the man pleaded with Jesus to heal him that he might not have to beg for food in shame (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.331).

Christ used this event to prove His Messiahship and to show that man is greater than religion.

1. Jesus departed (v.9-10).
2. The truth questioned: Is a man more important than religion—than Sabbath rules (v.10)?
3. The truth illustrated (v.11).
4. The truth stated: doing good for man supersedes religious rules (v.12).
5. The truth demonstrated: man and his needs are put before religious rules—man is greater (v.13).

1 (12:9-10) **Jesus Christ, Compassion**: Jesus departed. This is not referring to Jesus's leaving the cornfield where He had just been debating with the religionists (v.1-8). It means that He left the town He was in for another town. It was "on another Sabbath" that He entered their synagogue (cp. Lk.6:6).

1. Christ entered their synagogue. Note that discord, disputes, and opposition did not cause Christ to withdraw from worship nor prevent Him from doing what He should (cp.Mt.12:1-8).

Thought 1. Note two striking lessons.

1) Jesus was worshipping on the Sabbath. He was where He belonged on the Lord's Day.
2) Conflict and discord should not cause us to forsake the Lord's house. Our first obligation is to love and worship the Lord with our whole being.

2. Christ confronted a man with a withered hand. Note that Jesus had not begun to heal the man. The religionists apparently noticed Jesus eyeing the man or else sensed Jesus' compassion and movement to heal the man. The religionists were disturbed, deeply so, for Jesus was about to disregard their beliefs and Sabbath rules again (see note—Mt.12:1-8).

Thought 1. This man was in the synagogue. He was a man who sensed his dependency upon God. Note two things.

1) A physical handicap does not keep a person from being strong. A person can be handicapped and still be wonderfully strong. He can be strong spiritually and strong mentally, strong in confidence and strong in assurance, strong in a sense of God's presence and strong in a sense of purpose and meaning. God can give this kind of strength. In fact, physical health is useless and sometimes destructive without the spiritual strength of God. This man with the withered hand evidently knew God's strength, yet he had a need. These two facts touched Jesus' heart.
2) A physical handicap can be used by God—greatly so. God uses handicaps...
   - to demonstrate great faith.
   - to set a vibrant example of trust before loved ones, neighbors, and acquaintances.
   - to be a dynamic testimony of God's saving grace.
   - to cause a person's own salvation.
   - to draw a person ever so close to God in a very, very special way.
   - to cause a person to become a prayer warrior, an intercessor for both God's people and for a world reeling from a restless and warring spirit, lost and trying to find its way.

2 (12:10) **Religionists**: the truth was questioned. Is a man more important than religion, than Sabbath rules? (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10 for more discussion.) The law said that persons could not be healed or helped on the Sabbath unless life itself was threatened. However, there sat the man, and he desperately needed help. Jesus had the power to help him, but should He? If He healed the man, He would be breaking the religious rule. Should Jesus put the man or the ritual first?

> **"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:36-39).**
>
> **"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before men" (1 Jn.3:16-19).**
>
> **"He that showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).**

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) There are reasons why we put religious custom and the present order of things before man and the meeting of his real needs.
   a) We slip into a routine, a way of doing things, and we just continue in it because it is comfortable.
   b) We fear change lest we lose some people and their support.
   c) We fear the loss of position and security.
   d) We fear failure, the weakening of what we already have, of losing the loyalty of others to our religious position and practices.
2) Every man has need. He needs salvation, a true worship experience, a personal relationship with God day by day, a sense of the Spirit's presence and direction moment by moment. He needs to know how to live in a world that pulls him away from God, a world that pulls him toward every worldly thing imaginable. Yet, everything is too often put before man: maintaining the religious organization, form, ritual, ceremony, custom, service, order, liturgy, rules, and regulations—all seem to be more important than meeting man's needs.
3) Nothing should keep us from meeting man's needs, from putting him and his needs first before all religious ritual and form.
   a) It is the only way the heart of man can be reached and satisfied (Col.2:9-10; Jn.10:10).
   b) It is the only way the church can stop the loss of people who are being lost by the droves. As we have so often heard: they come in the front door and slip out the back door. Why? Their needs are not being met.

      We need to be courageous and come before the Lord searching our hearts and asking several questions. Are we really reaching that many for Christ? Are people really accepting Christ through our ministry? Why not, when the Lord said the fields are white unto harvest? Could it be we are steeped in religion so much that we are putting religion before meeting the needs of people?
4) Man's basic need is to know and worship God in a personal way. Yet, too often we fail to reach out to man by putting worship, form, order, ritual, and rules before meeting his need. Too often, we act as though...
   - man exists for religion, instead of religion existing for man.
   - man exists for worship services, instead of worship services existing for man.
   - man exists for maintaining the organizations, instead of the organization existing for man.
   - man exists for the rules and rituals, instead of the rules and rituals existing for man.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:10) **Religionists**: the religionists' conflict with Jesus over religious beliefs and rules is sometimes thought by modern man to be petty and harsh, or else such conflicts are just not understood. Three facts will help a person in understanding why the conflicts happened and were life-threatening, ending in the murder of Jesus Christ.

1. The Jewish nation had been held together by their religious beliefs. Through the centuries the Jewish people had been conquered by army after army, and by the millions, they had been deported and scattered over the world. Even in the day of Jesus, they were enslaved by Rome. Their religion was the binding force that kept Jews together, in particular...
   - their belief that God had called them to be a distinctive people (who worshipped the only true and living God).
   - their rules governing the Sabbath and the temple, intermarriage, worship and cleansing, and what foods they could and could not eat.

This belief and these rules protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other peoples through intermarriage. Their religion was what maintained their distinctiveness as a people and as a nation.

Jewish leaders knew this. They knew that *their religion* was the binding force that held their nation together. Therefore, they opposed anyone or anything that threatened to *break or weaken* the laws of their religion and nation.

2. The religionists were men of deep, deep conviction. They were strong in their beliefs; therefore, they became steeped in religious belief and practice. To break any law or rule governing belief or practice was a serious offense, for it taught *loose* behavior. And loose behavior, once it had spread enough, would weaken their religion. This is the reason Jesus was committing a great offense by breaking their law. In their minds, He was weakening their religion and threatening their nation.

3. The religionists were men who had profession, position, recognition, esteem, livelihood, and security. Anyone who went contrary to what they believed and taught was a threat to all they had. Some religionists undoubtedly felt that Jesus was a threat to them. Everytime Jesus broke their law, He was undermining their very position and security. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; 16:1-12; 21:23; 22:15-22; 22:23-33; 22:34-40; 23:1-12.)

The errors of the religionists were fourfold.

1. They misinterpreted and corrupted God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; cp. Ro.9:4).
2. They committed serious sin after serious sin in God's eyes (see notes—1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.2:17-29).
3. They rejected God's way of righteousness, God's Messiah, which is Jesus Christ (see notes—Ro.11:28; 1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.10:1-21, esp. 1-4, 19-21).
4. They allowed religion in its tradition and ritual to become more important than meeting the basic needs of human life: the need for God and the need for spiritual, mental, and physical health. Christ, being the true Messiah, was bound to expose such error. Thus the battle lines were drawn.

⇒ The Messiah knew that He had to liberate people from such enslaving behavior. He had to save them so they could worship God in freedom of spirit.

⇒ The religionists felt that they had to oppose Christ because He was a threat to their nation and to their own personal position and security.

The religionists' attack took two forms.

1. First, they tried to discredit Christ so the multitudes would stop following Him (cp. Mt.21:46).

"And they asked him, saying; Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse Him" (Mt.12:10).

"And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him" (Lk.6:7).

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" (Mt.22:15-17.)

2. Second, failing to discredit Him, they sought some way to kill Him.

"The Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him" (Mt.12:14).

"Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him" (Mt.26:3-4).

"And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people" (Lk.22:2).

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn.5:18).

"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry because the Jews sought to kill him" (Jn.7:1). (Cp. Jn.7:19-20, 25.)

3 (12:11) **Man**: the truth was illustrated to prove that man is greater than religion. Jesus asked: If a man had only one sheep, and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day, would the man not rescue it? Imagine the force of the Lord's question. It showed just how *unreasonable and illogical* the religionists were in their thinking. It exposed them as *ignorant and blind* to real spiritual truth.

The Lord's question had two points...

- Is an animal's welfare not put before religious rules?
- Is a man not of more value than an animal?

"If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?" (Jn.7:23).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased (Heb.13:16).

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food" (Jas.2:15).

Thought 1. Two questions need to be asked, questions that should search our hearts.

1) Is an animal of more value than a man and his needs?
2) Can things (ritual and order) ever be said to be of more value than compassion for man?

How deceived and irresponsible we so often live and act! How often we oppose Jesus Christ and His true mission just as the religionists of His day opposed Him! And we do it for the same reasons (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10).

Thought 2. We have *animals* today that are put before reaching man and meeting his needs: the *animals* of religious rituals and rules and of personal position and security. The truth needs to be known and lived. Priorities need to be established.

Thought 3. Man is not only more rational than animals, he is spirit, capable of worshipping and living forever with God. Animals are not spiritual beings; therefore, man and his needs should be placed before animals. If a person has a problem with this fact, it reveals a deceived heart and blinded mind. How many of us follow religious form before reaching out to man and meeting his real needs? How many of us have deceived hearts and blinded minds in our practice of religion?

4 (12:12) **Man**: the truth was stated. Christ said that doing good for man supersedes religious and Sabbath rules. We are to help a person who has needs before we worry about keeping the rituals and rules of religion.

Thought 1. There are many ways for us to go about doing good on the Lord's Day:

⇒ worshipping
⇒ visiting the lost and needy
⇒ feeding the hungry
⇒ bringing others to worship
⇒ helping those caught in unexpected distress
⇒ caring for those who are sick and hurting

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt.25:35-36).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(12:12) **Sabbath—Sunday**: the Sabbath or Sunday is for rest and worship (see note—Mt.12:5). What is allowed on the Sabbath or Sunday, the day set aside for rest and worship? God's Son says. "It is lawful to do well [good] on the sabbath days"; that is, it is lawful to *truly* help a person who has a *real* need.

5 (12:13) **Man**: the truth was demonstrated. Man and his needs are put before the Sabbath and religious rules. Man is greater; he is much more important. Jesus healed the man. Jesus demonstrated in no uncertain terms that there is nothing more sacred to God than man. Man is to be *reached* and *brought* into a personal relationship with Him (Lk.19:10), and he is to be helped and brought into a state of abundant living—as much as possible (Jn.10:10).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor.9:22).

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Th.5:14).

Thought 1. What a lesson for us as we reach out to lead men *to* God week by week and day by day! How much we need to correct our deceived hearts and blinded minds! How much we need to be freed from being enslaved to our religious order and forms and our own personal position and security!

1) We live only a short time, and then we shall give an account to God.
2) We have only a few short years to be about the task of the Lord.

Thought 2. Christ gives us an important lesson: we are to put man and his needs before our religious practices and our personal security. We are not to let our fears stop us (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10).

	C. Defense 3: Messiah Is the Chosen Servant of God, 12:14-21 (Mk.3:7-12)	which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,	
		18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my	a. God's Chosen Servant b. God's Beloved Son c. God's Spirit was upon Him—fully
1 Two attitudes a. First attitude: The Pharisees plotted against Jesus, so He withdrew b. Second attitude: Multitudes followed Jesus, so He healed	14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. 15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;	spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.	**3 Jesus' work** a. He proclaims justice to all peoples b. He shows humility 1) Not strife: Arguing 2) Not crying: Reacting 3) Not fussing
c. Jesus requested no publicity[DS1]	16 And charged them that they should not make him known:	20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.	c. He loves and encourages d. He leads justice to victory
2 Jesus' person[DS2]	17 That it might be fulfilled	21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.	e. He gives hope to all

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

C. Defense 3: Messiah Is the Chosen Servant of God, 12:14-21

(12:14-21) **Introduction**: the Old Testament predicted who the Messiah would be and what His work would be. This passage proves that Jesus fulfilled what was predicted of the Messiah.

1. Two attitudes toward Jesus and His response (v.14-16). (His response to the way people treated Him proved that He was the Messiah.)
2. Jesus' person (v.17-18).
3. Jesus' work (v.18-21). (What Jesus did and the quiet, tender way He went about doing it proved His Messiahship.)

1 (12:14-16) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: there are two attitudes toward Jesus. The religionists and the multitudes demonstrate the two attitudes.

1. The religionists rejected and plotted against Jesus. They represent those who rebel against the Lordship of Christ; rebel against His having any control over their lives. There was warning in Jesus' response to the religionists (Pharisees). They had opportunity after opportunity, and they continually rejected Christ's appeal. They rejected so much that their hearts became encrusted and hardened, apparently beyond reach. Christ was forced to withdraw from them.

> **Thought 1.** God says, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3; cp. Pr.29:1). This is a needful warning, for when we feel pulled to make a decision and put the decision off for an hour or two (a half day or a day at most), the pull fades and eventually dies completely. God's Spirit does not continue to strive with us. Most of us have experienced such movements and killed the Spirit's pull or striving.

2. The multitudes (many of them) believed and trusted and followed Jesus, so He healed them.

> **Thought 1.** Jesus heals, responding to any who *truly* follow Him.

3. Jesus requested no publicity (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:16 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:16) **Jesus—No Publicity**: Why did Jesus withdraw and charge the people not to make Him known?

1. Jesus wished to avoid confrontation with those who sought His life. His hour had not yet come. He did not wish to provoke the religionists to a deliberate conflict putting Himself in premature peril.
2. Jesus did not wish to be pushed forward by public acclaim to assume kingship of the nation. He understood His mission. He had come first to be the Suffering Servant, and He knew that the people were inflamable, aching for deliverance from the Roman conquerers. Too much promotion of His miracles might cause an uprising. He had to prevent an uprising so that He might carry out His mission of dying for the world as the Suffering Servant. (See note—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—Mt.22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)
3. Jesus needed time to teach the people what true Messiahship meant. The people thought the Messiah was to overthrow the Roman conquerors and establish Israel as one of the great nations of the world. Jesus had to show that the Messiah's kingdom was spiritual, not material; present and future, not just present; permanent and eternal, not just mortal and temporal.

4. Jesus needed to teach humility. He refused to make a spectacle, to "be seen of men" (v.19).
5. Jesus wished to give an example of the principle He had laid down: "When they persecute you in this city, flee to another" (Mt.10:23).

2 (12:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Chosen Servant**: the person of Jesus Christ is spelled out ever so clearly in these two verses. Note this is a quotation from Isaiah's prediction concerning the person of the Messiah (Is.42:1-4).

1. Jesus Christ is *the Chosen Servant* of God. Christ humbled Himself to do God's will. And He did God's will *perfectly* (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15). Therefore He is *The Ideal Servant* of God. He is the pattern, the picture, the ideal of how every man should serve God. Jesus was God's chosen servant in the great work of redemption. Note two things: Christ was (1) chosen by God, and (2) He was God's Servant (see note—Eph.5:2).

> **"[The Lord]...disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God; and precious" (1 Pt.2:4).**
>
> **"[Christ Jesus] who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:6-8).**
>
> **"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (Heb.10:7).**
>
> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me....And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:38, 40).**

Thought 1. Note three strong lessons for us.
⇒ Christ *submitted Himself* to do God's will; therefore,
⇒ He was given *a great work* to do;
⇒ He experienced *the great trust* of God.

2. Jesus Christ is God's beloved Son. There are two precious thoughts here.
   a. Christ has been "in the bosom of the Father" throughout all eternity; that is, His mission to earth and the great salvation He was to bring to man has been in the recesses of God's heart forever. God has always held Christ to be very dear and very precious to Him.
   b. Christ "was daily His [God's] delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Pr.8:30 cp. Pr.8:22-31). Throughout all eternity, there has been an inconceivable relationship of love and sharing between the Father and the Son that goes well beyond our finite minds. Christ has always been God's *beloved* Son.

> **"His [God's] dear Son: In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins...." (Col.1:13-14. Cp. 1:13-20 for a beautiful description of the work of Christ and the pleasure of God in that work.)**
>
> **"For He [Jesus Christ] received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (2 Pt.1:17. Cp. Mt.3:17; 17:5; Mk.1:11; 9:7; Lk.3:22; 9:35.)**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again" (Jn.10:17).**

3. God's Spirit fully endowed Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was qualified for the work God sent Him to do. He had an unlimited measure of God's Spirit (see note—Jn.3:34).

> **"For He [Christ] whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (Jn.3:34; cp. Heb.1:9 where "the oil of gladness" refers to the Holy Spirit).**
>
> **"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth" (Is.11:2-4).**

Thought 1. God puts His Spirit upon everyone whom He chooses. This means at least two things.
1) God gives spiritual gifts and power to every chosen vessel. He equips every person to do just what He calls that person to do. (Cp. Ro.12:5-8; 1 Cor.12:7-11, 27-31; Eph.4:11-16.)
2) God also bestows some of His image, some of His likeness, upon every chosen person (2 Cor.3:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:17-21) **Jesus Christ, Scripture Fulfilled**: cp. Is.42:1-4.

3 (12:18-21) **Jesus Christ, Work**: the work of Jesus Christ is spelled out clearly in these verses.

1. Jesus Christ proclaimed justice to all people. Justice means doing what is right toward God and man (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6). It is living right and doing right. Jesus Christ came to show all men, both Jew and Gentile, how to live and behave toward God and toward man. He came to proclaim *the right way* for man to live out his years on earth.

Thought 1. Christ shuts no man out, but men do shun and avoid, exclude and shut one another out. Christ reaches out to the Gentiles no matter how ungodly and corruptible they may be. He reaches out to all, and He shows all how to live a just and righteous life.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

2. Jesus Christ showed humility. The picture is twofold.
   a. Jesus Christ did not come making noise:
      ⇒ *striving* (arguing, quarreling, debating)
      ⇒ *crying* (loudly challenging and reacting against opposition)
      ⇒ *fussing* (brawling and creating an uproar in the streets).

      Jesus Christ came quietly and peacefully to conquer men by loving them and warning them to flee the terrible results of selfishness and sin.
   b. Jesus Christ did not come in the pomp and ceremony which the people had expected of the Messiah. He did not come in the force and violence which the people had expected of the Son of David (see note 1 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.1:18). He came in peace, humbling and denying Himself and offering peace to all men no matter how selfish and wicked they might be. He came with the voice of appeal and invitation to be saved, not with the voice of argument and terror and condemnation.

Thought 1. This is a strong lesson for every believer. How far the life and ministry of so many differ from Christ. So many talk about, put forth, stress, argue, and fuss over promotion and publicity, position and importance, ministry and results.

"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps.131:2).

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (Is.32:17).

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before here shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Is.53:7).

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:29).

"Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you" (2 Cor.10:1).

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Th.4:11).

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pt.2:23).

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:4).

3. Jesus Christ loved and encouraged men. Christ came to encourage.
   a. He did not come to destroy but to heal the "bruised reed": those who were hurt, battered, crushed, discouraged, depressed, down, insecure, inferior, shy. He came to heal all who were bruised.
   b. He did not come to condemn those with a flickering wick (light) nor to cut them off and cast them away; but He came to encourage the flickering: the weak (light), unmotivated, half-hearted, and lazy.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Is.40:11).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

4. Jesus Christ will lead justice to victory. He will cause justice to triumph throughout the world. A day of victory is coming. Hearts and lives will turn more and more to Him; men will begin to do right and behave as they should toward God and toward men. There is a glorious day of redemption coming, a climactic day of human history, when all believers shall be perfected in justice and glory.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor.15:24).

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Ro.8:36-37).

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (2 Cor.2:14).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:11-14).

5. Jesus Christ gives hope to all. This verse, written somewhere between 50-70 A.D., was a prediction. History has proven the fulfillment of the prophecy: the people who would trust Jesus were to be the Gentiles. The great purpose of God is for men to trust in "His name" (Ro.10:13). Therefore, the great hope of man is "His name."

"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph.3:6).

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Ps.22:27).

"All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name" (Ps.86:9).

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Is.9:2).

Thought 1. Christ gives hope to all, no matter how unclean, dirty, or polluted they may be. Trusting Him is all He requires.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation....For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:9-10, 13).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

	D. Defense 4: Messiah Is of God's Kingdom and House, 12:22-30 (Mk.3:22-30; Lk.11:14-23)	house divided against itself shall not stand: 26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?	b. A city or house divided cannot stand c. Satan's kingdom divided cannot stand
1 Jesus proved His Messianic power a. The proof: A devil-possessed man was healed[DS1] b. Two reactions 1) The people: They hoped that He was the Messiah[DS2] 2) The religionists: They said that He was of the devil[DS3,4] c. Jesus' answer: Four logical & irrefutable arguments **2 Argument 1: A divided allegiance destroys** a. A kingdom divided destroys itself	22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. 23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? 24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. 25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or	27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. 30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.	**3 Argument 2: Denying Him is inconsistent & illogical** a. Why deny His works while the works of others are accepted? b. His works are a sign 1) Of God's Spirit 2) Of God's kingdom coming to man **4 Argument 3: A strong man has to be bound before his property can be taken** a. Jesus has invaded Satan's house & taken his property b. Jesus has bound Satan **5 Argument 4: Neutrality is impossible—one is either with Christ or against Christ**

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

D. Defense 4: Messiah Is of God's Kingdom and House, 12:22-30

(12:22-30) **Introduction**: the opposition to Christ reached its height in this event (see note—Mt.12:1-50). Christ was scorned and diabolically attacked. He was blasphemed, not only accused, but *charged* with being of the devil. Again He kept calm and remained level-headed and went about proving that He was of God, the true Messiah. He answered the monstrous charge by giving four logical and irrefutable arguments. (See outline and notes—Mk.3:22-30.)

1. Jesus proved His Messianic power (v.22-24).
2. Argument 1: a divided allegiance destroys (v.25-26).
3. Argument 2: denying Him is inconsistent and illogical (v.27-28).
4. Argument 3: a strong man has to be bound before his property can be taken (v.29).
5. Argument 4: neutrality is impossible—one is either with Christ or against Christ (v.30).

1 (12:22-24) **Jesus Christ, Messiah**: Jesus proved His Messianic power.

1. The proof: a devil-possessed man (blind and dumb) was healed. Note three things.
   a. The man was "brought to Jesus." Family or friends cared enough to bring him. How desperately some people need family and friends who care enough to help them.
   b. Jesus had compassion on the most evil, on a man thought to be so evil that he was "possessed with a devil." The devil made the man both blind and dumb, yet Jesus had compassion upon him. His compassion reached out even to the most evil person.
   c. Jesus has the power "to deliver and heal" immediately. The one necessity is coming or being brought to Him.

   Thought 1. Christ's very purpose for coming to earth was to conquer Satan and break his power over men. In some cases, Satan's power was imagined; in other cases, it was real (and still is). When a man is held in bondage by anything, Christ cares and craves to deliver the man (cp. Heb.2:14-15. See Introduction note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34.)

   Thought 2. A man without Christ is "blind and dumb" to the things of God.

2. There are two reactions to Jesus' Messianic power.
   a. The people were amazed. They wondered *in hope*, "Is this the Son of David, the promised Messiah?" They thought He might be, yet they were not quite sure. He was not doing the things they had been taught the Messiah was to do (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18). He seemed to have no concern for political and national affairs. He had neither mobilized an army nor led an uprising against the Romans as the Son of David. Contrariwise, He was demonstrating compassion and love for needy persons who were destitute in spirit and hurting in body. He was proclaiming a message of personal salvation instead of national deliverance.

Such behavior was so different from what they had always believed and been taught. He claimed to be the Messiah; He even claimed to be the Son of God. They wanted to believe; they even hoped, but they just were not sure.

b. The religionists (Pharisees) denied Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22 for the reasons). When they saw the people's turning to Jesus, they did two things: (a) they set out to *shatter* the people's hope and belief lest they lose their own position and hold on the people, and (b) they charged Jesus with being from the devil and possessing the power of the devil (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24).

Thought 1. The people were open to the possibility that Jesus might be the Messiah, but the religionists were not. Why? Why are some minds and hearts open and others closed to Christ? Too often the difference has to do with peer acceptance, reputation, pride, wealth, possessions, fame, power, livelihood, public esteem, applause, praise, or position (1 Jn.2:15-16; cp. 2 Cor.6:17-18).

Thought 2. *Obstinate unbelief* is serious, critically serious (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24). In every generation there are those who cling to their unbelief despite witness after witness. The evidence of the Lord's presence in lives builds up to an undeniable point, yet they still persist in unbelief. They attribute any change in a human life to the power of the mind or to some psychological power of suggestion or to human faith. And they attribute any change in natural events to a fluke in nature or to an unexplainable and yet unknown or undiscovered cause. They will attribute the unexplained to anything just to keep from having to confess Christ and to surrender themselves to Him.

3. Jesus' answer was to give four logical and irrefutable arguments for His Messiahship. The open heart and honest mind must admit four arguments (see outline—pts.2-5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:22) **Devils—Evil Spirits**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34; note—Lk.8:26-39; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:23) **Messiah**: see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(12:24) **Religionists—Unbelief**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(12:24) **Beelzebub—Satan**: the charge against Jesus was that His power to deliver men from evil was not of God, but of the devil (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9). The idea was that He was sent by the devil to deliberately deceive people and to lead them away from the true traditional religion and beliefs. Note two things.

1. The evidence of supernatural power was clearly seen and admitted even by the enemies of Christ. Some force other than human power was healing people and performing miracles. Jesus' enemies were forced to look for answers elsewhere.
2. The depth of unbelief is seen here. It is *obstinate unbelief, a rooted malignity* that is full of malice and attempts to injure. It is an unbelief that will not surrender to the claims of Christ despite the evidence. The evidence was clear. Lives were changed and miracles did happen; yet some persons still refused to believe, and they hardened themselves in that unbelief. They searched out other answers for the miraculous power of Christ. They sought to attribute His power to anything that would keep them from having to confess Christ and surrender their own lives and possessions to Him.

2 (12:25-26) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Messiah, Proof of—Division**: the first argument is that a divided allegiance destroys. This is a universal truth. Division leads to separation and ruin. A divided kingdom, city, or house cannot stand. It fights and destroys itself. Satan is not going to empower anyone to deliver people from evil—not time after time as Jesus was doing. Satan would destroy his kingdom and rule over lives. Jesus was arguing that it was an absolute impossibility that He had come from anywhere other than from God Himself. "What fellowship...hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor.6:14-15).

Christ was saying that His works and power had to be of God. They could not possibly be of Satan nor of any source other than God Himself. Three things show this.

1. His works were too numerous (Jn.21:25).
2. His works were too supernatural—too immense and beyond any known human power—to be explained by any source other than the power of God Himself.
3. His works were too good, too virtuous, and too effective in delivering men to be from any source other than God.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

Christ did not come to build up the kingdom of darkness and of Satan. The only dealings He had with Satan were twofold.

1. Christ broke the power and fear of Satan over lives. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34.)

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
> **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

2. Christ destroyed the works of Satan as the arch rebel against God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9.)

> **Thought 1.** Note the strong lesson on division. No body of people can survive division. A divided people cannot stand. Too many people within churches have ignored the lesson: "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Gal.5:15; cp. 1 Cor.1:10f).

3 (12:27-28) **Jesus Christ, Response; Works—Denial**: the second argument is that denying Jesus is inconsistent and illogical.

1. Why are His claims and His works denied while the claims and works of others are accepted? There were those who "cast out devils" in Jesus' day; there were exorcists who practiced the casting out of demons.
   a. There were those who cast out devils in Christ's name, yet they did not follow Him (Mk.9:38).
   b. There were Jewish exorcists who travelled about using the name of Jesus in a magical way (Acts 19:13f).
   c. There were exorcists who were unfaithful to Christ (Mt.7:22).

Jesus was saying that to deny Him was inconsistent and illogical. The *good works* of other men were acknowledged, yet His *good works* were denied and attributed to evil. His works were the greatest works ever performed for men, and they far outnumbered the works of any other man (Jn.21:25). How could His power and His works be of *evil* and the works of others be of *good*? His works were bound to be of God. If His works were the *good works* of God, then His claim to be the Messiah was bound to be true, for God would not give His power to a liar and a deceiver.

There is only one logical and consistent conclusion: His works are of the Spirit of God. This points to a critical fact: His claim is true. He is the Messiah, and the kingdom of God has come to men (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Any other position is illogical and inconsistent.

2. Christ's works are a sign of His Messiahship. His works are a sign that God's Spirit rests upon Him and that God's kingdom has come to man.

> **Thought 1.** Christ pulls no punches in this argument. He is very clear and pointed: all unbelievers are inconsistent and illogical in their unbelief.
>
> If we ascribe good works to others, saying that they are blessed by God, why do we not do the same with Christ, especially when He did so many great works with such phenomenal power? Why do we not say that He is of God and blessed as no other person is blessed by God? Some do profess such. Why then do so many say His claim to be the Savior is not true?
>
> Christ is saying that such a position is illogical and inconsistent, for God could not bless a liar and a deceiver—especially with such supernatural and phenomenal power.

> **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works**
> **"If I had not done among them that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).**
> **"I must work the works of him that sent him, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
> **"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).**
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:10-11).the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).**

4 (12:29) **Jesus Christ, Destroys Satan—Satan**: the third argument is that a strong man has to be bound before his property can be taken. Satan is the strong man; Christ is the invader who enters Satan's house to free those imprisoned by Satan. Note: Christ is arguing that He is far from being in alliance with Satan; He is actually in opposition to him. He is entering the "evil house" or domain (territory) of Satan and taking his (human) goods. He is turning men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sin" (Acts 26:18). God "delivers us from the power of darkness" (Col.1:13).

When did Christ invade Satan's house and bind him?

1. Satan was bound somewhat during Jesus' temptations in the wilderness. For the first time in history, Satan confronted Someone whom he could not lead away from God. After the wilderness experience, Satan was set back, His power

shaken. The Man Christ Jesus had withstood the heaviest barrage of temptation ever launched. Satan was bound to sense the impending *binding* that was to come.

> **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

2. Satan was bound even more as He confronted Jesus throughout His life with temptation after temptation (Mt.16:23). Jesus stood fast, resisted and overcame the temptations, conquering and binding Satan more and more each time.

> **"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (Jn.8:46).**
>
> **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn.14:30).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:26).**

3. Satan was bound dramatically after Jesus' Garden of Gethsemane experience. Jesus was tempted to take another route other than the cross, yet He obeyed God perfectly (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:39; note—Mk.14:41-42).

> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin [the Garden of Gethsemane]" (Heb.12:3-4).**

4. Satan was bound in a completed sense at the cross. Christ had secured *perfect righteousness*—He had never sinned (2 Cor.5:21; see notes—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3). Therefore He was the Ideal Man, the Perfect Man. As the Ideal Man, His righteousness and death could stand for and embrace all men who would place their lives into His keeping. Satan's house of evil and sin was broken, completely broken.

> **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn.14:30).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**

5. Satan shall be bound climactically and forever at the end of time. Both the earth and the heavens shall be made anew and established forever in perfection—established without Satan and his "evil house" carrying on their evil work. (Cp. 2 Pt.3:3-18.)

> **"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Th.2:8).**
>
> **"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev.20:10).**

5 (12:30) **Neutrality**: the fourth argument is that neutrality is impossible. A person is either with Christ or against Christ. This could be a picture of a shepherd or a farmer. Each is involved in gathering—the one gathering sheep and the other gathering the harvest. Each also can become guilty of scattering—the one scattering the sheep and the other scattering the harvest.

Christ says two things.

1. A person stands with Him, believing and trusting Him, or else a person stands against Him in unbelief and distrust.
2. A person works with Him in gathering others or else works against Him by scattering others (see note—Mt.12:22-24).

Note two significant facts.

1. Neutrality is impossible. There are only two sides: with Christ or against Christ.
2. Refraining from evil is not enough. A person must gather with Christ. A person must constantly be doing good. If we do not gather, we scatter.

> **"For he that is not against us is on our part" (Mk.9:40).**
>
> **"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).**
>
> **"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).**
>
> **"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Dt.30:15).**
>
> **"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).**

	E. Defense 5: A Man's Words Determine His Destiny, 12:31-37 (Mk.3:28-30; Lk.11:14-16)	and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.	Christ good or bad b. Christ is known by His fruit
1 Blasphemous words against the Holy Spirit are unforgiven a. The warning 1) All is forgiven except this one sin 2) Even sin against Christ is forgiven b. The terrible result 1) Unforgiven in this world 2) Unforgiven in the next world	31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.	34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.	**3 Words expose the heart** a. Expose some as vipers 1) Because are evil 2) Because words are out of the heart b. Expose a good man: A good heart that does good things c. Expose an evil man: An evil heart that does evil things **4 All idle words must be accounted for**[DSI] a. Every idle word b. In the day of judgment
2 Words either confess or deny Christ a. A demand: Make	33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt,	37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.	**5 Words determine a man's destiny** a. Words justify him b. Words condemn him

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

E. Defense 5: A Man's Words Determine His Destiny, 12:31-37

(12:31-37) **Introduction—Tongue—Words**: words are extremely important, in fact, so important that they determine a man's destiny (Mt.12:37). Our words either bless God or curse God; bless men or curse men (Jas.3:9). The tongue is said to be "a world of iniquity," a "fire," and "an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (Jas.3:6, 8). Christ said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but [the words] which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man" (Mt.15:11).

There is a terrible responsibility placed upon man for the words he speaks. (See Tongue—General Subject Index.)

1. Blasphemous words against the Holy Spirit are unforgiven (v.31-32).
2. Words either confess or deny Christ (v.33).
3. Words expose the heart (v.34-35).
4. All idle words must be accounted for (v.36).
5. Words determine a man's destiny (v.37).

1 (12:31-32) **Tongue—Unpardonable Sin**: blasphemous words against the Holy Spirit are unforgiven. The warning is unmistakeable. Note these facts.

1. It is a *tongue-sin* that is unpardonable. This fact alone points to the seriousness of all *tongue-sins* (see outline—Jas.3:1-12, and Subject Index-*Tongue*).
2. Note why Christ gave the warning. He warns...
   - to strike fear in the hearts of those who border on committing the unpardonable sin (Mt.12:23-24; cp. 23:13).
   - to stir a reverence and repentance toward God (Mt.12:33, 37).
3. The one sin for which there is no forgiveness is not a sin against Christ but a sin against the Holy Spirit (Mt.12:31-32). Why? There is one simple reason given in Scripture. The Holy Spirit is the Person who works in the heart of man; it is He who "convicts the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...." (Jn.16:8-11). There is a single word that is very descriptive of His work: *conviction*. A man sees, feels, or hears about God's goodness and love and of his own need to surrender to God. The Spirit takes those evidences, using them as convictions. He convicts a man's heart to believe. A man may go on and on...
   - insisting on his own way.
   - refusing to acknowledge God and surrender his life to God.
   - choosing to be blind to what he sees, feels, and hears (the convictions of the Spirit).

Such a man eventually becomes so hardened that he cannot recognize God's truth and goodness. He reaches such a point of hardness that he no longer sees God or feels God or hears God. This man has blasphemed God's Spirit and counted His convictions as worthless. He has abused, reviled, neglected, ignored, and hardened his heart to the promptings of God's Spirit permanently. He has blasphemed God's Spirit and such blasphemy is unforgivable, Christ says.

4. Note what the unpardonable sin is. In the simplest and clearest of terms, it is *stubborn rejection, stiff-necked refusal, obstinate unbelief*. Such results in *a dead spirit* and apparently *a rooted malice* (Mt.12:23-24; cp. 23:13. See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24.)

When the Spirit convicts a man to turn to God, and that man...

- rejects and rejects, his rejection becomes stubborn.
- refuses and refuses, his refusal becomes stiff-necked.
- disbelieves and disbelieves, his unbelief becomes obstinate.

That man deadens his spirit against the convictions of the Spirit and develops a rooted malice against God. He insists on his own way too long and refuses to surrender to God while his heart is still soft enough to be touched.

What a warning to creatures of conditioning and habit—a warning against conditioning ourselves to reject and reject God. And what a call to stir a reverence and repentance toward God! How much we need to surrender to God while our hearts are soft enough to be touched!

5. In trying to determine just who it is that commits the unpardonable sin, two things are known.
   ⇒ The blood of Christ cleanses from every sin. There is not a single sin that cannot be forgiven—except obstinate unbelief against the convictions of the Holy Spirit (Mt.12:31-32).
   ⇒ There is no hope for salvation except through Christ and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, to reject or blaspheme the convicting power of the Holy Spirit is to deprive a person of salvation through Christ. Of course, a man who is concerned about having committed the unpardonable sin has not. His very concern shows that he can still come to Christ.

Thought 1. This is the glorious grace of God: all manner of sin (any sin, every sin, even blasphemy—even a word spoken against Christ) will be forgiven. This shows the humiliation that both Christ and the Father are willing to bear through the denial and cursing of men. God forgives all manner of sin. There is not a single sin that God will not forgive, no matter how terrible and how often repeated. Paul, the *old* Saul of Tarsus who was a blasphemer and murderer of early believers, was forgiven by God and greatly used by God (Acts 9:1; cp. 8:1).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Thy mercy is great above the heavens" (Ps.108:4).

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow" (Is.1:18).

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Is.43:25).

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Is.44:22).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundandtly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity" (Mic.7:18).

6. The terrible result is unmistakable. All sin is forgiven—*EXCEPT ONE*. Blasphemy against the Spirit of God is not forgiven. It is not forgiven in this world nor in the next world. In this world, there will be no *peace of conscience*, no *sense of forgiveness, no absolution*. In the next world, a man will stand guilty before God.

"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mk.3:29; cp. Heb.6:6; 10:26; 12:17).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them" (Is.63:10).

2 (12:33) **Tongue—Confession**: words either confess or deny Christ. Christ is the tree in this verse, referring back to verses 27-28. What Christ was saying is twofold.

1. Christ was making a demand: "Decide. Make Christ [Messiah] either good or bad. Quit vascillating and swaying with the wind. Judge me to be good and my fruit good, or else judge me to be corrupt and my fruit corrupt. I am either good, that is, I am who I say I am, the Messiah, the Savior of the world; or else I am bad, a deceiver and a liar, out to lead people away from God into another path of human reasoning. Who am I? Judge. Decide. For I am known by my works even as a tree is known by its fruits."
2. Christ is known by His fruit. He was saying, "There is no middle ground. Neutrality is impossible (v.29). You are either with me or against me, so quit playing the hypocrite and being half-hearted about me. Make a decision. Make and declare me *good* [of value] for you and your life or else declare me *corrupt* [a deceiver and liar] for you and your life. I am known by my fruit, so either speak for me as good or else speak for me as corrupt."

Note how strong Christ was in this demand, in fact, how strong He was throughout this whole passage. How thin is the ice upon which so many of us stand. How close to the precipice we are with our thoughts of waiting and indecision.

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10:21).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him" (1 Ki.18:21).

3 (12:34-35) **Tongue—Heart**: Christ says that a man's words expose his heart, the kind of man he is. A man's words expose one of three things about him:

⇒ that he has the heart of a viper (v.34).
⇒ that he has the heart of a good man (v.35).
⇒ that he has the heart of an evil man (v.35).

The idea is that words come out of an overflowing heart: "Out of the abundance [overflow] of the heart the mouth speaketh."

⇒ A man's words expose his true nature: what he is like beneath the surface.
⇒ A man's words expose what he is down deep within his heart: his motives, desires, and ambitions.
⇒ A man's words expose his true character: good or bad, kind or cruel.
⇒ A man's words expose his mind, what he thinks: pure or impure thoughts, dirty or clean thoughts.
⇒ A man's words expose his spirit, what he believes and pursues: the legitimate or illegitimate, the intelligent or ignorant, the true or false, the beneficial or wasteful.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"There is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the *heart of the sons of men* is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead" (Eccl.9:3).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

Thought 1. What we do is due to our heart. We act and behave and do things because of what we are within. Our hearts, what we are within, determine our behavior. This says something extremely important. *Reformation*—reforming behavior and changing the outside—is not the answer to the ills of human nature or of society. *Transformation* of the heart, of the *inner being* of man, is the answer. Human nature cannot be *made* good; it has to be transformed, that is, regenerated or born again. Only God can reach into the inner recesses of man's spirit to change his heart.

Note: the answer to the world's problems is not political, legal, military, or even religious. It is spiritual—a spiritual change of man's heart.

"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:15).

"And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (Lk.10:27-28).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb.10:22-23).

4 (12:36) **Tongue—Words**: all idle words must be accounted for in the day of judgment (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:36).

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) God hears and records every idle word that we speak.

"There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether" (Ps.139:4).

2) Unprofitable words make us and show us to be unprofitable servants.
3) Our idle words must be confessed to God and His mercy must be requested, for we are guilty of this unprofitable and wasteful sin.
4) Scripture flows with charge after charge governing the tongue.

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Ro.14:19).

"Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor.14:26).

"Let it not be once named among you...neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting" (Eph.5:3-4).

"Edify one another" (1 Th.5:11).

"Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good" (Job 15:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:36) **Idle** (aergos): means negative, unfruitful, barren, ineffective. The term "idle words" conveys very well what Christ means.

5 (12:37) **Tongue—Words**: words determine a man's destiny. Our words will either justify or condemn us.

Thought 1. The same law is common to man. A man is judged to be guilty or not guilty based on testimony, that is, by his words.

Kind, gracious, loving, edifying, profitable words will testify for us, justifying us in the day of judgment. Ugly, dirty, filthy, angry, spiteful, gossiping, grumbling, murmuring words will testify against us and condemn us in the day of judgment.

"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Mt.12:37).

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Pt.3:10).

"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Pr.13:3).

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Pr.18:21).

"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles" (Pr.21:23).

"Thine own mouth condemneth thee...yea, thine own lips testify against thee" (Job 15:6).

Thought 2. Two things are said about a man who "bridleth not his tongue" (Jas.1:26).

1) His religion is vain, false, empty, untrue, hypocritical.
2) He deceives his own heart.

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas.1:26).

	F. Defense 6: Messiah's Answer to an Evil Generation or Apostates, 12:38-45 (Lk.11:24-26; 29-32)	a greater than Jonas is here.	messenger than Jonah c. Result: Condemnation
1 An evil generation sought a sign	38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.	42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.	**3 An evil generation was condemned because it did not seek the greater wisdom** a. The queen of Sheba will testify against b. Why: Now a greater One than Solomon to impart the truth
a. Jesus condemned His generation as evil & adulterous[DS1]	39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:	43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.	**4 An evil generation followed a false religion—that of self-reformation** a. Illustration: A parable 1) Man reforms his life
b. Jesus gave one sign 1) The sign: Symbolized by Jonah 2) The sign: His death & resurrection[DS2]	40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.	44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.	2) Man fails to fill his life with Christ
2 An evil generation was condemned because it did not repent a. Nineveh will testify against b. Why: Now a greater	41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold,	45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.	b. Result 1) Greater depravity 2) End condition is worse c. Point: A generation that rejects Christ is fit for the take-over of evil

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

F. Defense 6: Messiah's Answer to an Evil Generation or Apostates, 12:38-45

(12:38-45) **Introduction**: there is within the heart of every person a desire to be special and to be treated special. Such is the nature of man. The desire to be special can be good or it can be bad. What is within the heart makes the difference.

For example, in dealing with God it is good to want a special relationship with God or a special call or a special gift. However, it is evil to seek special or spectacular signs. Christ is very clear on this point. Why? Because God has given every sign that could be needed in Christ Himself.

1. An evil generation sought a sign (v.38-40).
2. An evil generation was condemned because it did not repent (v.41).
3. An evil generation was condemned because it did not seek the greater wisdom (v.42).
4. An evil generation followed a false religion—that of reformation (v.43-45).

1 (12:38-40) **Generation—Signs**: an evil generation sought a sign. Paul said, "The Jews require a sign" (1 Cor.1:22). And they did; they always required supernatural signs from any prophet or messenger who claimed to be from God. Six things should be noted.

1. This is the same kind of temptation that Jesus faced in the second temptation of His wilderness experience: to prove His Messiahship by some spectacular sign (see outline and note—Mt.4:5-7. Cp. note—Mt.4:5-7.)
2. The Jews wanted more than the signs of miracles. They wanted *a sign from heaven*, apparently some spectacular event occurring in the sky which would reveal beyond doubt that Christ was the promised Messiah (Mt.16:1; Mk.8:11; Lk.11:16). Note the words "from thee." They wanted the sign to appear at a given moment by His command, not some freak spectacular event happening accidentally in the future that He might claim as a sign.
3. There were at least two reasons why the Jews required a sign.
   a. Their religion was a religion of signs and of miracles. Their religion had been given by God Himself and established by the miraculous acts of the prophets of God. A quick survey of the Old Testament will show this. Thus, anyone who claimed to be of God had to prove his credentials by what the Jews considered some "sign" from God.
   b. Jesus had come to supersede or fulfill the religion that had been built upon supernatural signs (Mt.5:17). The Jews were asking what His signs were, His credentials to do this.

> **"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee" (Mt.12:38).**
>
> **"And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven" (Lk.11:16).**
>
> **"Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" (Jn.2:18).**

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (Jn.4:48).

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom" (1 Cor.1:22).

4. The Jews were totally unjustified in seeking additional signs from Jesus. There had been sign after sign, miracle after miracle, work after work—sufficient to lead any man to the firm belief: "Truly, this man is the Son of God" (Mk.15:39; cp. Acts 2:22). A lack of signs was not their problem. Their problem was twofold.
   a. They just did not believe and did not want to believe. They were obstinate in their unbelief.
   b. They did not understand the love and the faith of God, that is, the true religion of God. They failed to see what God was after: faith and love, not signs and works. God wants a man to simply believe and love Him because of who He is and because of what He has done for man. The true religion of God is not a religion of works and signs but of faith and love in Christ Jesus, His own Son (see notes—Mt.4:1-11; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; note—4:48-49; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25; note—4:5. Cp. Acts 2:22.)
5. Those who sought a sign were called an evil and adulterous generation. The reason is simple. They were apostates, going after the false gods of works and signs instead of seeking the God of faith and love. In seeking after signs and works, they were committing spiritual whoredom, that is, turning from the true God and His Messiah to the false gods of signs and works. (Note: it is human reason that seeks after signs and works and proofs. The spirit of man seeks after belief and trust and love—the spiritual qualities that bind life together and make sense of life in all its facets.)
6. No sign whatsoever shall be given to any generation but one: the sign of Jonah. The sign of Jonah pointed to the resurrection of Christ from the dead (Mt.12:39-40. See notes—Lk.11:29-30; 11:33-36.) The resurrection is the *great proof* that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior of the world. He is "declared to be the son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

Thought 1. Note two significant lessons.

1) Christ will hear and answer prayer, meeting the true needs of His people. But He will not fill the selfish lusts of people, nor satisfy the curiosity of the carnal. He will not answer the arguments of the unbelieving by spectacular signs (Jas.4:1-3). God is through with signs. He has given the ultimate in signs; He has given His Son: His death, burial, and resurrection.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).**
>
> **"But ye denied the Holy One and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:14-15).**
>
> **"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).**
>
> **"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).**
>
> **"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).**
>
> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"[God's power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**

2) Note the word "Master." Not all who call Him, "Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." Many profess, but few possess. "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.22:14; cp. 20:16. See outline and notes—Mt.7:21-23.)

Thought 2. Men try to *prescribe* how God should act. They insist and beg God to do something, to give a sign; and if God will do it, the man promises to serve God with renewed commitment. Note several things.

1) God does not work by signs. He works by faith and love. He wants men to believe Him because He has promised, not because some spectacular sign occurs. He may sometimes grant a sign because of the weakness of a believer, but signs are not His way of dealing with men.
2) We should not prescribe to God, trying to dictate how He is to deal with us. God has given us *three enormous helps* that are more than sufficient in meeting our needs: His Word, prayer, and the Holy Spirit.
3) Many claim to have received signs, but our Lord says in a clear and unmistakeable statement: "There shall no sign be given...but [the resurrection]." The resurrection is the summit of signs. Think—what more can God do?

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:39) **Adulterous**: spiritual adultery and unfaithfulness; apostate; spiritual whoredom; seeking and carousing with other gods; worshipping and giving one's love to false gods. The generation was committing spiritual adultery against God. However, the word "adultery" could also mean that the people of the day were so given over to sexual sins that they could be characterized as an *adulterous* generation. (Cp. Judg.2:17; 1 Chron.5:25; Ps.106:39; Ezk.6:9; 20:30; 23:35; Hos.4:12; 5:4; 9:1.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:40) **Heart of the Earth**: the place of departed spirits; the abode of the dead (see note—Eph.4:8-10).

2 (12:41) **Jonah—Nineveh—Repentance—Judgment**: an evil generation was condemned because it did not repent. Note several things.

1. A whole generation can be evil and adulterous—so evil and adulterous that its life-style can be called "evil and adulterous" (v.39).
2. The Ninevites are a prime example of *repentance* and of just how essential repentance is. A person must repent or else he shall be condemned.
3. There is a day of judgment out in the future. Note the words "in judgment" and "in the judgment" (v.42). Both phrases point to a definite day of judgment.
4. The Ninevites' repentance will be used as a testimony in the day of judgment. The people of Nineveh are the prime example of people's turning to God from the depth of sin. They had stooped into the pit of sin, as deeply as a people can stoop, yet they repented at the preaching of Jonah.
5. The Ninevites' repentance leaves all *without excuse*. Why? There is no one who has stooped any lower into sin than they did, yet they repented. They show that anyone can turn to God from sin no matter how terrible the sin is. No man has any excuse for not turning to God.
6. Christ claims to be greater than Jonah. He claims to be the greatest messenger who has ever come, the Messiah Himself. Therefore, all men are definitely without excuse. The worst sinners in history repented at the preaching of a mere man, the prophet Jonah. Now the Messiah Himself, God's own Son, has come; and He has preached and announced: "the kingdom of God" itself is at hand. Every person is now, beyond question, without excuse.

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**

Thought 1. Note several things about Nineveh.
1) Nineveh was an ungodly and wicked city (Jonah 1:2).
2) God sent a prophet (Jonah) to warn Nineveh.
3) "The people of Nineveh *believed God*" and repented when the prophet preached.

Christ applies the experience of Nineveh to the world.
1) The world is an ungodly and wicked world.
2) God sent His prophet (Jesus Christ, His own Son) to warn the world in love.
3) The people of the world "do not believe God" and do not repent when the message of Christ is preached.

Thought 2. Note what Christ is saying. "You ask for a sign. *I am God's sign.*"
1) The Ninevites recognized God's message when Jonah preached, and they believed God and repented.
2) "You do not recognize me. You are so blind, evil, and adulterous that you cannot even see One who is greater than Jonah. God has given you *the greater sign*, the Messiah Himself; yet you do not see or hear."
3) "The Ninevites shall rise up in judgment and be used as a testimony against you."

Thought 3. Note two significnt points.
1) Jonah was but a mere man. He was a prophet, yes, but he was still a man with sinful passions just like we are. But Christ is Messiah, the Son of God Himself. Note that Christ is proclaiming and vindicating His Messiahship.
2) The repentance of Nineveh will be mentioned in the day of judgment. The Ninevites will rise up as witnesses of how people can turn from extreme wickedness to God. The Ninevites' example will leave the worst sinner without excuse. No matter how wicked and evil, a person is without excuse. The Ninevites had less than what we have. They had a weaker witness, Jonah. We have the greater witness, Christ Himself.

3 (12:42) **Queen of Sheba—God, Seeking—Man, Seeking—Wisdom**: an evil generation is condemned because it does not seek the greater wisdom. There are several important lessons about the Queen of Sheba and Christ in this verse.

1. The Queen of Sheba is a prime example of an individual's *seeking after* One who knows the truth. She demonstrates just how important it is to seek someone who can *share the truth*. In her search, she had to seek as diligently and go through as much as anyone ever has to experience in seeking after the truth.
   a. She had a long and perilous search. She had to travel from "the uttermost parts of the earth" to seek the truth.
   b. She had extreme responsibility. She was a queen with enormous duties and a busy schedule. As the Head of State, duty after duty demanded her time and presence, and a whole kingdom depended upon her care. Yet she let nothing stop her search for the truth.
   c. She was uncertain about her seeking. Her search was a gamble, uncertain in at least two senses.
      1) She could not be absolutely certain that Solomon was as wise in the truth as he was said to be. Reputations become exaggerated when spread by word of mouth. She knew this just as any wise person would know.
      2) She had no personal invitation to visit Solomon. Fame flatters men, often causing them to become inaccessible in order to enhance their fame of *busyness* and *heavy responsibility* and *greatness*. She could not be sure he would see her or grant much time to her.
   d. She had to bear terrible prejudice. She was a woman in a man's world. In her day, women were nothing more than chattel property, possessed and used by men for their own pleasure as they so desired.

2. The Queen of Sheba's seeking will be used as a testimony in the day of judgment. Her diligent seeking—the unbelievable extremes and difficulties she overcame to find One who knew the truth—stands as a testimony against all who fail to seek the truth.

3. The Queen of Sheba's seeking leaves all without excuse. There is no distance too far or perilous, no responsibility so important, no question or uncertainty so weighty, no prejudice or opposition so strong—nothing any greater than what the Queen of Sheba faced. Yet despite all, she sought the truth. It was the primary drive of her life. Everyone is left without excuse.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**
>
> **"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (Pr.2:3-5).**

4. Christ claims to be greater and superior to Solomon. He claims to be the Way, the Truth and the Life—just imagine, *life itself* (Jn.14:6). He claims to be the One whom all men should seek and find—at any price—or else face condemnation.

Since Christ has come, all men are definitely without excuse. The most improbable person in all the world, the Queen of Sheba, went to the farthest extremes possible to seek after the truth. And she was seeking truth from a mere man, Solomon. Now the Messiah, the One who is "the truth" Himself, has come and revealed the truth of God. Every person is now, beyond question, without excuse.

> **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:9-11).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).**

Thought 1. The Queen of Sheba went to the farthest extremes humanly possible to seek one (Solomon) who might share the truth with her. She is a dynamic example that no effort, energy, strain, or suffering should be spared in seeking the One who is the very embodiment of truth Himself.

Thought 2. If we are to know God, diligent seeking is demanded:

> **"He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6. Cp. Mt.7:7; Pr.8:17).**

4 (12:43-45) **Religion—Reformation**: an evil generation follows a false religion—that of reformation. How descriptive this picture is of a man who reforms and cleans up his life!

1. Note what happens when a man casts the evil (spirit) out of his life.
   a. Many dry places are experienced. No matter where a person goes or what he does, there are many moments of dryness. No matter how diligently a person seeks, nothing seems to fill up the evil (spirit) put out of his life. There is always some dryness.
   b. The evil (spirit) that was in man and has been put aside seeks rest but finds none. Man's evil spirit, when it is subdued or cast aside, becomes restless. It goes about in *restless wanderings*, yet it finds no rest.
   c. A man always experiences the craving of the evil to return. The evil (spirit) says, "I will return." Note the words "Into my house." His house was the place that was so comfortable, that made him feel so secure and so at ease. The evil spirit is saying, "I will return to that which always looked so good and tasted so good and made me feel so good."
2. All the above has to do with a man's reforming and cleaning up his life. Note what happens when the evil (spirit) returns to the man, knocking on the door of his thoughts and prying at the windows of his desires.
   a. He finds the house empty *and unoccupied.*
   b. He finds the house swept and clean and put in order—ready for occupancy. The man had removed all the rubbish and swept out all the dirt. He had cleaned the house of his life, but he had not invited the *tenant* (the Lord Jesus Christ) to move in and occupy the premises.
3. Note what happens when the evil (spirit) finds the house empty and unoccupied.
   a. He swarms and floods in with more force than ever. The man indulges and indulges much more than before.
   b. He brings more evil with him—launches out and does more evil than ever.
   c. He "dwells" there. It is unlikely he will ever clean his house again.

The reader should note that Jesus applies the truth of this parable not only to individuals but to whole generations and societies as well. The answer to the evil and ills of society is not reformation—not the changing of the outside and external—but the transformation and regeneration of man's heart. It is the filling of the human heart with Christ Himself and with the acts of Christian love and care. The message and acts of love and care are to be carried to a world suffering and reeling in pain and war, and doomed to die without God.

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years [religious ritual]" (Gal.4:8-10).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"[If] after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Pt.2:20-21).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev.2:4).

Thought 1. Note four lessons.

1) Evil can be conquered through Christ. It can be expelled, pushed back and cast out of our lives; *but it cannot be destroyed or eliminated—not in this life.* Evil, although it can be put out of a life and turned from, will always attack. What is needed is a *a supernatural power* to turn from evil. That power is in Jesus Christ.
2) When evil is put out of a life, something must be put within to take its place. What? Jesus Christ. The love of Christ and His mission of redemption is to fill a man's heart and life. Take all the acts of love and caring—a man cannot touch even the surface during a lifetime. The world is desperately weighed down with prejudice, war, wickedness, selfishness, pride and power; and many people are so needful. A man must cast the evil out of his life and replace it with Christ. When a man gives his life to Christ, he has so much to do that he does not have time to think evil or do evil.
3) The church's answer to keep from losing people is true converson and Christian action. A person must be truly converted from evil to Christ and then put to work. The converted believer must be *shown* and *directed* to his task in the Lord's church, then he must be led to serve Christ.
4) The church's task is twofold.
   a) To show people the desperate needs of the world and community, both nationally and internationally (Acts 1:8).
   b) To challenge and lead people to become personally involved in meeting those needs.

	G. Defense 7: Messiah's Answer to Doubting Relatives, 12:46-50 (Mk.3:31-35; Lk.8:19-21)	ing to speak with thee. 48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.	**2 He proclaimed the existence of a unique family** a. It is not based on blood relationships b. It is based on discipleship c. It is based on doing God's will d. It is based on a heavenly, spiritual relationship with God as Father
1 He was misunderstood by His family a. They "Stood without": Disturbed by His claims b. They tried to interrupt His ministry	46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. 47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desir-		

DIVISION VIII

THE MESSIAH'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF AGAINST OPPONENTS, 12:1-50

G. Defense 7: Messiah's Answer to Doubting Relatives, 12:46-50

(12:46-50) **Introduction—Family**: the family can be a subtle and powerful opposition. In fact, there is no stronger opposition than a family that misunderstands or stands against one of its own members who has accepted Christ. Jesus had declared, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Mt.10:34-39). He was now experiencing this opposition Himself.

Note that Mary was acting out of a mother's love and a sense of responsibility for her son (see outline and note—Mk.3:31-32). Nevertheless, she was wrong.

The opposition to Jesus had been strong and fierce, but now the opposition took a new twist (Mt.12:1f). Those who were most dear to Him, those of His own family, did not understand Him; they did not believe and even opposed His ministry. Many who have followed Christ have faced the same misunderstanding and rejection from their families, and in some cases, the rejection has been hostile. Practically every genuine believer knows another believer who has experienced opposition from some family member. It is an experience more common than usually thought. (See outline and notes—Mk.3:31-35; Lk.8:19-21 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus was misunderstood by His own family (v.46-47).
2. Jesus proclaimed the existence of a unique family relationship—a spiritual family (v.48-50).

1 (12:46-47) **Family**: Jesus Christ was misunderstood by His family. Apparently His family was disturbed by His claims and all the rumors and talk being buzzed about the country. (See note—Mk.3:31-32. This is an important note to understand His family's reaction against Him.)

Jesus was not disowning His family; He was not reacting because He was hurt by their disbelief. Jesus held His family close to His heart just as He did every soul and every home. This is clearly seen in Scripture.

1. His thoughts were tenderly upon His mother and her care while He was dying upon the cross (Jn.19:27).
2. He was probably experiencing a deep longing for His family's support when He uttered the despairing truth: "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58).
3. He was constantly talking about the family relationship by referring to His *Father*, God Himself.
4. He, God's very own Son, was sent into the world through the body of a woman and reared in the environment of a home. God thereby sanctified the family and the home beyond human esteem.

In this passage, Jesus is not disowning His family nor relegating the family to a position of less importance, nor teaching that the human family matters little to God. What, then, is He doing? He is proclaiming the existence of a unique family—a spiritual family (see note—Mt.12:48-50).

> **"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim.5:8).**

Thought 1. Note several things.

1) Jesus was preaching when His family interrupted Him. Think of the different ways He could have reacted, yet notice how He controlled the situation. Every servant confronts interruption sometime. We should control our reactions when we are interrupted, as difficult as it may be.
2) Jesus' family felt close enough to Him to interrupt Him. Easy access and familiarity do breed less respect and esteem (see outline and notes—Mt.13:53-58).
3) Jesus uses the interruption to teach a great lesson: God is building a unique family—a spiritual family.

Thought 2. Jesus' family had the opportunity to be with Him daily, the privilege of supporting Him and of learning from Him, yet they were not with Him. Why? Easy access and familiarity often breeds...

- less respect
- neglect
- contempt
- less esteem
- unbelief

We often neglect that which we can have anytime we desire it: parents, children, spouse, friends, worship, Bible study, prayer.

Thought 3. Opposition, even from our family, should not cause us to forsake our calling and mission. Christ continued on fulfilling all that God had called Him to do.

Thought 4. Disruption to our ministry often comes from friends. It may be unintentional; nevertheless, it is still disruptive. Friends feel close enough to interrupt and say a quick "hello" or to extend a personal invitation, and they expect personal responses. Such often interrupts the ministry, whether preaching, teaching, or preparing to minister. Note that Christ switches the interruption into an opportunity to teach.

2 (12:48-50) **Family—Spiritual Family**: Jesus Christ proclaimed the existence of a unique family—a spiritual family. He proclaimed a family relationship so bound together spiritually that it supersedes the human family. (See note—Lk.8:20.)

Jesus said four things about the spiritual family.

1. The spiritual family is not based on blood relationships. The human family is not downgraded, but a superior family relationship is proclaimed. It is a true personal relationship with God the Father, a relationship that is spiritual and eternal.

It is a relationship that is above the physical and temporal. The human family is important, but the human family breaks down. It breaks down in all its relationships. Children rebel, turning against parents and against one another. Parents oppose children and too often reject them. Spouses mistreat and turn from one another and allow barriers to build.

New families are often rebuilt after death as well as divorce. Human families are temporal and ever so fragile because of human selfishness and evil and the sin of the human heart. The human family is important, but it is only a type of the true family, the family of God Himself.

The true spiritual family—those who genuinely know God in a personal way—know *a stronger and closer union, a more binding force* than blood relationships. They know a true spiritual relationship with God the Father and His true followers, a spiritual relationship that is...

- more loyal
- more secure
- more understanding
- more loving
- more tender
- more binding
- more meaningful
- more purposeful
- more challenging
- more fulfilling

Of course, God's great desire is for the human family to be part of His eternal family. There should be no closer bond than a human family spiritually united in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. The spiritual family is based on discipleship—true discipleship to Jesus Christ. One of the clearest descriptions of what it means to be a true disciple of Christ is found in Luke (see outline and note—Lk.14:25-35).

a. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must put Christ first: before family—before self.

> **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).**

b. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must bear the cross of death—to self.

> **"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:27).**

c. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must give thought to discipleship—count the cost and the consequences.

> **"For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace" (Lk.14:28-32).**

d. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must pay the ultimate price—forsake all.

> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**

e. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must demonstrate love to others.

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**

f. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must be steadfast in his loyalty to Jesus Christ.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (Jn.8:31).

g. In order to become a disciple of Christ, a man must be fruitful in serving Christ.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).

Note that discipleship is centered around Jesus Christ. He is the central figure around whom all disciples live and move and have their being. Thus, it is discipleship to Christ that brings about the family of God. The family of God is a spiritual family based on true discipleship to Jesus Christ.

3. The spiritual family is based on doing God's will. Christ clearly says that doing God's will results in several things.

a. Doing the will of God establishes the family of God: it establishes a unique family—a spiritual family built by the Father and the Son. The family of God is a family that is built around the will of God: it is a family of people who are committed to doing the will of God.

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt.12:50).

"And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it" (Lk.8:21).

b. Doing the will of God secures fellowship with God and His people: it secures a unique fellowship—a spiritual fellowship with both the Father and the Son.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:17).

c. Doing the will of God proves that a person has become a member of God's family: that a person has entered into the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, into the spiritual world or dimension of being.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city [heaven]" (Rev.22:14).

d. Doing the will of God proves a unique fact: that God's family does exist—that what Christ claims is true.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:17; cp. 16-18).

4. The spiritual family is based on a heavenly or spiritual relationship with God as Father. Christ very clearly says: "Whosoever shall do the will of *my Father which is in heaven*, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." A person who seeks after God, who seeks to do His will, is the person who develops a relationship with God. That person becomes God's adopted child within God's family, a brother or sister to Christ.

Several unique things create this spiritual family of sons and daughters of God, of brothers and sisters to Christ.

a. The spiritual family is created by unique rebirth of one's spirit—wrought by the Spirit of God (see note—Jn.3:1-15).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3, 5).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

b. The spiritual family is created by unique adoption into the family of God—witnessed to by the Spirit of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.4:5-6).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witnesss with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and

joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

c. The spiritual family is created by unique fellowship created by the Spirit of God (see note—Acts 2:42).

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

d. The spiritual family is created by unique commitment to Jesus Christ, that is, by becoming disciples of His—stirred by the love of Christ. (See pt.2 this note—Mt.12:48-50.)

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

e. The spiritual family is created by unique experience as one worships and serves God daily.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

Thought 1. Christ sets the supreme example of loyalty to God and to the family of God.

Thought 2. A family and friends need to tread ever so carefully in their response to the person who is called to serve God.
1) God expects support and encouragement, not questioning and opposition.
2) God expects understanding and not feelings of being neglected and uncared for.

Thought 3. The believer's commitment to Christ is not for the purpose of minimizing the family but to give God His rightful place: supremacy over our lives.

	IX. THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52	forth to sow;	
	A. The Parable of the Sower: How a Man Receives the Gospel, 13:1-9 (cp.13:18-23; Mk.4:1-9; Lk.8:4-15)	4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:	**3 A large number did not allow the Word to take permanent root** a. Some dwelt by the wayside*DS1* b. Some received the Word in stony places*DS2*
1 Christ preached a parable a. On the Sabbath b. By the seashore in a ship c. Multitudes gathered d. They pressed Him into a boat	The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.	5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.	
2 A sower went forth to sow	2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.	7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:	c. Some received the Word among thorns*DS3*
	3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went	8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.	**4 Only a small number allowed the Word to take permanent root** **5 Only a few allowed the Word to bear 100% fruit** **6 A strong call: Hear**

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

A. The Parable of the Sower: How a Man Receives the Gospel, 13:1-9

(13:1-52) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Parables—Mysteries—Kingdom of Heaven**: the eight parables of Mt.13 have to do with the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.13:11). By *mystery* Jesus does not mean something mysterious, but rather something unknown and not revealed until this present time. What is the mystery, the new revelation? It is twofold.

1. Jesus pictured modern-day Christianity. He said the Kingdom of Heaven is a mixture of good and bad. It includes professing believers as well as genuine believers; false doctrine as well as true doctrine; false ritual as well as true ritual; hypocritical worship as well as genuine worship; professing belief as well as real belief. (Cp. the Sower and the Seed, the Wheat and the Tares, the Mustard Seed, and the Leaven.)
2. Jesus pictured the world and its priceless value. He said that He had come to seek and sacrificially purchase the world. He said that His followers are to laboriously work, seeking to pull men into the kingdom. He said they were unusually privileged: they had received the new revelation of God to add to their knowledge of the old revelation. Therefore, they were now responsible for teaching the new as well as the old (cp. the Hidden Treasure, the Pearl, the Net, and the Householder).

(13:1-9; 18-23) **Introduction—Sower, Parable of**: Christ interprets this parable in verses 18-23. *The sower* is either the Lord Jesus Christ or a servant of His (v.37). (The servants of the Lord, ministers or laymen, are "laborers together with God," 1 Cor.3:9). *The seed* is the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom (v.19). It is called (1) the "incorruptible seed" (1 Pt.1:23), and (2) "the gospel which...bringeth forth fruit" (Col.1:5-6).

The ground upon which the seed is sown is the heart of the hearers. Christ says two significant things about the ground:

⇒ there are different ways for the ground to hear and receive the Word (seed).
⇒ the fate of the Word, how well it grows, depends upon the ground, that is, the hearer. (See notes—Mk.4:1-20; Lk.8:4-15 for more discussion.)

Each hearer is personally responsible for how he receives the Word of God.

1. Christ preached a parable (v.1-2).
2. A sower went forth to sow (v.3, 18).
3. A large number did not allow the Word to take permanent root (v.4-7).
4. Only a small number allowed the Word to take permanent root (v.8).
5. Only a few allowed the Word to bear 100% fruit (v.8).
6. A strong call: hear (v.9).

1 (13:1-2) **Preaching**: Christ preached a parable.

⇒ He preached on the Sabbath.
⇒ He preached by the seashore in a ship.
⇒ He preached as the multitudes gathered.
⇒ The multitudes pressed Him into a boat.

2 (13:3) **Witnessing**: a sower went forth to sow. Note two things.

⇒ First, the sower did go forth.
⇒ Second, the sower did sow the seed (the Word of God) or the Word of the Kingdom (v.19).

3 (13:4-7) **Unbelief—Rejection**: a large number did not allow the Word to take permanent root. But note: these did hear the Word of God. They were in church—regularly. The Word did fall upon them, but they did not allow the Word to penetrate—not permanently.

Note that the number of persons who rejected the Word was far greater than the one's who received it. They did not all obey the gospel...

"Lord, who hath believed our report" (Ro.10:16).
"Many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.22:14).

Thought 1. A person is held accountable for the kind of heart he has: hard, emotional, superficial, thorny, or soft and tender.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:4, 19) **Wayside—Gospel, Hardened to**: some dwelt by the wayside. In the day of Christ there were no fences to separate property lines. Instead, long narrow foot paths were used for the travelling public. These paths were trodden down as hard as pavement by the constant use of the travelling public. This is the hard wayside ground referred to by Christ.

Note: these hear the Word but they do not understand it (v.19). They are in the church regularly, and the Word falls upon them. Some have made public decisions, and some have not; but no matter, they are all still off to the side, paying little attention to what is going on. Even those who have made decisions are not genuine. They are hard, very hard, with closed minds and concrete hearts; therefore, they pay no attention and give no heed to the Word. Their minds are elsewhere. They have no interest and are indifferent, failing to realize how important the Word is to life. They just feel they can get along without the Word of God, that it is not needed in life.

Christ said "the wicked one" comes and snatches away whatever Word is sown. People whose hearts are not open and soft are easy prey for the devil. The Word always remains on the surface of the heart, thereby exposing it to whatever the devil may wish to grab.

There are at least four reasons why people become hardened to the gospel.

1. They rebel and rebel. They react because of some tragedy or some circumstance, and they blame God.
2. They do not stay awake or alert; they do not pay attention. They do not consider the gospel important enough to merit their attention. In their minds, other things need their attention more than the gospel.
3. They are careless in handling the gospel. They treat the gospel as an *item*, an *additive*, a part of life instead of life itself. When needed and when time is available, the gospel is acceptable. Their attitude is that the gospel has its place, but it is not the permeating factor of life that so many make it.
4. They are deceived. What matters to them is attendance, being present in *worship services* and associating with other Christians. A change of heart and life is meaningless. Religion to them is a matter of form and ceremony, not life.

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).

"Who [the hard-hearted] being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph.4:19).

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).

Thought 1. Scripture gives a clear warning: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Heb.2:1f).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(13:5-6, 20-21) **Stony Places—Backsliding—False Profession**: some received the Word in stony places. In some parts of Palestine lying right beneath the ground is a layer of limestone. When seed falls upon this ground, something dramatic happens. The limestone holds the rain and heat from the sunlight right under the surface; therefore, the fallen seed sprouts quickly and dramatically. But it has no root.

The application is clear: this person has what appears to be a dramatic conversion. He makes a decision for Christ, and he stands out as an example of a changed life and quick growth. However, the change lasts only for a season, perhaps an extended season, but in the end it fails.

Note four things about this person (v.20-21):

⇒ He hears the Word.
⇒ He receives the Word immediately.
⇒ He receives the Word with joy.
⇒ He endures for a while.

Note why this person fails.

1. He has no root in himself (v.21). He has not rooted and grounded himself in the Word and in prayer. He has not learned the doctrines and principles of Christianity. He began in the *emotional joy* of the Word and in his decision to reform his life, but he has continued to live in the emotions of his experience and his new-found Christian friends. He does little about the hard demands of Christ that come only through diligent study and disciplined prayer. He knows little about sacrificial obedience: "Study to show thyself approved" (2 Tim.2:15).
2. He has little spiritual strength to withstand the trials and persecutions of life. Pressure from circumstances or former friends of the world—mockery, abuse or whatever—causes him to cave in.

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).

"But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Lk.6:49).

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [the world], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pt.2:20-22).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hath left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev.2:4-5).

Thought 1. Hearing the Word preached and taught will not get a person into heaven. A person has to receive the Word.

Thought 2. A great mistake is sometimes made with persons experiencing dramatic conversions. They are pushed forward as a strong testimony long before they have proven the genuineness of their conversion (1 Tim.3:10).

Thought 3. A sobering fact: "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt.10:22).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(13:7, 22) **Thorns—Worldliness—Wealth**: some received the Word among thorns. The thorny ground is deceptive ground. It looks good and clean, appearing to be clear of weeds and thorns, but it is not. Right under the surface of the soil is a chain of roots ready to spring up. The fact that the roots are already there means that the thorns will be stronger and grow faster than the *good seed*. They will choke the life out of the good seed.

Thorns represent those who receive the Word as an addition to their life. The Word is merely added on, not allowed to replace the world and the things of it. These do not truly repent; they just try to take God and add Him to their collection in life. They make Him only a small part of their affairs; consequently, the Word is always choked to death. (1 Jn.2:15-16).

Note what the thorns are (also see outline and notes—Mt.6:19-24 for a thorough study on wealth).

1. Thorns are "the cares of this world" (v.22). They *prick and prick* away at the Word. They *entangle* a person in the world and the things of the world (2 Tim.2:3-4). They irritate, aggravate, trouble, and hinder a person from pursuing his task. When a person's mind is on *the cares of the world*, his mind is not on God and the things of the Word or Spirit. He is carnal-minded, not spiritual-minded (Ro.8:5-8; 2 Cor.10:3-5).
2. Thorns are "the deceitfulness of riches" (v.22). Note: it is not wealth itself that is worldly (thorny); it is the *deceit* of wealth. Wealth deceives in several ways.
   a. Wealth tends to make a person *self-confident* and *self-dependent*. It makes him feel comfortable and secure in this world. Such tends to keep him from trusting and calling upon God.
   b. Wealth tends to make a person *overly comfortable*, *extravagent*, and *indulgent*. It makes him live sumptuously, beyond what is needed. He sometimes feels that he can spend to get a little more and a little better than is necessary. This feeling arises especially if he has already given to meet the needs of the world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.16:19-21.)
   c. Wealth tends to *consume a person's mind*. It arouses the urge and passion to keep and protect all that a person has and to make more and more. A wealthy person often finds himself more and more centered

around his wealth and less and less centered around the things of God and His Word.

d. Wealth tends to *misinterpret the blessings of God*. It leads a person to the false idea and security that *to have is to be blessed by God*, and not to have is to be blessed less by God. This is a false concept that has prevailed since the beginning of time: that to receive and have anything in this world is a blessing from God, and the more a person has, the more he is *especially blessed*. God has promised the necessities of life in this material world, but His great blessings are spiritual (Mt.6:25-34; see note—Eph.1:3).

Note: these four deceptions show clearly why it is so difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:23).

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his [God's] wrath" (Job 20:28).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10; cp. Eccl.2:18).

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Pr.23:5).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

4 (13:8, 23) **Fruit—Salvation**: only a small number allowed the Word to take permanent root. A person who allows the Word to take permanent root represents the honest and good heart (Lk.8:15). Christ says two things about him.

1. He hears the Word of God and understands it. His heart is soft and tender toward God, so he listens, meditates, concentrates, and thinks. He is not hypocritical, wasting his time and being present physically but absent mentally. He does not allow his thoughts to wander off when the Word of God is being preached. He is responsible and behaves intelligently. He listens to God's Word, studies and receives it.
2. He is fruitful. He bears the fruit of God's Word and Spirit in his own life (Gal.5:22-23). And he reproduces himself by reaching out to lead others to a saving knowledge of the Lord (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8).

Note that John 15 classifies fruit-bearing as "no fruit" (Jn.15:2), "fruit" (Jn.15:2), "more fruit" (Jn.15:2), and "much fruit" (Jn.15:5, 8).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:24).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).

"Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing" (Ps.92:13-14).

Thought 1. God's Word shall never return to Him void (Is.55:11). This is a glorious encouragement to the true minister and teacher of God.

Thought 2. Fruit is that which distinguishes the true believer from the hypocrite.

5 (13:8, 23) **Fruit—Commitment**: this is a shocking truth! Not all believers are equal. Some bear only 30 percent fruit; some 60 percent fruit; and shockingly, only a very small number bear 100 percent fruit. Most are just not willing to give 100 percent of their energy, effort, strength, time, and possessions. There is not the willingness to pay the price—not within most men.

6 (13:9) **Decision**: Christ issues a strong call, "Hear. The person who has ears to hear, let him hear" (v.9).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

Thought 1. The ear has no greater purpose than to hear the message of God.

	B. The Messiah's Reasons for Speaking in Parables: Who Receives & Who Loses, 13:10-17 (Mk.4:10-12; Lk.8:9-10; 10:23-24)	do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:	refuse to really see & hear 2) Refuse to understand b. Their rejection prophesied
1 Why Jesus spoke in parables a. The disciples questioned Jesus	10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?	15 For this peoples' heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.	c. Their rejection described 1) Harden their hearts 2) Deafen their ears 3) Close their eyes 4) Deny what they see 5) Refuse understanding 6) Fight conversion & healing
b. The general statement 1) Mysteries are given to believers 2) Mysteries are not given to unbelievers	11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.	16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.	**4 Reason 3: Believers receive & are blessed** a. They see & hear b. They are especially privileged—privileged over O.T. believers
2 Reason 1: Seekers & achievers receive more a. Some seek & have b. Some do not seek, & lose	12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.	17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.	
3 Reason 2: Unbelievers reject & lose a. Their wilful rejection 1) Do see & hear, yet	13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither		

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

B. The Messiah's Reasons for Speaking in Parables: Who Receives and Who Loses, 13:10-17

(13:10-17) **Introduction—Parable**: at this point in Jesus' ministry He made a significant change in His method of teaching. He began to speak in parables that were difficult to understand—especially when unbelievers were present. Why would He speak so that His audience could not understand what He was saying? Three conclusions can be drawn from what Jesus said.

1. The unbelieving crowds were deliberately shutting their eyes and ears to His claim and refusing to be converted and healed spiritually (v.13-15).
2. It was time to teach the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" to true disciples. The mysteries would be understood by true disciples, but they would be misunderstood by those who deliberately blinded their eyes and deafened their ears.
3. "The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" cannot be understood without first recognizing Jesus as the Messiah and as the One who brings the Kingdom of Heaven to men.

Jesus had always used illustrations, and sometimes the illustrations had been parables, but the parables had always been clearly understood. But now the parables were different, totally different. They were not clear, and the change in Jesus' method shocked the disciples. Therefore, they questioned Him: "Why?" His answer was a strong warning to some and a great promise to others. (See notes—Mk.4:1-2; Lk.8:9-10 for more discussion.)

1. Why Jesus spoke in parables (v.10-11).
2. Reason 1: seekers and achievers receive (v.12).
3. Reason 2: unbelievers reject and lose (v.13-15).
4. Reason 3: believers receive and are blessed (v.16-17).

1 (13:10-11) **Parables**: Why did Jesus speak in parables? Note five points. (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Mystery*—1 Cor.2:7.)

1. Note the words, "Why speakest thou *unto them* in parables?" The disciples knew the people did not understand, and Jesus was not explaining the parables to them. The disciples were concerned lest the people miss the lessons.

> **Thought 1.** We should always be concerned over the way the Word is preached and taught and the way people receive the Word. Are they listening and growing, or are they disinterested and stymied?
>
> **Thought 2.** Note: the same preaching turned some off (the unbelieving crowds) and stirred some to seek more (the believing disciples). There is encouragement here for the preacher and teacher and warning to the unbeliever.

2. Jesus made a very general statement. God gives believers the understanding of spiritual things, the mysteries of the Kingdom, but the mysteries of the kingdom are not given to unbelievers.

Common sense tells us that God will reveal things to a person who really believes in Him and draws near Him—things that He cannot reveal to a person who ignores, neglects, and cares nothing about God. Therefore, Christ puts it very simply: "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [unbelievers] it is not given." God does not reward unbelief; He rewards belief and trust (cp. Mt. 13:35).

3. There are "mysteries" in the kingdom of heaven:
   - ⇒ the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16; DEEPER STUDY # 8,9—1:23)
   - ⇒ the ideal and perfect righteousness of Christ secured by His living a sinless life while on earth (see note—Mt.5:17-18)
   - ⇒ the death of Christ on the cross for man (Mt.27:26-56)
   - ⇒ the intercessory work of Christ going on right now (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Heb.3:1)
   - ⇒ the Holy Spirit and His presence in the believer (Jn.14:16-21)
   - ⇒ the material world and the spiritual world, or the physical and spiritual dimension of being (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.6:9)
   - ⇒ man's sinfulness and his dead spirit due to sin (Ro.3:9-19; Eph.2:1-3)
   - ⇒ the church, both local and universal, and the mixture of both good and evil in it (see note—Mt.13:1-52)
   - ⇒ the future resurrection (1 Cor.15:51)
   - ⇒ the destruction and remaking of the heavens and earth into a perfect universe (2 Pt.3:10-13)

4. The mysteries of heaven have to be revealed by God. Man cannot know them by human reason; they have to be *given*, that is, revealed.

5. The mysteries of heaven are given, revealed to believers only. This is logical, exactly what would be expected, as is mentioned above. The reasons given by Christ explain even more why believers alone see and understand what God reveals (v.12-15).

> **"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).**
>
> **"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:12-13).**
>
> **"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).**

2 (13:12) **Commitment—Diligence**: the first reason Christ spoke in parables is that seekers and achievers receive more. Therefore He wanted to stir all men to seek and to achieve more and more. Seekers and achievers do receive and get more. The non-dreamer and complacent receive little and get less. This is a law of every realm.

1. It is the law of nature: the early bird gets the worm; the early get and survive; the late get little and suffer.

2. It is the law of man: men reward energy and effort, results and production. They threaten and often take away from the lazy and inactive. Those who labor and practice and are diligent and persistent see, hear, and get. They are in a position to get more and more and to be given more and more. But the neglectful, lazy non-worker, and the unfaithful lose.

All through life a man either gains or loses. He seldom, if ever, stands still. It all depends on the dreams, the effort, and the energy he is willing to exert.

3. It is the law of God.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).**
>
> **"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk.16:10).**

Thought 1. A little formula says it all.
- ⇒ Perspective + initiative = success
- ⇒ Perspective - initiative = lost opportunity
- ⇒ Initiative - perspective = nothing

By *perspective* is meant the ability to see, envision, dream, understand. It is the ability to see clearly; to envision opportunity; to dream dreams; to conceive visions; to look through. It is a person who has the capacity to dream dreams and envision visions and see what is necessary to reach the vision. It is the capacity to measure the importance of the vision and the steps to achieve it in all its relationships. Very simply, it is a person with a vision who can measure its importance and who can see its various parts.

By *initiative* is meant acting at the right time. A person must act, but act at the right time. Therefore, a person who has...

⇒ Perspective (seeing opportunity) + initiative (acting at the right time) = success
⇒ Perspective (seeing opportunity) - initiative (failing to act at the right time) = lost opportunity
⇒ Initiative - perspective = nothing (the person just acts and acts, flops around and around, begins project after project and ends up with nothing. Why? Because he lacks perspective or vision.)

It is the person who has God's perspective (vision) and God's energy (spirit) who achieves and has all and does all that God purposes for him.

Thought 2. The person who seeks and seeks to achieve will receive more and more. This passage is both a great encouragement and a realistic and understandable threat.

1) It is a great encouragement to the person who is...

- faithful
- diligent
- steadfast
- toiling
- persevering
- consistent
- enduring
- hard-working
- a beginner and finisher
- an initiator and finalizer

2) It is a realistic and understandable threat to the person who is...

- lazy
- idle
- complacent
- inconsistent
- closed-minded
- closed-eyed
- closed-eared
- self-satisfied
- sluggish
- slothful
- shiftless
- purposeless
- a late sleeper
- a late starter
- a time-waster
- misguided

3 (13:13-15) **Rejection—Unbelief—Sin, Enslavement to**: the second reason Christ spoke in parables is that unbelievers reject and lose more and more. Note three things.

1. The unbeliever's rejection is wilful, always deliberate. He sees and hears, yet he refuses to really open his eyes and ears. He refuses to understand. But why? Why does a person act so illogically, rebel and refuse to understand? Christ said, "This people's heart is waxed gross" (v.15). The Greek is "this people's heart has grown fat [overweight]." Being fat indicates sensuality and senselessness. To eat and eat, adding weight upon weight, is living after the flesh and makes no sense at all. It is sensual and senseless. Christ was therefore saying this: the unbeliever has become so sensual and senseless that he rebels and refuses to understand the mysteries of God. His sensuality is due to worldliness and lust for the things of the world (Ro.8:5-8; 1 Jn.2:15-16), and his senselessness is due to being deceived by the evil one (2 Cor.4:3-4).
2. The unbeliever's rejection is prophesied (Is.6:9-10; cp. Jn.12:40; Acts 28:26f). A man who wilfully rejects God experiences a *judicial blindness and rejection* by God. The person who deliberately chooses to be blind and who rejects understanding is given over to a *just punishment*. His obstinate unbelief and constant sin and continual rejection lead to a judicial blindness and to being rejected by God.

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness...For this cause God gave them up unto...vile affections...God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Ro.1:24, 26, 28. See outline and notes—Ro.1:24-32.)

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would [have] none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Ps.81:11-12).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos.4:17).

3. Note also the clear description of the unbeliever's rejection. No clearer or stronger description could be given:

⇒ They harden their hearts.
⇒ They deafen their ears.
⇒ They close their eyes.
⇒ They deny what they see.
⇒ They refuse understanding.
⇒ They fight conversion and healing.

Thought 1. Why do men reject Christ? Why do they harden their hearts, deafen their ears, and close their eyes?

"Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"Thou [man] lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness" (Ps.52:3).

"Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked" (Pr.2:14).

"They...believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Th.2:12).

Thought 2. One of the most tragic sights in all the world is to see people sitting under the most glorious message and fall asleep, or be listless, unattentive, disinterested, or wilfully hardened and close-minded. God will "give them up" to their slumber and deliberate hardness.

Thought 3. What a person is fighting against is conversion and spiritual healing. If he listens and receives, he has to change his life, giving God *all He is and has*. So he rebels and rejects—deliberately. The person does not want to be turned "from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18). He wants to continue in the darkness of his sin.

4 (13:16-17) **Believers, Privileges of**: the third reason Christ spoke in parables is that believers receive and are blessed with more. The blessings of God include the greatest possessions imaginable: love, joy, peace, confidence, assurance, and eternal security. The blessings of God come from seeing and hearing, that is, from *conversion and spiritual healing*, not from the things that men desire (Jn.10:10; 14:27; 15:11; 16:33; Ph.4:6-7).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps.19:7).

New Testament believers are much more privileged than Old Testament believers because of Christ (see outlines—2 Cor.3:6-18; Heb.1:1-3; 1:4-14; 2:5-13; 2:14-18; 3:1-6; 4:14-16; 5:1-10; 7:1-10; 7:1-24, etc. Hebrews is an epistle which really shows the New Testament believers' great privilege in Christ.)

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:26-27).

"But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 Jn.2:20).

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise" (Pr.15:31).

	C. The Parable of the Sower Explained, 13:18-23 (Mk.4:13-20)		
1 Describes the Kingdom of Heaven	18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.	21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.	b. Problem: He has little root & is unprepared to face the trials & persecution of life c. The result: He falls away
2 The seed by the wayside a. Identity: A person who is hard & close-minded b. Problem: His heart is not soft; the seed is unable to penetrate c. Result: Satan snatches the seed away	19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.	22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.	**4 The seed among thorns** a. Identity: A person who is religious & worldly minded b. Problem: Worldliness c. Result: Word is choked & he bears no fruit
3 The seed on stony ground a. Identity: A person who experiences a quick, dramatic conversion	20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;	23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.	**5 The seed on good ground** a. Identity: Those who hear & understand the Word b. Result: They bear fruit, but they bear different percentages

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C. The Parable of the Sower Explained, 13:18-23

(13:18-23) **Introduction**: this passage is the interpretation of the Sower and the Seed (see outline and note—Mt.13:1-9 for discussion).

	D. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares: The Question of Evil, Why It Exists, 13:24-30 (cp.Mt.13:36-43)		
1 The parable: Describes the Kingdom of Heaven	24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened	householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?	a. Question 1: Where do the tares come from?
2 A man sows good seed a. He does sow b. He owns the field	unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:	28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?	b. The answer: An enemy sows them c. Question 2: Shall we judge & root up the tares?
3 An enemy sows tares a. He sows secretly b. He sows in the same field	25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.	29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.	d. The answer 1) Do not judge: Will root up some wheat along with tares[DSI] 2) Let both grow together
4 A day for fruit comes a. Wheat appears b. Tares appear	26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.	30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.	**6 A day of harvest is coming** a. Tares: Will be bundled & burned b. Wheat: Will be gathered into the owner's barn
5 A day of questioning comes	27 So the servants of the		

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THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

D. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares: The Question of Evil, Why It Exists, 13:24-30

(13:24-30, 36-43) **Introduction**: some of man's basic questions about the presence of evil in the world and judging others are covered in this parable. It is a parable that has some very practical answers and lessons for man.

1. There are both good and evil people in this world and in the Kingdom of Heaven (v.24-26).
2. Christ sows the righteous; the devil sows the wicked (v.24-25).
3. Men question why there is evil in the world and in the kingdom (church). Did God plant the evil as well as the good (v.27-28)?
4. Men are not to judge who the wheat and tares, the good and bad, are. Why? Because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the good and bad, and some of the good might be rooted up (v.29).
5. A day of harvest and of judgment is coming (v.29-30).
6. God alone has the wisdom to judge correctly (v.29-30).

Jesus explains the parable in vs.36-43. Glancing at the major points of the parable will help one get an overview of the parable.

1. The parable: describes the Kingdom of Heaven (v.24).
2. A man (Christ) sows good seed (the righteous) (v.24).
3. An enemy (the devil) sows tares (the wicked) (v.25).
4. A day for fruit comes (v.26).
5. A day of questioning comes (v.27-30).
6. A day of harvest is coming (v.30).

1 (13:24) **Kingdom of Heaven**: this parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

2 (13:24, 37-38) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: a man sows good seed. *The man* is Christ, the Son of Man (v.37); *the good seed* are the righteous (v.43), the children of the kingdom (v.38). *The field* is the world. Note two things.

1. What the man, Christ, does. His work is to sow righteous people in the world.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Ps.126:5).**

2. The man, Christ, owns the world. The world is "his field."

> **"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (Jn.1:3).**
>
> **"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col.1:16).**

"[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb.1:2).

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) Christ owns the field. The world is His by right because He created it (Jn.1:3; Col.1:16; Heb.1:2).
2) Christ does sow in the world. He works actively. He is not far off out in outer space someplace, disinterested and inactive. He is vitally interested in the world, and He works hard at sowing the righteous.
3) Seed is scattered all over the field. God has scattered the seed, the righteous all over the world. No single nation possesses all the righteous of the earth. No single nation is a favorite of God. God is not a respecter of persons.
4) Seed is to bear fruit. If it does not, it is either *dead* or else it is not real seed.
5) There is no righteous person apart from Him. He is *the sower* of the righteous seed.

3 (13:25, 38-39) **Satan**: an enemy sows tares. *The enemy* is the devil (diabolos, v.39), the liar, the deceiver, the one who struggles against the truth. *The tares* are the children of the devil or the wicked one (v.38).

1. Note what the enemy (the devil) does. His work is to sow wicked or lawless people in the world and to do it secretly so that they will be unnoticed (v.38, 41). He came while men slept (v.25). They were...

- unconscious
- too busy
- too unconcerned
- unaware
- too preoccupied
- too enticed with pleasure and other affairs

The devil operated under the cover of darkness and deception.

"Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not" (Jn.8:43-45).

"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him" (Jn.13:2).

"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3).

"And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18).

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:3-4).

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).

2. Note that the enemy (the devil) sows in the same field as the Lord. The bad are sown among the good. The devil's method is counterfeit and imitation (cp. 2 Cor.11:13-15). Some within the world and within the church have not been sown by the Lord. They may be in the world and in the church; they may even look like they belong to Him, but they do not.

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:13-15).

Thought 1. The devil is a sworn enemy to Christ, to the world, and to all good. He is the sworn enemy of man, to his peace, and to the fulfillment of his purpose and life on earth. Whatever power he uses on earth is the same as the power used by wicked men: it is usurped and unjust (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9).

Thought 2. One reason so many tares are sown is because so many righteous are sleeping when they should be watching over the field (v.25). Satan never sleeps; he is ever awake for every opportunity.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).

Thought 3. Note the words, "He went his way." Satan does not want to be known as the sower of wicked men. In fact, he wants the wicked to disclaim him, never to confess that he is their "father" (Jn.8:44). The tares are "in the Lord's field" professing that they belong to God, but they are deceived (2 Cor.11:13-14).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

4 (13:26) **Profession Only—Profession, False**: a day for bearing fruit always comes. It comes for every professing Christian. The tares themselves were called "darnel," some form of plant or wild corn that was slightly poisonous and narcotic. When eaten it would cause dizziness and nausea. It was called the bastard wheat. Its roots became intertwined with the roots of the wheat. If it were rooted up, it would destroy the wheat plant before the fruit became mature. The method used to get rid of it was to let it grow and then to harvest it with the wheat. It was then separated from the wheat, bundled together, and cast into a flaming fire.

Note something: the tares (that is, the unregenerate) looked like wheat when sown and during the growing stage. All men appear the same in religious practices. It is during the fruit-bearing stage that the difference appears. Unregenerate men can imitate true believers for only so long; eventually their true nature begins to show.

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Mt.7:17).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit.1:15).

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).

Thought 1. A person's nature always comes out eventually. A tare shows itself. A wicked person may profess to be righteous, but a life of selfishness and unrighteousness will eventually take hold. The profession may continue, but so will the life of wickedness.

Thought 2. A fact to note: the tares (wicked) among the wheat (righteous) are hurtful to the wheat.

1) They are an evil reflection upon the wheat. They sometimes make it very difficult for the world to distinguish between *good* and evil; therefore, they are the primary cause for the charge of hypocrisy leveled against the church.
2) They stymie the growth of the wheat. Their behavior and conversation and thoughts are centered in the world, not on Christ. Therefore, the righteous are not edified when tares are clinging to them.
3) They are a threat to the wheat. They can draw needed nourishment from the wheat. The professing tare can tempt and lead the righteous away from the Lord and His nourishment, tempt and lead the righteous into the world and its delights.
4) They can cause the death of the wheat. The professing tare can persecute and even kill the wheat.

5 (13:27-30) **Evil, Questioned—World, State of—Church Discipline**: a day of questioning comes. There is the question concerning *tares* or evil in the world.

⇒ Where does evil come from?
⇒ If there is a God, why is evil allowed to continue?

At this particular stage of the disciples' growth, Jesus simply states that evil persons are present—that someone who is an enemy to God plants them. His statement without an explanation is enough, at least for the present time. However, in answering the question of evil, a person needs to consider the full revelation of God that is given in Scripture. Scripture reveals that Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, is the original Sower or Creator. He is the Master and Owner of the field or world. He created man to be perfect (v.43), that is, in His own image; and He planted within man a spirit to do right (Gen.1:26). But immediately after creation, the other sower, the devil, went right to work. He began with Adam and Eve (Gen.3:1f); and ever since, he has sown nothing but tares, the unrighteous, among God's "good seed."

There is the question as to why evil is allowed to continue in the world and why hypocrites are allowed to continue in the church instead of being disciplined and expelled. This question, of course, concerns judging others. Jesus' answer to this question needs close attention. A person on this earth is not to judge others (see note—Mt.13:30).

1. It is sometimes hard to distinguish between the wheat and the tares, the righteous and the hypocritical who profess to be righteous but are not. But note: if a person judges, he may tear out some wheat along with the tares.
2. A day of judgment *is* coming; however, it is not to be executed by men, but by Christ at His return.

Thought 1. Evil is of great concern to the righteous. We must always be before the Lord dealing with the presence of evil and our responsibility toward it.

Thought 2. Note who is to blame for wicked people in God's kingdom and church. It is not God's servant but the devil who is responsible. God's servant is not at fault for hypocrites in the church; he is not to be blamed for hypocrites.

Thought 3. Great caution and patience must always be shown in dealing with the sins of men.

"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost [sinful]" (Lk.19:10).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pt.3:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:29-30) **Judging Others**: there are three very practical reasons why no man can judge another.

1. A person is to be judged for his whole life. He is not to be judged for a single act or for a particular period of his life. No one sees another person's whole life. In fact, very little of a person's life (thought or activity) is seen by any one individual.
2. A person may make a serious mistake or go through a stage of terrible sin. Then, by the eternal mercy and eternal grace of God, he may turn back to Christ and make the rest of his life a wonderful service for God.
3. Any person who is judged to be righteous today may fall into sin later, years later. Only God can see the whole of a life. Only God can see and know all the facts that led the person to sin: facts within his being and facts without; pressures within and pressures without; relationships within and relationships without. Only God can know a person completely and fully—accurately know all the ramifications of every thought and act and stage of life.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Mt.7:1).

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Ro.2:1).

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (Jas.4:12).

6 (13:30) **Judgment**: a day of harvest is coming (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.13:41; DEEPER STUDY # 2—13:42; DEEPER STUDY # 3—13:43 for discussion).

	E. The Parable of the Mustard Seed: The Growth & Greatness of Christianity,[PSI] 13:31-32 (Mk.4:30-32 Lk.13:18-19)
1 The parable: Describes the kingdom (Christianity) **2 A mustard seed was sown** a. A man deliberately took & sowed the seed b. Sowed in his field **3 The mustard seed grew & became the greatest of bushes** a. Was the smallest seed b. Grew into the greatest of bushes c. Result: Birds come & lodge in its branches	31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: 32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

E. The Parable of the Mustard Seed: The Growth and Greatness of Christianity, 13:31-32

(13:31-32) **Introduction**: Christ is describing the growth and greatness of His kingdom and of Christianity in this parable. He shows how it begins as the smallest of seeds and grows into the greatest of movements.

The message of the parable is a powerful message to individual believers and congregations as well as to Christianity as a whole. The seed of faith begins ever so small, but it grows into the greatest of bushes as it nourishes itself day by day. Mature (grown, v.32) believers and congregations alike provide lodging for the people of a turbulent world.

1. The parable: describes the Kingdom of Heaven (Christianity) (v.31).
2. A mustard seed is sown (v.31).
3. The mustard seed grows and becomes the greatest of bushes (v.32).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:31-32) **Mustard Seed, Parable of**: there are two interpretations of this parable.

1. Some say the birds are those in the world who find their lodging in the kingdom—the kingdom (the church and Christianity) that had so small a beginning but is now growing into a stately movement. Many in the world, believers and non-believers alike, have found help and safety under its branches. Laws and institutions of mercy, justice, and honor have to a large extent evolved from this magnificent movement. This interpretation relies heavily upon the picture painted by the Old Testament. A great empire is said to be like a tree and conquered nations are said to be like birds who lodge under its shadow (Ezk.17:22-24; 31:1-6; Dan.4:14).
2. Others say the birds are the children of the evil one who see the lodging facilities and protective covering of the kingdom and seek lodging therein.

Neither interpretation need exhaust the meaning. However, two facts should be noted.

1. Jesus was speaking to the multitudes in the first four parables. His purpose was to teach what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. It is a *mixture of good and evil*. He had just been vindicating His Messiahship to the Pharisees (Mt.12:1-50) who were set upon destroying Him (Mt.12:14). It was the same day that He began to speak in parables, and His purpose was to hide the mysteries from unbelievers and to protect Himself from those who would destroy Him (Mt.13:10-17). They were the evil ones who had penetrated the kingdom. However, this fact needs to be known only by true disciples, not necessarily by those who are evil. Therefore, some say that the very purpose for speaking in parables seems to point to the interpretation of a mixture of good and evil.
2. The birds are used to describe the evil one in the Parable of the Seed (v.4, 19).

1 (13:31) **Christianity**: the parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the kingdom's present state here on earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

2 (13:31) **Christianity**: a mustard seed is sown. The mustard seed was used in proverbial sayings to describe smallness in the day of Jesus. The mustard seed grew to be a great bush, a bush as large as a tree. Its characteristics were loftiness, expansion, and prominence. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Mustard Seed*—Mk.4:31.)

The Man is Jesus Christ. The field is the world (cp. v.24, 37-38). Jesus Christ plants the seed in His field which is the world. Note the world is His (cp. v.13:24, 37-38).

Took (labon) means to deliberately take; to take with purpose and thought. The planting of the seed was not by chance. It did not just happen. Christ *deliberately* planted the seed and nourished the growth of the bush. The bush existed because of *great purpose and thought*.

The *field* means the world. As said, Christ plants the seed in His field. The world is His.

Thought 1. The Man is active, very active, not lazy or lethargic. He plans and He sows. This is a great lesson as we plant the mustard seed of our lives. What an enormous difference there would be in the world if we would plant our lives where many could come and find the care they so desperately need!

3 (13:32) **Christianity**: the mustard seed grows and becomes the greatest of bushes. Note three things.

1. The beginning of the bush (Christianity). It began as the smallest of seeds. There are several facts that show just how small the beginning of the kingdom or Christianity really was.
   a. Christianity began in the soul of a single person. Christ launched the movement all by Himself. The idea and dream were in His soul and no one else's. He moved out alone—in God's strength.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

   b. Christianity was born in the soul of a carpenter from the obscure villages of Nazareth and Capernaum (Galilee) and from an obscure and despised nation, Israel (see notes—Mt.8:5-13; 13:53-58).

> **"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see" (Jn.1:45-46).**
>
> **"They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (Jn.7:52).**
>
> **"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).**

   c. Christianity was carried forth by men without position and without prestige. They were not mighty or noble or famous. They were only common folk, some from ordinary professions such as fishermen (Mt.4:18-21) and some from despised professions such as tax collecting (Mt.9:9).

> **"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:26-29).**

   d. Christianity grew from just a few persons who had very "little faith" (cp. Mt.14:31; Lk.12:32).

> **"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Mt.6:30).**
>
> **"And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Mt.8: 24-26).**
>
> **"Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?" (Mt.16:8; cp. 16:6-12).**

   e. Christianity numbered only about one hundred and twenty persons when Christ departed this earth.

> **"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty)" (Acts 1:15).**

2. The bush (Christianity) grew into the greatest of bushes. Christ said explicitly that when the kingdom or Christianity is fully grown, it is the greatest of movements.
   a. Christianity is the greatest movement socially. It has changed the face of the earth. Liberty and freedom, and the laws and institutions of mercy, justice, and honor have for the most part evolved from Christianity. The movement has set free the enslaved (see Introd., Special Features, pt.3—Philemon) and raised enormously the status of women and children (see notes—Mk.10:5; Acts 16:14).
   b. Christianity is the greatest movement individually and personally. This is true because Christ did for an individual just what a tree does for a bird.
      1) Christ gives *rest* to a person just as a tree provides rest for a bird (see outlines and notes—Mt.11:28-30; Heb.4:1-13 for discussion).
      2) Christ gives a *home* to a person just as a tree provides a home for a bird (see note—Mt.12:48-50 for discussion).

3) Christ gives *food*, physically and spiritually, to a person just as a tree provides food for a bird (see note—Mt.6:25-34 for discussion).

Thought 1. This parable is a great encouragement to every believer.

1) It is an encouragement to us in our personal lives and in our ministry. No matter how small we may begin, we must continue on. If we continue, our lives and efforts will grow. We may be like Christ and see little growth in numbers while here on earth, but the growth will take place. Success is assured.

> **"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-56).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**
>
> **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:5-6).**

2) It is an encouragement to our hope in eternity. The Kingdom will finally come some day, and we shall be rewarded for our faithful labor (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

> **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).**
>
> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt.25:34-36).**
>
> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**

3. The result of the bush's presence. The birds come and lodge in its branches. The same two steps are essential for man.

a. First, a person must come.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

b. Second, a person must lodge and live and walk in Christ (see outline and notes—Mt.13:1-9).

> **"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:4-6).**
>
> **"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Ro.6:4).**
>
> **"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph.4:1).**
>
> **"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).**
>
> **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).**

	F. The Parable of the Leaven: The Transforming Power of the Gospel, 13:33 (Lk.13:20-21)
1 The parable describes the kingdom **2 It is deliberately taken** **3 It is mixed in unfinished meal** **4 It silently transforms the whole lump**	33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

F. The Parable of the Leaven: The Transforming Power of the Gospel, 13:33

(13:33) **Introduction—Leaven**: there are essentially two interpretations of this parable.

1. Some say the leaven represents evil that penetrates the Kingdom of God and His church. The main arguments of this position are threefold.
   a. Consistency with the Lord's purpose points to this interpretation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.13:31-32).
   b. The Lord's very choice of *leaven taken by a woman and hidden in the meal* indicates a mixture of evil within the good. Leaven is always used to symbolize evil in Scripture (cp. Mt.16:6, 11; see note 2—Mk.8:15). Leaven sours, ferments, and putrifies. It is a picture of corruption which penetrates and permeates the dough (cp. 1 Cor.5:6-8; 2 Cor.7:1; Gal.5:7-9).
   c. The woman had to hide the leaven, camouflage it in the meal.
2. Most say the leaven symbolizes the Kingdom of God that penetrates and works silently to transform men and society.
   a. It is argued that Christ and His gospel alone have *the power* to transform lives, individually and socially, "till *the whole* [is] leavened." It is felt that evil could never be said to "leaven the whole" of God's kingdom, for such would mean the failure of the kingdom.
   b. It is also argued that the woman took the leaven and acted with purpose and plan. The argument is that no person can be said to deliberately act against God's kingdom until "the whole [is] leavened." If evil works and works until it has "leavened the whole," then evil will succeed in corrupting God's kingdom. Again such an interpretation would mean that God's kingdom is to fail.

1. The parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (v.33).
2. It is deliberately taken (v.33).
3. It is mixed in unfinished meal (v.33).
4. It silently transforms the whole lump (v.33).

1 (13:33) **Kingdom of Heaven**: the parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for discussion).

2 (13:33) **Church**: the leaven is deliberately taken. In the first interpretation where leaven repesents evil, the woman would probably represent the religion of man or what might be called a rationalistic or humanistic religion. Man has always had a religion of some sort, a religion of his own making. He attempts to satisfy the spiritual need of his soul, and just being associated with Christianity and being within the walls of the church make him feel better.

In the second interpretation where leaven represents the Kingdom of God, the woman would probably be the church and the leaven the gospel. The meal would be the world or those without the knowledge of God in the world. This means that the church would have a twofold task.

1. The church would seek to leaven *individuals*: to penetrate an individual with the gospel until the whole person is transformed.

> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).**
>
> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

2. The church would seek to leaven *society* as a whole: to penetrate society with the gospel until the whole of society was transformed.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Thought 1. See note—Mt.13:31 for a contrast between being diligent and being lazy.

Thought 2. It was the woman's task to leaven and make the bread as it should be. Note: (1) she did her job, and (2) it took leaven (the gospel) to do the job right.

3 (13:33) **Leaven**: the leaven is mixed in unfinished meal. If the leaven is the gospel, then the picture is that of the gospel being placed...

- into the unfinished and imperfect world.
- into the unfinished and imperfect church in its earthly state.

The gospel (leaven) has to be placed right in the midst of the world and the church (unfinished and imperfect) if it is to do its work.

Note another point: meal is not bread, not by itself. By itself it is hard, dry, unsatisfying, and not too nourishing (see note—Mt.13:33). Using meal by itself to make bread is to misuse meal. Yet, how many try to make it through life without the leaven of the gospel. Their meal, that is, their lives, are thereby misused and incomplete.

Thought 1. The gospel is powerful, extremely powerful. Just a "little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor.5:6; Gal.5:9). Note three things.

1) A person who will allow just a little of the gospel to penetrate his life will eventually have his life changed.

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17:11-12).

2) Believers are to mix the gospel in the world. Just a little leaven will transform much. But observe: the leaven has to be worked and worked in order to be mixed thoroughly. What a lesson for faithfulness in sounding forth the message of the gospel!

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim.2:24-25).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit.2:15).

3) It does not take much leaven to do the work. No matter how little of the gospel a person knows, he should be leavening, that is, working to reach people and to change the world for Christ. There is no excuse for doing nothing.

"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mk.5:19).

"And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me" (Jn.15:27).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor.4:13).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

If a person interprets the leaven to be evil, then the picture is that of the church in its unfinished and imperfect state. Because it is unfinished and not yet perfected, it is permeated with evil. The evil and unbelieving men (leaven) enter the church; they falsely profess to follow Christ.

4 (13:33) **Leaven—Transformation—Gospel**: leaven silently transforms the whole lump. Leaven changes and transforms bread. Again, bread made from water is hard, dry, and not too nourishing. But leaven mixed in with dough changes and transforms bread tremendously. It does at least four things for bread.

1. Leaven makes bread soft, no longer hard. The leaven of the gospel does the same. It penetrates the heart of a man and softens the hardness of his life. He becomes much softer toward the Lord and toward the needs of others. He becomes a more caring and giving person. Softness is definitely one of the trademarks of a transformed person.

2. Leaven makes bread porous and moist, no longer dry. The leaven of the gospel does the same. It penetrates the dryness of a man's heart and life. The gospel penetrates and creates pores in his life and moistens his heart so that he can grow into a moist or fruitful person.

3. Leaven makes bread satisfying, no longer unfulfilling. Again the leaven of the gospel does the same for the man who lives a dissatisfied life with no purpose, meaning, or significance. The gospel leavens or transforms a person's heart giving purpose and joy and hope—all the satisfaction a person could ever desire.

4. Leaven makes bread nourishing, no longer of little benefit. The leaven of the gospel does the same thing for the man who seems to accomplish so little in life. The gospel not only gives purpose, but it inspires and causes a person to feed others. A person transformed by the gospel is able to feed the truth to the world—the truth about the emptiness and loneliness of the human heart and God's provision for man's plight.

Note several important facts about how leaven works.

1. Leaven works quietly and silently. It works without fanfare and the spectacular. There is a thoughtful lesson here on how the gospel should be presented (see outline and notes—Mt.4:5-7; 12:38-40).

2. Leaven finishes its work. Once it is inserted into the dough, nothing can stop it or ever pluck it out. It is in the dough forever, and it will transform the dough forever. There is a great lesson here on the security of the person who genuinely allows the gospel to penetrate his heart and life.

> **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:28).**
>
> **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).**
>
> **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).**
>
> **"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:5).**
>
> **"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24-25).**

3. Leaven works slowly and gradually, yet consistently. It takes time for it to leaven the whole lump. The believer can learn at least two lessons from this fact.

a. It will take time for him to grow in the gospel. Just as a child grows physically, if the believer receives proper nourishment, his spiritual growth will take time; but it will be consistent and sure.

> **"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).**
>
> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**
>
> **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).**

b. It will take time for his own witnessing and work to produce bread. Yet his leavening (service and ministry) will leaven the lump of meal, the people with whom he works.

> **"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).**
>
> **"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Tit.2:7).**
>
> **"Having your conversation [behavior] honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pt.2:12).**

4. Leaven changes the quality, not the substance of the dough. It is still dough, yet it is changed. A man who receives the gospel remains a man, but he is a changed man—a man of quality, a man of God.

> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

Thought 1. The gospel, God's Word of hope, is quick and powerful. It is sharp; therefore, it will penetrate and transform lives.

> **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb.4:12).**

	G. The Messiah's Purpose for Speaking in Parables, 13:34-35 (Mk.4:33-34)
1 To reach the multitude **2 To teach "these things"**	34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:
3 To fulfill Scripture[DS1]	35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.
4 To reveal the mystery of the Gospel[DS2]	

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G. The Messiah's Purpose for Speaking in Parables, 13:34-35

(13:34-35) **Introduction**: see outline and notes—Mt.13:10-17 for a full discussion of the "Messiah's Reasons for Speaking in Parables." It may be best to include these two verses in the outline of Mt.13:10-17 as Reason 4: the mystery of the gospel must be revealed (v.34-35). (See outline and notes—Eph.1:9-10 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:35) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Ps.78:2.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:35) **Gospel, Mystery of**: see outline and note—Mt.13:11 for discussion.

	H. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares Explained, 13:36-43	is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.	a. The day: The end of the world b. The reapers: Angels
1 The parable explained a. Jesus was alone with His disciples b. The disciples asked the meaning of the parable	36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.	40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.	**5 The reaping of the tares** a. Symbolizes judgment b. When: In the end of the world c. Executed by angels d. Who: Those in the Kingdom[DS1] 1) Who offend others 2) Who are lawless
2 The good seed a. The sower: The Son of man b. The field: The world c. The seed: The children of the kingdom	37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;	41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;	e. The judgment: Fire & weeping[DS2]
3 The bad seed a. The seed: The children of the devil b. The sower: The devil	38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;	42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.	**6 The reaping of the wheat** a. Identity: The righteous b. Position: Glory in the Kingdom[DS3]
4 The harvest	39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest	43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.	**7 The strong call**

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H. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares Explained, 13:36-43

(13:36-43) **Introduction**: this passage is the interpretation of the Wheat and Tares. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:24-30 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:41) **Judgment**: the ones to be judged and condemned are in the kingdom; they include all those who offend others and who do iniquity (are lawless).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:42) **Hellfire—Weeping—Gnashing**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; note—8:12; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24. These notes paint the terrible picture of the judgment to come.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(13:43) **Reward**: the righteous shall be glorified. The promise is given to the righteous, the promise that they shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

What does this mean? Several things need to be said.

1. Just what a *glorified* man will look like is not known.

> **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).**

2. It will involve a *glorious* body.

> **"Christ who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:21; cp. Ro.8:17).**
>
> **"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:41-44, 48-50, 53).**

3. It will involve "shining forth" as the sun, a reflection of the glory of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.3:23. This note gives the meaning of God's glory.)

	I. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure, Giving Up All for Christ,[DS1] 13:44
1 The parable describes the kingdom **2 A treasure is hid in a field** **3 A man finds treasure** a. He hides & protects it b. He goes, sells all, buys the field, joys	44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

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THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

I. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure: Giving Up All for Christ, 13:44

(13:44) **Introduction—Believers—Treasure—Gospel**: there are two main interpretations of this parable.

1. Some say that Jesus Christ is *the man* (cp. v.24, 37-38) and *the treasure* in the field represents potential believers who are in the world. In this interpretation, Jesus sees the treasure of men in the world, and seeing them He does four things.

a. He *hides* the treasure: He takes what the Father has given Him and tucks it away in His heart, choosing and protecting them until He can complete the work of salvation.

> **"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd....My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:14-16, 27-30).**

b. He *goes*: He comes to the world.

> **"For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him, not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).**

c. He *sells* all: He gives up heaven in all its glory and splendor.

> **"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk.2:7).**
>
> **"For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end" (Lk.22:37).**
>
> **"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth" (Acts 8:33).**
>
> **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).**
>
> **"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:7-8).**

d. He *buys*: He pays the ultimate price. He gives His life for the life of man.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal.4:4-5).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

e. He *joys*: He envisions the glorious day when all His treasure shall be possessed by Him.

> **"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).**

2. Others say *the treasure* is the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the Messiah who is ever so precious. A man sees the gospel, the saving message of Christ, as never before; that is, He understands the immense treasure of salvation.
   a. He *hides* the treasure: he tucks it away in his heart, protecting it, not letting it loose. He seeks and continues to seek the truth of Christ.
   b. He *goes*: approaches Christ and makes a decision.
   c. He *sells all*: repents and turns from his former life to God.
   d. He *buys*: commits all and gives all to possess the treasure of salvation.
   e. He *joys*: experiences the completeness and satisfaction of the treasure and envisions and hopes for more and more, eternally.

Either interpretation fits what is said, and we are probably safe in saying that neither one exhausts the meaning.
1. The parable describes the kingdom (v.44).
2. A treasure is hid in a field (v.44).
3. A man finds the treasure (v.44).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:44) **Parables**: Jesus was now talking only to His disciples. In v.36 He had sent the multitude away; now He shared four parables with the disciples alone. The parable of the Hidden Treasure and The Pearl of Great Price could possibly be preached and taught together. Their point is the same: the great value of Christ.

1 (13:44) **Kingdom of Heaven**: Jesus used a parable to describe the Kingdom of Heaven and its immense value (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.13:44; DEEPER STUDY # 3—19:23-24).

2 (13:44) **Jesus Christ—Believers**: a treasure is hid in a field. Jesus Christ is the most valuable treasure a person can possess.

> **"Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mt.13:46).**
>
> **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whold world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36). (Cp. 1 Tim.6:7.)**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).**
>
> **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**
>
> **"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col.1:19).**
>
> **"In whom [Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col.2:3).**
>
> **"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:10).**

If the treasure is interpreted to be potential believers, then *note one* will stir sufficient thoughts to share the lesson of the parable (see note, *Believers*—Mt.13:44).

3 (13:44) **Gospel—Believers**: a man finds the treasure. In Jesus' day it was common practice to hide treasure and valuables by burying them in the ground. The earth was the safest place to hide one's valuables; for example, in the "Parable of the Talents," the unprofitable servant hid his talent in the earth to keep from losing it (Mt.25:25).

The field could represent the gospel. The treasure would then be Christ who is "hid" in the gospel. A person cannot find the treasure (Christ) by just scratching the surface of the earth (gospel). One must dig and dig deep (Jn.5:39; 2 Tim.2:15).

There is an enormous difference between the philosophical treasures of the world and the treasure of Christ and His Word. A person does not learn the world's philosophical treasures by scratching the surface. He has to dig. So it is with the treasure of Christ: a person has to dig into the gospel and dig deep to find the treasures of the gospel.

When the man finds the treasure he does five things.

1. He *hides and protects* it. A person who has really tasted and learned the value of Christ hides the treasure in his heart. He seeks and seeks to lay hold of the gospel; he does not let the gospel go. He seeks and resolves to possess the treasure.

> **"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).**

2. He *goes*; that is, he approaches Christ and makes a decision. Note two things.
   a. Christ gives invitation after invitation for men to come and seek His mercy.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready" (Lk.14:17).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**

   b. A decision has to be made (see outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2,3*—Mt.7:13-14).

3. He *sells* all; that is, he repents and turns away from his former life to God. There are two critical points here.
   a. The man is *willing* to sell and to give up all. He is *willing* to turn to God from all. He is *willing* to repent (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30). Why? To gain the priceless treasure.

> **"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).**
>
> **"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mt.5:4).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**

   b. He is not only willing, but he *gives up and denies all*. He lives a life of self-discipline (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). This involves the sacrifice of personal desires and ambitions, cravings and wants, lusts and possessions. It involves all of one's life.

> **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).**

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:27-28).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disicple" (Lk.14:33).

4. He *buys*; that is, he commits all and gives all to possess the treasure of salvation. The person knows something: it is worth anything to *lay hold of* Christ. Therefore, the person presents his body a living sacrifice to Christ (see outline and notes—Ro.12:1-2).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:23-25).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

5. He *joys*; that is he experiences the completeness and satisfaction of the treasure (Christ) (v.44). The person experiences three things.

a. He experiences abundant life.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

b. He experiences completeness.

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:10).

c. He experiences the fruit of the spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

	J. The Parable of the Merchant Man and the Pearl of Great Price: Giving Up All for Christ, 13:45-46
1 He seeks pearls a. Seeks *many* pearls b. Seeks *fine* pearls	45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:
2 He finds a priceless pearl a. He goes b. He sells all he has c. He buys the pearl	46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

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THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

J. The Parable of the Merchant Man and the Pearl of Great Price: Giving up All for Christ, 13:45-46

(13:45-46) **Introduction**: the point of this parable is the same as the Parable of the Hidden Treasure. They could be preached and taught together. (See notes—Mt.13:44 for detailed discussion and thoughts.) The Parable of the Pearl has two interpretations.

1. Some say the *merchant man* is Jesus Christ. The many *pearls* for which He seeks are potential believers, and the one great pearl is the church, the full body of believers (cp. Jn.17:21; 1 Cor.13:12). Note: the pearls are sought after, and the one great pearl is found as a result of seeking for all the pearls. (See notes—Mt.13:44 for a discussion of the points.)
2. Some say the merchant man represents men who seek after truth (pearls). In the search, some men discover the truth of Jesus Christ, the pearl of great price; and when a person finds a priceless pearl, he takes the three steps outlined by Christ: he goes, sells all he has, and buys the pearl of great price (see outline and notes—Mt.13:44 for a discussion of these steps).

1. He seeks pearls (v.45).
2. He finds a priceless pearl (v.46).

1 (13:45) **Pearl**: the pearl is born out of suffering. A speck of sand or parasite makes its way into an oyster. The oyster is a living organism, so the intruder hurts the oyster. To protect itself, the oyster secretes a substance called mother-of-pearl, or nacre, to surround the intruder. It is the secretion that gradually forms the pearl. Thus, the pearl is born out of much torment and pain. The same is true of the believer and the church: both are born out of suffering and out of the travail and death of the Lord Jesus.

> **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:15-16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:8-10).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Another picture can be seen in that the pearl is embedded in living, but corruptible flesh. It remains there until perfectly formed and purified. Then it is separated from the corruptible flesh as a thing of beauty. It is priceless, fit for the diadem of a king.

> **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where theives do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reporach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb.11:24-26).

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18).

Still another picture is seen in the beauty of a pearl. A pearl has a lovely aesthetic value. It is purchased and possessed as much for the *inward satisfaction and enjoyment* as for its monetary value.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:5-8).

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Ro.5:10-11).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy" (Gal.5:22).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12.3:).

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Is.61:10).

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).

2 (13:45) **Seeking**: the man discovers the pearl of great price while seeking for pearls. Note there are *many* pearls and some of these are *fine* pearls. Pearls are a symbol of truth and of life. Men seek truth and life in such things as philosophy, science, technology, wealth, fame, sensation (the flesh), art, music, literature, and religion. But there is only one pearl that is priceless, only one pearl that is worth more than the world itself—the pearl of Jesus Christ Himself. (See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Col.2:3; note—2:8-10 for more discussion.)

"Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mt.13:46).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell" (Col.1:19).

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col.2:3).

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:10).

	K. The Parable of the Dragnet: Separating the Bad from the Good, 13:47-50	down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.	c. The good are gathered into containers d. The bad are cast away
1 The parable describes the kingdom **2 A net is cast into the sea**[DS1] a. It gathers every kind b. It is drawn when full	47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat	49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.	**3 The parable is a symbol of the world's end**[DS2] a. Angels come forth b. Purpose: Separate[DS3] the wicked from the just 1) To cast into fire[DS4] 2) Result: Weeping[DS5] & gnashing[DS6]

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

K. The Parable of the Dragnet: Separating the Bad from the Good, 13:47-50

(13:47-50) **Introduction**: the net is the Kingdom of Heaven and the gospel is the message of the kingdom. The sea is the world in all the depth of its darkness and its unknown. The fishermen represent Christ and His followers.

Note several things.

1. They worked and worked hard. They cast the gospel, the message of the kingdom, into the world.
2. There is a mixture of good and bad in the Kingdom of Heaven while the kingdom is on earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). The net, the gospel and kingdom, gathers both good and bad; there is a mixture on earth. Some bad do join the good in the kingdom, which means that all who join the kingdom on earth are not sincere and genuinely good.
3. There is a set time, a climactic hour coming. The net has a limit as to how many it will hold. *Someday* heaven will be full. Of course, only the Lord knows when it is time to draw the net.
4. Separation of the bad from the good does not take place until the net is full. Judgment is not only to take place now. The Lord has the right and wisdom to execute judgment—to cast away the bad. (Cp. Mt.5:13; 2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-13.)

It should be noted that Christ does not explain the first part of the parable. The meaning is clear.

1. The parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (v.47).
2. A net is cast into the sea (v.47-48).
3. A symbol of the end of the world (v.49-50).

1 (13:47) **Kingdom of Heaven**: the parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (see notes—Mt.13:47-50; DEEPER STUDY # 3—19:23-24).

2 (13:47-48) **Gospel—Kindgom of Heaven**: a net is cast into the sea (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.13:47). Christ and His true followers do cast the net of the gospel into the world. They work and work hard "fishing for men" (Mt.4:19).

Note what happens when the net is cast into the sea.

1. The net gathers every kind. The visible kingdom or church contains a mixture of both good and bad. There are reasons why some bad (unconverted people) want to be a part of the earthly church.
   a. The church stresses *morality, virtue, ethics, and justice*. Civilization and society progress when they are built upon this message, so the church is considered one of the basic institutions of some societies.
   b. The church offers *social standing and opportunity*. In some communities, it is even expected that a socially acceptable person becomes a church member.
   c. The church offers *fellowship*. Many people are lonely and empty for various reasons such as being single, divorced, a newcomer, or shy. The church meets their need.
   d. The church instills a sense of *spiritual security* to some. They feel God is pleased and accepts them because they attend and serve the church regularly. Therefore, they *support and work for* the church.
   e. The church offers some degree of *authority* and *direction*. The Bible says that "men are as the fish of the sea...that have no ruler over them." Some find in the church the authority they need. There are few self-disciplined people on earth, so most people need authority and direction.
2. The net is drawn when full. Note two encouraging facts.
   a. Sometimes the net catches more than at other times. The catch sometimes goes quickly and sometimes slowly. God's servant should never despair from lack of results, and he should never quit because of slow results (1 Cor.3:6-8).
   b. The gospel is effective: the net (heaven) will be filled. God's Word will not return to Him empty (Is.55:11).
3. The good are gathered into containers. Note the good are already in the Kingdom of Heaven while on this earth. They have a real relationship with God already.

> **"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Jn.10:9).**
>
> **"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).**
>
> **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:16).**

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:27-28).

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10)

4. The bad are cast away. Who are the bad? They are the sea creatures which are...
   - the wrong kind
   - too small
   - unclean
   - useless
   - unfit
   - dead

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:47) **Dragnet—Seine Net**: the dragnet was actually a large square net that was pulled through the water behind a boat. It was weighted down so that it formed a *cone-shaped drag* catching everything in its path. The fishermen could tell when the net was full by the weight of its pull. When it was full, they drew the net to shore and began the tedious process of separating the good fish from the bad. The bad, of course, were not kept. They were cast away.

3 (13:49-50) **Judgment**: the net is a symbol of the end of the world.

1. Angels shall come forth to execute judgment in behalf of Christ. The dragnet cannot distinguish between the good and bad as it is pulled through the water—it just gathers the bad with the good.
   a. Separation occurs when the net is full and has been pulled to shore.
   b. The angels of God shall do the separating, not the church or any religious authority (see outline and notes—Mt.7:1-50).

It is a fact; when man judges, he blunders and makes mistakes. There are at least three reasons why (see note—Mt.13:30).

2. The purpose of the angels' coming forth is to separate the wicked from the just. Note a critical point: who it is that is cast away. It is people who are in the net, who are in the Kingdom of Heaven, but they are still bad. They have not become good. Brushing shoulders with and living among, fellowshipping and worshipping with the good will not make a bad person good. A bad person who is bad all through life will be bad at the end of life.

Thought 1. The only time the bad will be in the presence of the good ***is now***. Soon, very soon, the bad will be *separated* from the good. Christ will separate the bad from the good. If a person lives bad all of his life, even if he is in the church (net) and among the good, he will not be allowed to continue with the good. He will be taken and cast out of the presence of the good. Christ preached and taught *separation* from God time and again.

"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (Mt.13:49).

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).

"And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk.16:26).

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (Lk.17:34).

Thought 2. There is a specific destination for the wicked and it is a place of *everlasting punishment*. Christ preached and taught *everlasting punishment* time and again (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22).

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (Mt.5:22).

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and

not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell" (Mt.5:27-30).

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).

"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:41-42).

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Mt.18:8-9).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Mt.23:15).

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt.23:33).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

"But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Lk.12:5).

Thought 3. This parable is about hypocrites: people in the net who remain *bad* or *wicked*.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:49-50) **Parable**: note that the first part of this parable deals with the present state of the kingdom or the church. The latter part deals only with the future (v.49-50).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(13:49) **Sever—Separate** (aphorizo) to separate; to set off by bounds. The wicked are to be taken completely away. They are taken and cast completely out of the presence of the good.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(13:50) **Hell-Fire**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:12; note—5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; cp. Mt.13:42.

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(13:50) **Weeping**: see note—Mt.8:12; cp. Mt.13:42.

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(13:50) **Gnashing**: see note—Mt.8:12; cp. Mt.13:42.

	L. The Parable of the Householder: Devotion & Study & Sharing, 13:51-52
1 Disciples questioned—do they understand the parables?	51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.
2 They are compared to Jewish Scribes a. To imitate their devotion b. To imitate their study	52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.
3 They are compared to the head of a house a. Possess a treasure b. Responsible to share	

DIVISION IX

THE MESSIAH'S PARABLES DESCRIBING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, 13:1-52

L. The Parable of the Householder: Devotion and Study and Sharing, 13:51-52

(13:51-52) **Introduction—Householder**: this parable teaches a strong truth: the true disciples of Christ had the same privilege and responsibility as Scribes and householders. They were unusually blessed. Throughout their lives, they had been instructed in the old counsel, but now they had been taught by Christ, the Messiah Himself. They now knew the new counsel of God. Thus, they were to be responsible disciples and share the whole counsel of God, both the old and the new.

1. The Jewish Scribe had two unusual traits. He was extremely devoted, and he studied his religion all the time. Christ wanted the disciples to develop the same devotion. He wanted them to study the Kingdom of Heaven (the gospel and His Word) with the same kind of unswerving diligence (Acts 17:11; 1 Cor.15:58; 2 Tim.2:15; 2 Pt.2:2-3). Therefore, He questioned them, "Have you understood these things?" No doubt He was referring to the parables He had just shared, but He was probably also referring to all that He had been teaching throughout His ministry. They answered, "Yes, Lord."

At this point He called them Scribes, hoping to plant an idea that He wanted them to always remember: they must be as devoted as the Scribes. But there was to be one difference: they were not to be devoted to religion but to Him and His kingdom, His gospel, and His Word (2 Tim.2:15; 3:16; 1 Pt.2:2-3; cp. Dt.17:19; Is.34:16; Jn.5:39; Acts 17:11; Ro.15:4; Col.3:16).

2. The householder or head of a house possessed the treasures of food, both old and new. He had two prime duties in dealing with food. He was to store the old food and keep it fresh, and he was to add the new food to the old, serving both at the appropriate time.

Christ was charging the disciples to share what they had learned. They knew the old truths, the message of the Old Testament; and now, since He had come, they were learning the new truths, the message of the New Testament. They were, therefore, responsible to share both the old and new.

1. Disciples questioned—do they understand the parables (v.51)?
2. They are compared to Jewish Scribes (v.52).
3. They are compared to the head of a house (v.52).

1 (13:51) **Parable**: Christ questioned the disciples—did they understand the parables?

1. Note the extreme concern of Christ in making sure that His audience understood. (Did some seem to be disinterested, daydreaming, falling asleep? Was that the reason for His question?)
2. Note the patience of Christ in His teaching. No doubt, Christ would have gone over and over the parables if the disciples had not understood. What a lesson for us in our preaching and teaching.

Thought 1. Note several lessons in this question.
1) Christ wants us to understand His Word, what He teaches us.
2) We should ask for an explanation when we do not understand.
3) There is no disgrace or reproach for not understanding.
4) We should be ready to help others to understand and be so observant that we can tell when they do not understand. We need to know when others are puzzled or have questions.

2 (13:52) **Disciples**: the disciples were compared to Jewish Scribes (see note—Mt.13:51-52). What did Christ mean?

1. The disciple is to *imitate* the Scribes' devotion, but there is to be a significant difference. The disciple is to be devoted to Christ, not religion. This means at least three things.

a. He is to be "a living sacrifice":

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**

b. He is to be "crucified with Christ":

> **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).**

c. He is to love God with all his heart:

> **"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Mt.22:37).**

2. The disciple is to imitate the Scribes' study. Note three things that characterized the scribes. (Again, there is to be a significant difference. Our study centers around Christ and not religion.)

a. The subject of our study. We are to study the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the gospel of that kingdom that we are to teach. Other areas of study such as philosophy, psychology, and social justice may help in supporting or illustrating our preaching and teaching; but our prime instruction must be in the Word of our Lord.
b. The need for intellect. We must *study* what Christ has said before we can *understand* what He has said.
c. The need for personal application. Christ's concern was that each disciple understand to the point that he could apply the lessons learned. If they were to teach, they first had to *understand and live*. We must all have a personal knowledge and understanding of God's kingdom to effectively live, preach, and teach.

Thought 1. Note two significant things about Scripture.

1) Scripture was given to help man learn and grow.

> **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3; cp. Acts 20:32).**

2) We are to study and walk in Christ if we want God's approval.

> **"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts" (1 Th.2:4).**
>
> **"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (1 Th.4:1).**
>
> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**

3 (13:52) **Disciples**: the disciples are compared to the head of a house (see notes—Mt.13:51-52. Cp.Mt.12:33-34.) Disciples are like the head of a household—extremely responsible. They are responsible for two things.

1. To share the Kingdom of Heaven with all of its riches.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).**

2. To share what they have, both the old and the new. They are to show just how the new fulfills the old (See note—Mt.5:17-18; cp. 1 Jn.2:7-8. See outlines—Hebrews. Scanning the outlines which compare the old with the new—such as the new covenant, new sacrifice, new tabernacle—will show just what Christ means. It will also show just how

diligently we must study if we are to understand the Word of God. Who would have ever thought there was so much meaning behind the worship and experiences of the Old Testament?)

Thought 1. The disciple is like the head of a household.

⇒ The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the Old and New Testament.

> **"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Ro.15:4).**
>
> **"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor.10:11).**

⇒ The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new revelation.

> **"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (Jn.1:17-18).**

⇒ The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new truth.

> **"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jn.1:17).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6; cp. Ps.119:142).**

⇒ The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new messages of God.

> **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt.5:17).**
>
> **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).**

⇒ The disciple possesses an enormous treasure: the old and new covenants.

> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).**
>
> **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered**

	X. THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12 **A. The Messiah Was Rejected in His Hometown: Why Jesus Is Rejected, 13:53-58** (Mk.6:1-6; cp. Lk.4:16-30)	Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?	a. He lacked proper credentials & education b. He was from humble beginnings
1 Jesus finished teaching the parables a. He went to Nazareth, His hometown b. He taught, but they rejected Him **2 Reason 1: They did not understand the source of His wisdom & power**	53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. 54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said	57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. 58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.	**3 Reason 2: They were offended because of Him** a. Because He was of their own country b. Because He was of their own house **4 Reason 3: They did not believe**

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

A. The Messiah Was Rejected in His Home Town: Why Jesus Is Rejected, 13:53-58

(13:53-16:12) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus Christ, Ministry**: Jesus was rejected by Nazareth, His hometown, and threatened by Herod (Mt.14:1f); therefore, He withdrew from Herod's dominion (Mt.14:13).

(13:53-58) **Introduction—Nazareth—Jesus Christ, Childhood & Early Life**: something of Jesus' early life can be imagined from this passage.

1. Note the words "his own country." This was Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. The city was surrounded by rolling hills and sat within eyesight of some of the major caravan routes of the day. As a boy Jesus would have roamed over the hills playing and talking with the traders from all over the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.2:23).
2. Note the words "Whence hath this man this wisdom...?" Jesus' education was in the home and the local synagogue (all Jewish boys were trained in the local synagogue). He was taught primarily at the feet of His mother and father, not at the feet of some famous teacher. He had no training from a university, and He had no degree, nor was He recognized and called "Rabbi" by the public at large.
3. Note the words "the carpenter's son." As the oldest son in the family, He would have helped His father, learning and working as a carpenter beside his father's side. He knew what it was to build a house (Mt.7:24-27), a tower (Lk.13:4; 14:28; Mk.12:1), a barn (Lk.12:18), and an oxen yoke (Mt.11:29). He knew about beams (Mt.7:3-4) and strong foundations (Lk.6:48-49; 14:29). He did the very best at whatever He did, so He was the best of carpenters. Apparently His father died while He was still home, so He would have been the head of the house and the major breadwinner for a number of years. (Note that nothing is ever said about Joseph during Jesus' ministry and that Jesus commits His mother into John's hands as He is dying. Cp. Jn.19:26-27. Note also that v.55 mentions only Mary.)
4. Note the words "his brethren...and his sisters" (v.55-56). Jesus apparently had four half-brothers and some half-sisters. The word *sisters* probably refers to several, meaning at least three. The sisters are never named so the number remains unknown. They were all brought up in the same home with Jesus' being the oldest. He would have played with them as any normal child would, and as the eldest child, He would have helped in looking after their needs as directed by His parents.
5. Note the words "Is not this...His mother...His brethren...His sisters, are they not all *with* us?" Jesus knew His neighbors well, and His neighbors knew Him and His family well. Having done all things well, Jesus would have been the very best of neighbors. He and His neighbors would have been close. They would have shared together—shared their homes and the joys and griefs that come with kinship and friendship. Many of those who were now rejecting Him would have been His playmates as a child, men and women with whom He had grown up and known so well (see outline and notes—Mt.12:46-50; Mk.3:21; Lk.8:19-21. Cp. Jn.7:3-5.)

Jesus' experience with His hometown friends and neighbors must have hurt Him deeply. Luke says they were going to kill Him (Lk.4:28-29). He loved them in a very special way because they had been His friends, and He wanted to do so much for them. But He was unable to do anything, for they rejected Him (see outline and notes—Mt.12:53-58).

Note the major reasons for their rejection.

1. Jesus finished teaching the parables (v.53-54).
2. Reason 1: they did not understand the source of His wisdom and power (v.54-56).
3. Reason 2: they were offended because of Him (v.57).
4. Reason 3: they did not believe Him (v.58).

1 (13:53-54) **Jesus Christ, Teaching—Rejection**: Jesus finished His teaching of the parables. Jesus stayed where He was until He had completed His ministry. He departed only after He "had finished these parables," that is, His teaching ministry.

Thought 1. The very fact that this is mentioned is a strong lesson for us. We should complete each task before moving on elsewhere.

1. Jesus went to Nazareth, His hometown. Why? We are not told, but its citizens had been His neighbors and many must have been very dear friends. As with most of us, He loved His hometown. He had so much to offer in helping to meet their needs. They were as other men—lost and without hope and needing a Savior. He longed to help those with whom He had played, grown up, and rubbed shoulders for thirty years.

2. Jesus taught, but they rejected Him. The people's rejection was strong. There was *scorn and spite* in their rejection. A quick glance at the questions they were asking and at Luke's account will show this. Luke tells us that they set out to kill Jesus (Lk.4:28-29).

Thought 1. What is it that causes such scorn and spite?

1) A sense of inferiority can cause scorn and spite. Inferiority is caused by being bruised. Nazareth was a conquered city and was despised by the Roman conquerors. The city was also despised by the rest of the Jewish nation (Jn.1:46). A citizen of Nazareth was the object of deep prejudice by all. Inferior persons handle their inferiority...
   - by withdrawing
   - by reacting with a reverse pride
   - by rejecting those who are or seem to be above their status

   In Jesus' case, the latter two seem to have been at play against Him.
2) Familiarity often breeds contempt or less respect (see note—Mt.12:46-47).
3) A feeling of being *bypassed* or *unblessed* by the powers that be, whether God or some destiny out in space, can cause scorn and spite. A person can feel left out and destined to be nothing: dull, unlovely, incapable, ungifted, disadvantaged. He can sense being so worthless and disadvantaged that he acts like it. Of course, such an attitude comes from a wrong view of God. It was this that caused Jesus' hometown to despise and scorn Him. They wondered how in the world a person from their own midst could possess such wisdom and authority.

> **"They answered and said unto him [Jesus], Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out" (Jn.9:34).**
>
> **"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Ro.2:4-6).**
>
> **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good" (2 Tim.3:1-3).**
>
> **"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government [authority]. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (2 Pt.2:9-10).**

2 (13:54-56) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: first, Jesus was rejected because the people did not understand the source of His wisdom and power.

1. Jesus lacked proper credentials and education (see note, pt.2—Mt.13:53-58). They recognized His unusual wisdom and works. They heard His wisdom and saw His works, but they understood neither. They would not acknowledge that He had really come from God (Lk.4:16-21; Jn.10:30-38).

Thought 1. Many judge others by their...

- education
- achievement
- prestige
- position
- social status
- name
- roots
- heritage
- success
- wealth
- fame

2. Jesus was from humble beginnings. His family was humble and ordinary—just an average family and nothing more. His father, Joseph, was a carpenter; His mother, Mary, was a housewife and mother. Neither parent had achieved any prominence nor had any of the children risen above or given promise of any more than the other children of Nazareth. How could Jesus possibly be who He was claiming to be: the Messiah, God's very own Son (cp. Lk.4:16-21)?

> **"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (Jn.4:10).**
>
> **"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).**
>
> **"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes" (Jn.9:30).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).**

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

3 (13:57) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: second, Jesus was rejected because people were offended by Him. The literal meaning of offended is *stumbling*. His neighbors and friends *stumbled over* Him.

1. They could not imagine that someone from their own house—someone whom they knew and had known from a child—*could be the Messiah*, the Son of God. (See note, pt. 5—Mt.13:53-58.)
2. They could not imagine that someone who had been born in their own country and lived among them could be making the claims that He was making. A man who ate, drank, worked, and slept among them had *no right to speak* and make such claims. (See note, pt.2—Mt.13:53-54.)

"And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Mt.27:39-40).

"Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him" (Mk.15:31-32).

"And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (Lk.5:21).

"And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God" (Lk.23:35).

"And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar. And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself" (Lk.23:36-37).

"And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us" (Lk.23:39).

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn.5:18).

"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn.10:33).

Thought 1. Most people deny a God beyond themselves. They exile God by seldom, if ever, considering Him. They consider Him to be some remote power in outer space or in another dimension of being. They put Him *out there*, not *in here*, not in their world and in their lives.

1) Men do not want God too close. If God is close, right here, then a man has to submit to God, serving and obeying Him. Man is just unwilling to give up the strings to his life. Therefore he creates a *mental god*, a god *far off*—far enough away to be unknown and to have little control over his life.
2) Men do not want a God who reveals Himself. If God revealed Himself, it would mean that man would have to serve and obey Him. Man simply wants a god *out there*, a god *beyond*, a god whom man has to seek. He wants a god far enough away that he *has to guess and work out* what God and His laws are. By having to seek after God and His laws, man is able to *make up* and to *imagine* God to be as he wishes. Therefore, man is able to make up his own god and rules and laws—able to live as he wishes.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pt.2:11).

"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1 Pt.4:2).

Thought 2. We must choose! We either shrink Christ to our level of humanness or else surrender to Him as the Incarnate Son of God. He is either one of us or else the true Messiah and Savior of the world. If He is mere man, He is the worst imposter and most tragic deceiver in history, for He claimed to be the Son of God Himself. If He is the Messiah, then He is our Lord and our God. (A quick survey of the outlines of John will show this. Just a quick glance at the General Outline of John will also show the fact.)

Thought 3. Prophets should be honored. Some people do honor them, but not everyone. Jesus is saying prophets are worthy of honor (cp. 1 Tim.5:17).

4 (13:58) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: third, Jesus was rejected because the people did not believe Him.

"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe" (Lk.22:67).

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (Jn.4:48).

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (Jn.6:64).

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:24-25).

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" (Jn.12:37).

Thought 1. Unbelief results in some bitter fruit.

1) Unbelief hurts the unbeliever. The unbeliever loses life—life abundant in this world and life eternal in the next world.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn.5:39-40).

"The thief [false teacher] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

2) Unbelief hurts the unbeliever's neighbors and friends. Imagine all the good that could be shared and experienced by the neighbors and friends of an unbeliever if he just trusted Christ!
   - ⇒ Imagine the difference on a personal scale: fewer tragedies, trials, temptations, broken homes, bankruptcies, diseases, and accidents; less envy, jealousy, prejudice, disappointment, discouragement, loss, and disruption.
   - ⇒ Imagine the difference on a global scale: fewer wars, savage beasts, terrorism, broken treaties, and less economic greed, turmoil, poverty, hunger, and death.
3) Unbelief hurts Christ. It cuts His heart. He longs to give life and to help us along day by day. But as in Nazareth, He is often denied the right to show His love and power to the unbeliever.

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).

"Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way" (Mt.15:32).

"So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him" (Mt.20:34).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem [world, world], thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt.23:37).

"And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean" (Mk.1:40-41).

"Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise" (Lk.7:12-14).

"Jesus wept" (Jn.11:35).

Thought 2. Unbelief hurts everyone. God cannot work where there is unbelief. Unbelief shuts God out; it pushes Him away and refuses to let God's love and power work.

Thought 3. It has been centuries since Christ came, yet the world is still unreached and denying God, reeling in the tragedy of unbelief. The lack is not on God's part; the lack is on our part—it is our unbelief.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

CHAPTER 14

B. The Messiah's Forerunner is Murdered: A Godly vs. an Ungodly Man,[ps1,2] **14:1-14**
(Mk.6:14-29; Lk.9:7-9)

1 John's mighty works vs. Herod's guilty conscience
a. Herod heard of Jesus' works
b. Herod feared John was risen from the dead

At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,
2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

2 John's righteous witness vs. Herod's immoral life

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.
4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

3 John's godly testimony vs. Herod's worldly & fearful ambition

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

4 John's denial of the world vs. Herod's foolishness & fleshly lust
a. Seen in a woman's shameless dance
b. Seen in Herod's passionate lust
c. Seen in Herod's weakness & subjection to his wife (cp. v.3)

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.
7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.
8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

5 John's godly fate vs. Herod's unholy pride & weakness

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

6 John's courageous end vs. Herod's savage cruelty

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.
11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

7 John's joy & glory vs. Herod's doom
a. John's disciples buried him
b. Jesus was told about John's death: He grieved & retreated, getting all alone

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.
13 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

c. Jesus went forth
1) With renewed compassion
2) With renewed ministry

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

B. The Messiah's Forerunner is Murdered: A Godly vs. an Ungodly Man, 14:1-14

(14:1-14) **Introduction**: this passage is a portrait of a godly vs. an ungodly man. Humanly, the picture shows the ungodly triumphing over the godly; but when we look behind the picture, the truth is seen. The godly is the real victor, and the ungodly is the real loser. There is always much to be learned by looking at the godly vs. the ungodly.

1. John's mighty works vs. Herod's guilty conscience (v.1-2).
2. John's righteous witness vs. Herod's immoral life (v.3-4).
3. John's godly testimony vs. Herod's worldly and fearful ambition (v.5).
4. John's denial of the world vs. Herod's foolishness and fleshliness (v.6-8).
5. John's godly fate vs. Herod's unholy pride and weakness (v.9).
6. John's courageous end vs. Herod's savage cruelty (v.10-11).
7. John's joy and glory vs. Herod's doom (v.12-14).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:1-14) **Herod Antipas**: Herod is mentioned three times in Scripture. He is mentioned here at the execution of John; when some Pharisees warned Jesus that Herod planned to kill Him (Lk.13:31); and when Herod stood face to face with Jesus at Jesus' trial (Lk.23:8f).

Herod's life can be dramatically seen in a discussion of the outline points.

1. Herod had a guilty conscience for two reasons (v.1-2).
   a. He lived a life of gross sin which is clearly illustrated in this passage.
   b. He imprisoned and killed a prophet of God.
2. Herod lived an immoral life (v.3-4). Herod had married the daughter of Aretas, King of the Nabataean Arabs; but on a trip to Rome he had visited his half-brother and was deeply attracted to his wife, Herodias. He seduced her and talked her into returning with him. Herod's own wife discovered his plans; and fearing for her life, she fled to her father, King Aretas (see pt.7, Herod's doom, for Aretas' reaction).

Two serious sins were committed by Herod. He had put away his own wife (her life was probably threatened), and he had stolen the wife of his half-brother. It was against such immorality that John preached.

3. Herod loved the world and was extremely ambitious. As a result, he experienced much fear as all worldly and ambitious men do (see outline and notes—Mt.6:19-20). Herod's mind was set on the things of the world.

a. He was a builder given to extravagance. He reconstructed Sepphoris (4 miles north of Nazareth) and built a new seaport on the southwest side of the Sea of Galilee, naming it Tiberias in honor of the Roman emperor. His love for the world and for luxury are evident from this passage.
b. Herod was ambitious and envious of others. When Herod Agrippa was given the title of King, he too coveted the title of King. He tried his best to secure it, but it was this ambition that caused him to lose his throne (see pt.7).
c. Herod's close friendship with Pilate at the Lord's crucifixion would also indicate a tendency to capitalize upon *close connections*.
d. Herod imprisoned John for two reasons. First, he feared John's popularity as a prophet among the people. He feared John might say something that would arouse the people to rebel and cause him to lose favor with Rome. Rome would then strip him of his power and wealth and replace him with someone who could control the people. His ambition and love for the world caused him to pursue the safest course—that of imprisoning John. Second, Herod gave in to his wife, Herodias. Herodias despised John with a vengeance because of his preaching against sin, and she apparently nagged Herod to get rid of John until he did.

4. Herod lived a life of foolishness and fleshliness (v.6-8). Herod's fleshliness is seen in his lust and seduction of Herodias (see pt.2) and in the events of this passage. He apparently followed the Greek practice of celebrating special events with lavish feasts, heavy drinking, and suggestive, lustful, and passionate dancing. When he was full of drink, he was stirred with such lust and passion after his step-daughter that he offered her anything, even half of his kingdom. Just how fleshly minded he was is seen in the fact that he would allow one of the royal family (his step-daughter) to dance so suggestively before the royal court. Such dancing was done by professional prostitutes, not by members of the royal family.

Herod's foolishness and his marred judgment are illustrated in the *reckless offer* to his step-daughter and in believing that he had to keep a wicked and dishonorable oath.

5. Herod had an unholy pride and weakness (v.9). Herod made a foolish promise. Now he was faced with keeping a wicked oath or with breaking one of God's major laws, "Thou shalt not kill." His pride prevented him from confessing his error. He feared being shamed and embarrassed by a woman's tantrums before his guests and being the butt end of their jokes and amusement. He knew what he should do, but in *pride and weakness* before men, he buckled and caved in to a terrible sin.

6. Herod demonstrated a savage cruelty (v.10-11). The very way in which Herod executed John and had his bloody head brought in on a platter reveals a depth of cruelty and drunken debauchery that is enormously repulsive to any decent person. His cruelty is also seen in that he had unjustly arrested John and had left him in a rat and roach infested dungeon for about a year and a half.

Josephus, the prominent historian of that day, writes that it was Herod's worldly ambition that led him to arrest and execute John.

> *"Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late"* (*Josephus Complete Works*. Antiquities 18.5:1-2).

7. Herod was doomed (v.12-14). As mentioned above in point 2, Herod's first wife had to flee for her life, seeking refuge with her father, King Aretas. Seeking vengeance, the king went to war against Herod and bitterly defeated him. A desperate appeal to Rome saved Herod's life just in the nick of time. However, his doom was sealed just a few years later when he envied and sought the title of King for himself. In a plot of intrigue, Herod Agrippa persuaded the Roman government that Herod Antipas was plotting a rebellion against Rome. The emperor Coligula was convinced and exiled Herod Antipas to Spain. He died there.

The doom of Herod is dramatically seen when he stood face to face with Jesus at Jesus' trial. Jesus "answered...nothing" (Lk.23:9). Christ faced Him in stone silence. The silence was a rebuke and condemned Herod's flippant and worldly attitude toward life.

Herod died without God. Why? He had two of the greatest witnesses in human history: John the Baptist and Christ Himself. It is written that:

> **"Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things [that John taught], and heard him gladly" (Mk.6:20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(14:1-14) **Herod the Tetrarch**: the word Tetrarch means the ruler of a fourth part; however, the word eventually came to mean the subordinate ruler of some section of a country. Herod the Tetrarch is Herod Antipas, the Herod who was prince over Galilee and Perea from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D. He was the son of Herod the Great and his Samaritan wife, Malthace (Mt.2:1). He was the full brother of Archelaus (Mt.2:22).

1 (14:1-2) **Conscience—Repentance**: John's mighty works vs. Herod's guilty conscience (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.1—Mt.14:1-14). "John did *no miracle*" while he was alive (Jn.10:41), but he did perform *great works* for God. Herod knew this. Therefore, when he heard of the miracles being performed by a man who called Himself the Messiah, he supposed one of two things. He thought that John had literally risen from the dead or that God had given some man the very same power John had. Note that Herod did not ascribe the works to John himself, but he ascribed them to God: "mighty works do show forth themselves in Him" (v.2).

Thought 1. John was imprisoned, yet the Word of God continued. Note two things.
1) Men cannot stop God's Word. Prophets do not live forever, but God sees to it that His Word always takes hold of some hearts and lives (Zech.1:5-6).
2) When the world silences one of God's servants, God raises up another, and sometimes he raises up many to stand in the place of the one who was martyred.

Thought 2. Note Herod's conscience. He feared John and knew John was a just and holy man and enjoyed listening to him. He was even perplexed, stricken in conscience, trying to live to some degree like John said (Mk.6:20). Yet he imprisoned John, fearing that John's popularity with the people might lead to an uprising; and he had John executed in a bloody, abhorrent scene.

The point is this: Herod seemed to have some consciousness of sin and righteousness, some conviction of godliness, yet this was not enough. In the midst of some conviction of conscience, he committed some horrible sins. He showed no "*godly sorrow*," no change, no repentance, no courage to stand up for what was right (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.5—Mt.14:1-14).

Note: a conscience that is soft and tender and that is even experiencing conviction and guilt is not enough. A *godly sorrow* and repentance toward God and a courage to stand up for God are necessary.

> **"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).**
>
> **"And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?" (Lk.13:2).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).**
>
> **"Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake" (Ro.13:5).**
>
> **"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward" (2 Cor.1:12).**
>
> **"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck" (1 Tim.1:19).**
>
> **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**

2 (14:3-4) **Witness**: John's righteous witness vs. Herod's immoral life (see note, pt.2—Mt.14:1-2). Mark's account of this event is much more detailed. Mark says Herod "observed John; and when he heard him, he did many things." Herod actually tried to do some of the things John preached (Mk.6:20). Despite who Herod was—despite the threat of his power and influence—John boldly preached righteousness and pointed his finger right at Herod's sin. John knew about Herod's cruel power, yet he was honest to God's Word and true to his calling. He proclaimed boldly: "It is not lawful for thee to have her."

Thought 1. Note three things.
1) People are to be told what is lawful and unlawful, right and wrong.
2) No one is above the law: the law is for all men. What is right for the poor, the weak, and the lowly is right for the wealthy, the strong, and the king. God expects His Word to be kept by all.
3) People who break the law should be told of their violation. When a person does wrong or fails to do right, he is to be told: "It is not lawful...."

Thought 2. The servant of God is to be faithful in preaching against wrong, even it if does offend people. He is to run the risk of losing favor rather than being disobedient to God.

> **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).**
>
> **"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Th.5:14).**
>
> **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**
>
> **"To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit.2:5).**
>
> **"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression" (Is.58:1).**

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezk.3:18).

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezk.33:9).

3 (14:5) **Worldliness—Fear**: John's godly testimony vs. Herod's worldly and fearful ambition (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.3—Mt.14:1-14). Despite Herod's respect for John, he would have killed John as a rabble-rouser (Mk.6:20). One thing kept him from it: worldliness. John was very popular among the people (Mt.3:5). Herod feared the people might react and revolt against such a heinous crime as killing so great a prophet. If they did, Rome would remove him from his post; and he would lose his position, fame, wealth, and power.

Thought 1. Note several things about this man, things that are often true of the powerful, famous, and wealthy.

1) Herod's actions were not based upon a fear of God nor upon a fear of God's prophet. He acted only to protect himself and his position. God and His prophet had nothing to do with his final decision. He feared what the people would do and the effect upon his position with Rome.
2) Herod's worldliness and fleshliness overpowered what interest he had in godliness and righteousness (cp. Mk.6:20). Initially he had respected John, but his ambition and lust wiped out the pull of his heart for God.
3) Herod's primary ambition was secular, not spiritual. He chose to possess the material things of this earth for a few short years rather than the spiritual things for eternity.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

4) Herod was gripped with fear. Despite all his power and wealth, he feared. Secular man has many fears...

- fear of losing
- fear of not having
- fear of not recovering
- fear of emptiness
- fear of loneliness
- fear of others
- fear of the future
- fear of ill health
- fear of death

The basic cause of fear is insecurity. Secular man has nothing—no power, no god beyond himself and other men—to help him through the crises of life, the crises that go well beyond the coping power of men. There are just some crises that man can do nothing about: death, accident, illness, a spouse's rejection, physical abnormality, bankruptcy, thievery. Few will admit insecurity and fear, yet it is present in all secular men.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb.10:26-27).

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes" (Ps.118:9).

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Is.2:22).

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites" (Is.33:14).

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not" (Is.66:4).

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).

4 (14:6-8) **Worldliness**: John's denial of the world vs. Herod's foolishness and fleshliness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.4—Mt.14:1-14). John was godly and disciplined. He lived for God and lived a controlled life. Herod was foolish; he was carnal, fleshly, and secular. This scene shows it. He foolishly lived only for this world: for fame, wealth, position, power, and for the sensual pleasure and stimulation of the flesh.

Note what *drinking and suggestive dancing and lust* did to Herod. It led him (1) to allow his step-daughter to expose herself before gaping men; (2) to give anything for sensual satisfaction, up to half of his kingdom; and (3) to commit murder.

Thought 1. Herod desired the bright lights, fast crowds, good times, and sensual feelings. He lived a life of worldliness and fleshliness. When people get together for social affairs and have alcoholic drinks and suggestive or contact dancing, they create an atmosphere for things to happen that would not ordinarily happen. They do things they would not ordinarily do.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things" (Pr.23:31-33).

Thought 2. Note the influence of Herodias over her daughter Salome. The mother set a bad example before her daughter and encouraged her to do evil. There is a lesson here for all parents.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).

"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:5-7).

5 (14:9) **God—Deliverance**: John's godly fate vs. Herod's unholy pride and weakness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.5—Mt.14:1-14). John was God's servant; therefore, he was in God's hands. To the genuine Christian, John's death was God's will: God was ready for John to come home to Him. To the world, John's death was a terrible, untimely, and wasteful fate. If this world is all there is for human life, the world would be right. But since there is eternity, the Christian knows that John's fate was *not just a worldly fate, but a godly fate*. His death fitted in perfectly with the eternal purpose of God.

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

6 (14:10-11) **Witness—Repentance**: John's courageous end vs. Herod's savage cruelty (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.6—Mt.14:1-14). Many would have told John to remain silent, to play it safe lest he provoke Herod. But John had a duty *to speak up* for God, and he fulfilled that duty. What an example for speaking up and for bearing a strong witness for God!

Note the words "and the king was sorry." Again, being sorry is not enough. There must be repentance; a person must do what is right. There is a *worldly sorrow* and a *godly sorrow* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of [without regret]: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb.12:16-17).

"For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps.38:4).

7 (14:12-14) **God, Presence**: John's joy and glory vs. Herod's doom (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.7—Mt.14:1-14). John's faithful disciples buried him. The picture of Herod and John shows ever so clearly that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal.6:7). Sin reaps death and righteousness reaps life.

Note two results of John's death that speak clearly to us.

1. Jesus got alone, apparently for contemplation and devotion. Jesus is touched by every death. To the mature believer, someone's death is a time for getting alone with God for contemplation and devotion.
2. Jesus went forth with renewed compassion and ministry. He was stirred to minister more and more.

Thought 1. There is no record of John's closing moments, but we can rest assured that God was with Him in a very, very special way.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me" (Ps.23:4).

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim.4:6-8).

"...all men forsook me...notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me" (2 Tim.4:16-17).

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Ph.1:21).

	C. The Messiah's Power to Feed Five Thousand: The Essentials for Ministry,[ps1] **14:15-21** (Mk.6:30-44;Lk.9:10-17; Jn.6:1-14)	and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.	inadequate **3 Essential 3: Trusting Christ to use one's resources**[ps2] a. The disciples' duty: To bring the resources to Christ b. Jesus' example 1) Taking resources 2) Thanking God[ps3] 3) Using resources c. The disciples part 1) To share 2) To save & be thrifty 3) To observe & witness Christ's power, His Messiahship
1 Essential 1: Seeing people & having compassion a. Christ's example, v.14 1) Seeing the multitude 2) Feeling compassion b. The disciples concern: Only human concern	15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.		
2 Essential 2: Accepting one's duty to minister a. Christ's charge: Give b. The disciples' humanism: Resources are	16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. 17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves,		

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

C. The Messiah's Power to Feed Five Thousand: The Essentials for Ministry, 14:15-21

(14:15-21) **Introduction**: what Jesus was doing in this event is twofold. (1) He was demonstrating or proving His Messiahship, and (2) He was teaching His disciples their part in the work of God. He was teaching them the raw essentials for ministry. He had called them to minister, to show people that He, the Messiah, was the answer to human helplessness. They were to meet the day-to-day needs of people, helping them through the trials and problems of life. He had to teach them a critical truth: they would never be able to do the job in their own strength. Their human resources were just too inadequate to meet the needs of the world. Humanism, man and his ability alone, could never get the job done. Man and his resources could only take care of some of the needs, and man and his resources would always end up having to send multitudes away to fend for themselves (v.15). Why is this true? Why is humanism such a futile failure? Why can man himself not meet all the needs of the world? Because so few see the multitude in their need and even fewer experience compassion for them (Mt.14:14). Most say, "Send the multitude away, that they may go...and buy themselves" (v.15). But Jesus said, "They need not depart; *give ye* them to eat" (v.16).

It is at this point that man fails and fails so miserably. He has his eye stuck to the earth, only on human resources. What Jesus said is profound: "Bring them [your human resources] here to me" (v.18). What would happen if men would bring their human resources to Christ? The resources would become wonderfully multiplied, and the world's needs would be met.

1. Essential 1: seeing people and having compassion (v.15).
2. Essential 2: accepting one's duty to minister (v.16-17).
3. Essential 3: trusting Christ to use one's resources (v.18-21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:15-21) **Feeding of Multitudes**: the feeding of the five thousand has been said to picture several significant events in the Christian's life.

1. It pictures how Christ miraculously multiplies the believer's human resources.
2. It pictures the Lord's Supper. The early church saw the miracle as a picture of the blessing that comes to the believer when he partakes of Christ, the bread of life. There is the picture of Christ "looking up to heaven," blessing, breaking, and passing the loaves out to the people through the disciples who were acting as the elders and deacons of the church.
3. It pictures the great marriage feast or banquet of the Lamb yet to take place in the future kingdom of God (Mt.22:1-14; Lk.14:16-24).

1 (14:15) **Compassion**: the first essential for ministry is seeing people and having compassion. There is a sharp contrast between the compassion of Jesus and the disciples.

1. Jesus' compassion was very strong. Refer back to v.14 for the picture of Jesus' example of compassion. His compassion had caused His heart to pour out to the multitude, and He had been ministering most of the day. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:36 for the meaning of *Compassion*.)

Note two things about Jesus and the multitudes.

a. Jesus saw the multitudes. He was very observant, always looking for people in order to help them. He had "come not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mt.20:28).

b. Jesus felt compassion. The helplessness of the people pierced His heart. He saw precious, immortal souls who were hurting and being pressed under the weight of human problems. He was moved to help them and to teach His disciples the great necessity of seeing people and of feeling a gripping compassion for them.

2. The compassion of the disciples was very weak. They had a concern for the people, but a gripping compassion was missing. Their problem was the same problem that has always enslaved men. Men see nothing but their own human power and resources; they see nothing but man, his *humanness*. Their eyes are on the earth and on man alone. Therefore, they live only as humanists. The result is this: their power and resources are just as they have always been—inadequate. They think in terms of doing just what the disciples did: ignoring and sending the multitude away.

Thought 1. We often feel that we need what resources we have in order to take care of our needs. Therefore, we ignore the crying needs of those who are around us and those who are scattered all over the world.

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).

2 (14:16-17) **Ministering**: the second essential for ministry is accepting one's duty to minister.

1. The charge of Christ is, "Give"—give what resources you have—it is your duty to give.

Thought 1. The command of Christ is to every man: "give." We are to take what resources we have and give to meet the desperate needs of the multitude. We all have the duty and responsibility to give whatever we have, no matter how little or how small.

2. The disciples' humanism still showed itself. They still could not see beyond the physical world although they were at least thinking about the human need and the resources they had to meet the need. This is understandable, for the only life they had really known was life *lived on the human plane*. They had always looked only at what they had, only at what man could do with what little he had. They had not yet seen what God could do with human resources yielded to Him.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Mt.16:24-25).

"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

Thought 1. Note that the disciples were being awakened to the need and moved by Christ. They were now willing to offer and share what they had. But note: being aware and being moved to share will not get the job done. God is needed! We have to take our resources and turn them over to God. Why?

Because man has a problem down deep within that underlies all his problems, a problem that causes the physical needs of his experience. His physical needs are only the symptoms or results of the underlying cause. The underlying cause is *sin*, that is, selfishness, greed, envy, pride, prejudice, lying, stealing, cheating, indulgence, extravagance, hoarding, and so much more. Man's spirit has to be changed before the needs of the world will ever be met.

⇒ The earth has the potential *to meet some needs* of every man, but few men have the free spirit to act unselfishly.

⇒ The earth itself does not have the means to give abundant life (security, self-esteem, godly esteem, love, joy, peace, etc.). (Cp. Jn.10:10.)

⇒ The earth itself does not have the means to give eternal life (Eph.2:4-7).

3 (14:18-21) **Ministering**: the third essential for ministry is trusting Christ to use one's resources (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.14:18-21).

1. The disciples' duty is to bring his resources to Christ. Christ did not meet the need apart from the disciples' resources. We have to bring our resources to Him if we are to see the needs of men met. Two facts are universally true: we are helpless in meeting the needs of men apart from God, and God is helpless without the commitment of His disciples.

Thought 1. No matter how little we may have, it is needed, and we are held responsible for bringing it to Christ.

Thought 2. Christ wants disciples who will give what resources they have. It is the resources of His disciples, not angels, that God uses to show *His love and His truth* to others. Thus, for the cause of Christ and for the sake of the world, we must bring our resources to Christ, trusting Him to effectively use them in meeting the needs of so desperate a world.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor.16:2).

"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee" (Dt.16:17).

"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase" (Pr.3:9).

2. Jesus' example of how our resources are to be used is threefold. (1) Christ took the resources given Him (2), gave thanks, and (3) used the resources. He will always, without fail, do the same with whatever we give—if we will just *give all that we have*.

Thought 1. In these three acts, Christ teaches how to use what resources we have.
1) Take them: surrendering them to Christ and His purposes.
2) Thank God: acknowledging Him as the source of the resources.
3) Use them: giving all we have to those who are so hungry, lost, and desperately needful throughout the world.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

Thought 2. Christ "gave the loaves *back* to His disciples"—He filled and filled their hands continually, unceasingly.

3. The disciples' part in the ministry of the Lord was also threefold.
   a. They had to share.
   b. They had to save and demonstrate thriftiness, showing the glorious bounty of God. They had to be serving as an example of how resources should be used.
   c. They had to observe the power of Christ themselves, ever learning and strengthening their own faith so that they could serve ever more forcibly in the future.

Thought 1. Christ did not heap up the bread all at once. The provision grew as it was distributed. It was *in the breaking*, *in the use* of the resource that it met the need of men. We must give what we have to Christ and then trust Him to multiply it enough to meet the need. Very simply, that is our part in meeting the needs of the world. We take what we have and do what we can, trusting Christ to multiply it enough to meet the need.

Thought 2. When we share what Christ gives, He fills everyone. There is enough, more than enough, and there is satisfaction. The needs of people are met. But it all depends upon one thing: our sharing. We must share what God gives.

Thought 3. Whatever we share, God multiplies. God can take a little and make it go a long way.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

Thought 4. When plenty comes, man too often...
- overuses it on himself
- hoards what self does not need
- wastes the leftovers
- forgets the past
- ignores the real Giver
- shuts his eyes to others

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19-20).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(14:18-21) **Lessons**: note five things.
1. The disciples exercised great faith in Christ. They brought their resources to Christ despite the fact that the resources were few in number and small in size.
2. Christ used *all* the resources—all that was available.
3. Christ worked through the disciples, the individuals who brought what they had. The persons who gave what they had became the agents of Christ.
4. Christ multiplied what was given to Him manyfold.
5. The disciples and the people witnessed a miracle from God: the need was met.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(14:19) **Prayer, at Meals**: Biblical believers prayed before eating their meals (Mt.15:36; 26:26; Acts 27:35; Ro.14:6; 1 Cor.10:30; 1 Tim.4:5; cp. 1 Sam.9:13).

	D. The Messiah's Power To Calm a Storm: The Power of His Presence, 14:22-33 (Mk.6:45-52; Jn.6:16-21)	for fear. 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. 28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. 29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. 31 And immediately Jesus sretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? 32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. 33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.
1 Christ's presence is assured by personal preparation a. He sent the disciples away b. He dismissed the multitude c. He got alone to pray 1) On a mountain 2) In the evening 3) All alone 4) In a storm	22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.	
2 Christ's presence conquers fear a. A storm arose b. Jesus went to them: He walked on the sea c. The disciples feared, thinking they saw a ghost	24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. 26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out	d. Jesus gave assurance—His presence
		3 Christ's presence stirs the hope of being saved a. Peter's hope was stirred: He could be saved by Christ's presence b. Jesus' command: Come c. Peter's faith faltered 1) Glanced at storm 2) Began to sink 3) Cried: Lord, save d. Jesus saved, but rebuked faltering faith
		4 Christ's presence conquers nature
		5 Christ's presence stirs confession & worship[DSI]

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

D. The Messiah's Power to Calm a Storm: The Power of His Presence, 14:22-33

(14:22-33) **Introduction**: note that Christ had to *constrain* His disciples to leave and go to the other shore. They argued against going. There were several reasons why the use of constraint was necessary.

First, right after Christ had fed the crowd, they wished to take Him by force to make Him King (Jn.6:15). Christ knew the popular view of Messiahship. The Messiah was to lead Israel in revolt against the Roman conqueror, freeing the people and establishing a theocratic government, that is, the rule and reign of God over all the earth (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). The disciples were caught up in the excitement. Christ had to send them across the lake and disperse the crowd in order to calm the disciples, keeping them from making a serious mistake. Of course, Christ knew that they would be fighting a storm, and having to strain against a storm and fight for survival would calm their excitement. His calming the storm would also prove His Messiahship and again show that He was in control of all things. It would show that He knew the best way to proclaim His Messiahship.

Second, it was time for Christ to move on, for others needed His ministry. He wanted the disciples to make use of what little daylight remained for crossing the lake.

Third, and so important to see, Christ needed time alone for prayer (v.23).

Fourth, and just as important, Christ wanted the disciples to begin learning one of the most important lessons of their lives: His presence would always be with them, not necessarily His physical presence but His spiritual presence. What they needed was great trust in Him (cp. Peter's demonstration of trust, v.28-29).

The Lord's presence makes all the difference in the world. (See outline and notes—Mt.8:23-27.)

1. Christ's presence is assured by personal preparation (v.22-23).
2. Christ's presence conquers fear (v.24-27).
3. Christ's presence stirs the hope of being saved (v.28-31).
4. Christ's presence conquers nature (v.32).
5. Christ's presence stirs confession and worship (v.33).

1 (14:22-23) **Preparation, Personal—Prayer**: Christ's presence is assured by personal preparation. This fact is demonstrated by what Christ Himself did, and the lesson is forceful. He got alone for prayer. There are times when long sessions of prayer are needed—no matter the circumstances. If Christ sensed the need, how much more should we.

Christ sent the disciples across the lake and dismissed the crowd; then He got alone to pray. So much had happened that Jesus was just drained and exhausted. The tempter had confronted Him once again, offering the easy way to secure the loyalty of the people (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.4:1-11). The people were ready to acclaim Him king, but He knew

that human proclamation was only the way of the devil. He had to secure salvation for men through death and the resurrection. He needed time alone with God.

⇒ He needed to be renewed and strengthened. He was physically exhausted.

⇒ He needed to recover a clear perspective of His mission. He was mentally exhausted; His mind was so tired, it was probably like ours after intensive thought and labor—foggy (cp. Heb.4:15-16).

⇒ He needed to be recharged with God's power and with the singleness of heart to do God's will. So much power had gone out of Him He was spiritually drained (cp. Mk.5:30; see note—Mt.9:20-22).

Several lessons on prayer can be gleaned from this experience of Christ.

He prayed on top of a mountain. The believer who stands on top of a mountain thinking, viewing the awesomeness of the country below, sees the massiveness of God: His power, majesty, and glory. The believer gains a new perspective of God and man.

Christ prayed in the evening. The evening is a tender and warm time, a time when a person who has worked ever so hard is very much aware of being drained and needing renewal. It is a time when a review of the day and a look ahead to tomorrow can take place. Christ prayed all alone; He needed to share with God face to face.

He prayed "until the fourth watch" (3-6 a.m.), probably seven or more hours.

He prayed in a storm. A storm arose at some point, apparently long before 3 a.m. or the disciples would have already crossed the lake. The importance of prayer to Christ is strikingly seen in the fact that He prayed for so many hours *in the midst of a storm.*

Thought 1. We are mere people. We get tired so frequently; exhausted so often; tempted so much; pressured so tightly; strained so painfully. We fight to keep our minds on Christ and struggle to maintain a moment-by-moment consciousness of His presence (2 Cor.10:5). We war to keep at our task. Such takes its toll, wears us down mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Our only hope is to learn that Christ's presence, a consciousness of His presence, is assured by prayer—much prayer. We must learn to spend much time alone with God.

Thought 2. A dedicated person lives in a mad rush and is attacked time and again by distraction after distraction. It is impossible to remain strong and faithful to Christ without getting alone for prayer and renewal. Such is the way God has chosen to teach us to trust. We are not self-sufficient. If we want the assurance of His presence and if we are going to do what He has sent us into the world to do, we must spend time alone with Him.

This is one of the basic laws of spiritual growth and ministry (see outline and notes—Mt.7:7-11. Cp. Mt.6:6.)

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

2 (14:24-27) **Fear—Jesus Christ, Presence**: Christ's presence conquers fear. This is the point seen in the storm and the disciples' experience in the storm.

1. A storm arose while they were crossing the lake. The word "tossed" (basavizomenon) means to be tossed about with great force. The picture is descriptive: the boat was tossed about so ferociously that it was in pain and anguish. The storm arose while the disciples were working. They were doing exactly what Christ had told them to do, but the storm still came. How true of life: storms come upon the just as well as upon the unjust (Mt.5:45).

2. Jesus went to the disciples, but note how: He walked on the sea. However, He did not go to them immediately. Why?

   a. Because He needed to teach them to trust Him and to obey His command no matter what happened to them. They were doing what He had told them to do, so they could trust His care and His will.

   b. Because He needed to teach them to go about conquering the storms of life by using their own skill and strength. They needed to learn to use all the gifts they had in struggling against the storms of life. He would step in only after they had done all they could. Once their own strength and skill had been exhausted, the praise for salvation would go to God and His delivering power, not to man.

3. The disciples were stricken with fear, they thought they were seeing a ghost. The physical and mental condition of the disciples is important at this point. They were *physically exhausted*, having struggled against the storm for hours, and they were *mentally drained* from using all the skill at their disposal. Their lives were threatened, and they were struggling for survival. All of a sudden out of nowhere they saw a figure, an apparition (ghost) walking on the water. They were frightened, perhaps bordering on going into shock—perhaps thinking that the "death angel" or a premonition of their death was at hand (Peter's impulsive request seems to indicate this). Then all of a sudden a voice *shouted out*: "It is I; be not afraid." Exhausted, frightened, shocked—*fearing* and struggling for their lives and being face to face with a real apparition—the disciples were suffering an almost unbearable experience.

4. Jesus gave assurance of His presence. Christ's sudden presence on the water was *a great encouragement* to the disciples, yet they were not quite sure it was Him: "Lord, if it be thou." His words and His presence are *a marvelous revelation* of His care and power to save us through the storms of life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20).

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:20).

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen.28:15).

"And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Ex.33:14).

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him" (Ps.28:7).

"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (Ps.40:17).

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:1-2).

Thought 1. We should not turn back when storms arise, no matter how terrible the trial (cp. Mt.13:5, 21). Christ is able to take the trials of life and make opportunities out of them. They give us experience in the life of faith.

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:3-5).

Thought 2. This is human distress at its height, a terrifying experience. The thrust of the point is clear: we are helpless when caught in the greatest storms of life. Christ's presence alone can save us *through* those storms. His presence alone can conquer our fears, giving us hope and security.

Thought 3. Storms can be moments of sorrow, self-conflict, temptation, decision making, or any adverse circumstance. Christ is ever so near and ready to help those who will call out to Him. His presence is most assuring, comforting, and strengthening to the true disciple.

3 (14:28-31) **Peter—Faith, Weak**: Christ's presence stirred the hope of being saved. When Peter heard Christ's voice, he was stirred.

1. Peter's hope was stirred: he could be saved by Christ's presence. He asked permission to join Christ. Peter's request was most unusual, and it has always baffled some persons. We must picture the scene: the physical and mental exhaustion; the hours of struggle for survival against the storm; the fear that strikes when thoughts of death face a person for so many long and unbroken hours; the fright of seeing a real apparition; the state of shock from confronting so much. Peter thought he was dying. A man in such a condition wants to be saved and delivered from danger. Peter knew Jesus, both His power and His love: "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee [save me, get me out of this danger]." Peter was not thinking in terms of miracles. His mind was too occupied for that. He was in a hopeless situation; he wanted to be saved.

Note another point: Peter was not wanting to go to Christ because he loved Christ. He loved Christ, but right now his thoughts were on the love and power of Christ to save him. Christ was his only hope for being saved from death. Christ's presence stirred Peter's hope: Christ could save him.

2. Jesus' command was, "Come." The word is strong; Christ was not merely giving Peter permission to come; He was commanding Peter. When a person sees that Jesus is his salvation, the command is there: "Come."

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteh, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

3. Peter's faith faltered. Peter saw Jesus, his hope of being saved. He knew Jesus cared and loved and had the power to save him. He had his eyes upon Jesus. It was when he took his eyes off Jesus, focusing on the storm, that his faith began to weaken and he began sinking. Note that Christ saved him despite weak faith: "Lord...help thou mine unbelief" (Mk.9:24). There is some faith in the cry, "Lord...help."

Thought 1. There is a picture of salvation in this scene. A man's hope is stirred: Christ's presence can save him. He asks to join Christ, and Christ commands "Come." The man begins to walk toward Christ, passing over the turbulent waves of life. All of a sudden, he turns his attention away from Christ to the storms of life and begins to sink. He cries out in desperation, "Lord, save me," and Christ reaches out and saves him.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Ps.61:2).

Thought 2. The Lord's presence is the answer to the storms of life—to all distressed spirits:

> **"We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation" (1 Pt.1:5).**
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).**

4. Jesus saved Peter but rebuked his faltering faith. He saves a person with *little faith*, but He rebukes it.

> **"And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you" (Lk.17:6).**
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

4 (14:32) **Deliverance**: Christ's presence conquers nature. He is the Messiah, the Sovereign Lord over all. He demonstrated His Messiahship, adding proof upon proof to this handful of believers to whom He was to entrust His cause. He brought peace to a sea that reeled to and fro for their sake. He would always be present to help them no matter the severity of trial. They must know this, and they must learn that He could bring peace to any reeling and hopeless soul that will call upon Him.

> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).**
> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**
> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).**

5 (14:33) **Confession—Decision—Worship**: Christ's presence stirs confession and worship. The disciples experienced great relief—a drained, exhausted relief. They had been saved and delivered from the life-threatening storm by the power of Christ. Never before had they witnessed such power. There was no alternative, no other action to be taken: "They came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." They understood more than ever before, not perfectly, but enough to acknowledge Him as the Son of God.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).**
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
> **"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father" (1 Jn.2:23-24).**
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

Thought 1. Note: they *not only professed* belief, but they *worshipped* Him. There is a vast difference.

> **"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Lk.24:51-52).**
> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him" (Jn.9:35-38).**
> **"And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb.1:6).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:33) **Son of God**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Jesus Christ, Son of God*—Mt.1:16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:1-5; note—1:34 for discussion. Cp. Mt.27:43; Mk.1:1; Lk.1:35; 3:38; Jn.3:18; 5:25; 9:35; 10:36; 11:4; 19:7; 20:31; Acts 8:37; 9:20; Ro.1:4; Gal.2:20; Eph.4:13; 1 Jn.3:8; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 13, 20.

	E. The Messiah's Power Sought and Trusted: The Steps to Seeking & Being Made Whole, 14:34-36
1 **Christ in the land of Gennesaret**	34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.
2 **Step 1: Knowing about Christ**	35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;
3 **Step 2: Coming to Christ & bringing the diseased to be healed**	
4 **Step 3: Begging Christ to touch the diseased**[DSI]	36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.
5 **Step 4: Touching Christ**	
6 **Step 5: Experiencing the power of Christ & being made whole**	

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

E. The Messiah's Power Sought and Trusted: The Steps to Seeking and Being Made Whole, 14:34-36

(14:34-36) **Introduction**: this brief passage is a picture of the Messiah's power being greatly sought and trusted. His power needs to be sought and trusted by a destitute and needy world! He alone has the power to make man completely whole. The very steps to seeking and being made whole are demonstrated by the people in the land of Gennesaret.

1. Christ in the land of Gennesaret (v.34).
2. Step 1: knowing and having knowledge of Christ (v.35).
3. Step 2: coming to Christ and bringing the diseased to be healed (v.35).
4. Step 3: begging Christ to touch the diseased (v.36).
5. Step 4: touching Christ (v.36).
6. Step 5: experiencing the power of Christ and being made whole (v.36).

1 (14:34) **Gennesaret, Land of**: Christ came into the land of Gennesaret. This land was an unusually fertile plain on the northwest side of the Lake of Gennesaret. It stretched some three miles long and was about one mile wide, lying between Chorazin and Magdala. It was called *paradise* and was *the garden of princes*.

Thought 1. An *earthly paradise* and *the garden of princes* can bring only physical pleasure and relaxation. It can restore only the body; it cannot...

- give a permanent peace of soul (see note—Jn.14:27).
- give an eternal body (Jn.5:24-29; cp. 1 Cor.15:42-46, 51-54).

Only Christ can give peace and eternal life (cp. Jn.16:33; Ph.4:6-7; Jn.3:16; 5:24; 10:10).

2 (14:35) **Seeking Christ**: the first step to seeking and being made whole is knowing about Christ.

1. We must know that Christ is present, at hand, reachable, available to make us whole.
2. We must know that Christ is not only available, but He is also *able and willing* to make us whole.
   ⇒ Knowing that *He is able* involves believing that He is the true Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior sent into the world by God to save us.
   ⇒ Knowing that *He is willing* involves believing that He is love and has "come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10), and that He is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Pt.3:9).

Thought 1. If men really knew the saving grace of Christ, many would quickly surrender their lives to Him. There are two reasons why men do not know about Christ.

1) Believers have failed to live and go forth *with zeal* bearing testimony.
2) Unbelievers have failed to open their closed minds and hardened hearts to Christ.

Thought 2. If a person has not heard of Christ, then it follows that he does not know Christ. How is it possible that God Himself, Maker of heaven and earth, could send His Son into the world 2000 years ago and some still do not know about Him?

⇒ Could it be that we have *reformed Christ* (so to speak) to our man-made religions and stifled zeal instead of *reforming* our lives and zeal to Christ?

⇒ Could it be that we are so comfortable with self that we deceptively ignore the truth as He has revealed it, the truth that Jesus is truly the Son of God who has come to save man?
⇒ Could it be that we do not believe man is perishing and doomed to perish eternally?

How can we deny and deceptively ignore that we are perishing when we *are* perishing? How can we deny that everyone else is perishing when they *are* perishing? Do *we* not want to live eternally? Do we not want *others* to live eternally? Do we even believe that we *can* live eternally? Why are we so blind? So dull? So hard to see and to hear? *Why do we deny the truth?*

"It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb.9:27).

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts 4:12).

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (Jn.1:10).

3 (14:35) **Witnessing**: the second step to seeking and being made whole is coming to Christ and bringing the diseased to be healed. Note that the men *went* "*throughout* all that country" *and brought all* to Christ. They did not just attend the services alone: they brought their families, their loved ones, their neighbors, their friends. They had heard about Christ; they knew about Him and they were excited. To think that they and their friends could be healed and made whole stirred their hearts with an excitement beyond imagination. There was no chance they were going to miss *this opportunity*.

Thought 1. Two critical questions need to be asked by all of us.
1) Do we monopolize our faith? Have we ever brought someone else to Christ?
2) Have we ever come to Christ for healing? Have we honestly come—beyond any question?

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

4 (14:36) **Seek—Seeking**: the third step to seeking and being made whole is asking and begging to touch Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.14:36). Note the word "besought." It means to ask and to beg. The word points to three attitudes necessary to be made whole.

1. A sense of need: sensing our need for Christ's help so much that we *beseech Him*, ask Him and beg Him to make us whole.
2. A sense of humility: sensing that our need is *really* desperate and beyond man's cure: sensing the desperation so deeply that we humble ourselves to genuinely *beseech* Christ to make us whole. People looking on just do not matter.
3. A belief in Christ's power and willingness to make us whole: believing in His power so much that we know He will make us whole *through and through*, if we will only ask and beg Him.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Ps.61:2).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:36) **Faith, In Christ—Healing**: Why were the people asking to touch the hem of His garment instead of having Him touch them? There are probably three explanations.

1. This was the country where the woman with "an issue of blood" had been healed by touching the hem of His garment. She had probably borne such a witness for Christ that many felt they would be healed if they would approach Christ in the same way (see note—Mt.9:20-22).
2. A pious Jew, one who believed and trusted God, wore a blue tassel on the fringe of his robe. The tassel was the mark (the sign or insignia) of the person's faith. Many believed that Jesus was the Messiah, so in asking to touch the hem of His garment, they were asking to touch *the sign*, the insignia of His faith and power.
3. Some were so diseased and helpless and had been that way for so long that they were just awed with humility. To think that they could be "made whole" by the Messiah Himself stirred a deep sense of unworthiness within them.

5 (14:36) **Salvation—Jesus Christ, Openness**: the fourth step to seeking and being made whole is touching Christ. Reaching out for Jesus brings healing to one's whole being. Jesus does not shrink from anyone—no matter how deformed, distorted, abnormal, diseased, ugly, unattractive, dirty, polluted, immoral, or sinful. He loves everyone and sees

the need within everyone and longs to meet that need. Anyone who reaches out for Him is taken by the hand and pulled to His heart. They are received and made whole *through and through*.

> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn.6:35, 37).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**

6 (14:36) **New Nature—New Man—Salvation**: the fifth step to seeking and being made whole is experiencing the power of Christ, actually being made whole (see note—Mt.14:36). *Made perfectly whole* (diesothesan) means to be made whole through and through. A complete restoration takes place within the person. The person is completely cured, spiritually and inwardly, as well as physically and outwardly.

In the Scripture when Christ heals someone and faith is not explicitly mentioned, it is understood to be present. There is always the implication or understanding of whole healing, of a complete and total healing that includes the inner person as well as the outer person, the spiritual as well as the physical.

> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**
>
> **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).**

Thought 1. Christ healed both body and soul. There is no such thing as Christ's healing *only the body* or *only the soul*. He heals both.

We cannot be saved except on this earth, and we cannot be saved except by the other world, by God Himself. We are body and soul, mind and spirit. We live on this earth, so we have to be saved and made whole and held together on this earth. There is no salvation except on this earth. The fact that Christ healed man's body reveals God's love for man's body while he is on this earth. It says that God is interested in man's physical welfare and in any movement that helps man while he journeys through life on this earth. God is interested...

- in personal expressions of help such as a helping hand, a smile, a visit, a word of encouragement, a personal witness, and on and on.
- in professional services such as medicine, psychology, social and welfare ministries that meet the human needs for food, clothing, housing, and on and on.

	CHAPTER 15	trines the commandments of men.	
	F. The Messiah Teaches What Defiles a Man, 15:1-20 (Mk.7:1-23; cp. Lk.11: 37-41)	10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:	**3 A foul mouth defiles** a. The audience: The multitude b. The defilement 1) Not what goes in 2) What comes out
1 There were three audiences (see pts. 2,3,4,5)	Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,	11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.	
2 A traditional religion defiles a. The audience: Religionists from Jerusalem b. The charge against Jesus: He broke tradition c. The charge by Jesus: Religionists broke God's law to keep their tradition	2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.	12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?	**4 A blind spirit defiles** a. The audience: The disciples b. The disciples' concern: Offending the religionists
	3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?	13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.	c. Jesus' answer: Even rel. can be wrong 1) Are not planted by God[DS4] 2) To be rooted up
1) The law broken: Honor your father & mother[DS1]	4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.	14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.	d. The defilement: Are spiritually blind 1) Leave them alone 2) Mislead the blind 3) Shall fall
		15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.	**5 A corrupt heart defiles**
2) The transgression: Taking gifts due one's parents for religious purposes	5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;	16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?	a. The audience: Peter & the disciples b. The rebuke: Slow to learn
d. The real transgression or defilement[DS2] 1) Setting aside God's Word for tradition	6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.	17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?	c. The defilement[DS5] 1) Not what enters the body
2) Being hypocritical: Lip service vs. heart service[DS3]	7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,	18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.	2) What comes out of the heart
3) Worshipping, but with an empty heart	8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.	19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:	d. The deeds of a corrupt heart
4) Teaching tradition as God's commandment	9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doc-	20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.	

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

F. The Messiah Teaches What Defiles a Man, 15:1-20

(15:1-20) **Introduction**: there are and always have been two basic religions in the world. There is the religion that stresses *the outside* and the religion that stresses *the inside*.

- ⇒ External religion says be physically and morally clean. Internal religion says be spiritually regenerated and made into a new creature.
- ⇒ External religion says that if a person keeps the outside clean then the inside will be clean. Internal religion says that if a person is clean on the inside then he will keep the outside clean.
- ⇒ External religion develops a system of laws to govern behavior. Internal religion behaves *out of a heart of love* and respect for God and man.
- ⇒ External religion says be faithful to religion (the church) and its practices and moral teachings, and you will be clean. Internal religion says be cleansed within by Christ, and you will be faithful to the church and live justly.

⇒ External religion is a man-made religion of ritual, ceremony, laws, and works. Internal religion is God's religion *based upon* His Son Jesus Christ who changes or recreates the heart of man. This act of recreation gives man a new heart, a heart that reaches out to both God and man in love and respect.

The conflict between these two religions is the conflict that was being waged between Christ and the religionists of His day.

Through the years, the Jewish religion, in an attempt to keep man religiously and morally clean, had come up with thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations governing man's behavior. A section of these had to do with keeping oneself physically clean by washing with water. One of the rules said that a person had to wash his hands before eating a meal. The disciples apparently had failed to wash their hands before eating some meal; therefore, they had broken the tradition of the church and embarrassed the religious faithful of their day. Jesus was asked about the matter. He answered by charging the religionists with breaking God's law *in order to keep* the traditions of their religion. And He gave them an example:

"God says, 'Honor thy father and mother.' But your tradition says that once a person vows to give a gift to the temple, he can never back out of the vow, even if he later needs the gift to take care of his parents."

Christ is saying, "I am not the law breaker, the hypocrite. You are. You are the one who is breaking God's law. You put your own rule above the law of God." (Several notes should be read at this point to see the background of this conflict: see notes—Mt.12:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—Mk.7:1-13; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2.)

Note that Christ used this occasion to teach one of the most important messages in Scripture: "*What Defiles a Man.*"

1. There were three audiences (v.1).
2. A traditional religion defiles (v.2-9).
3. A foul mouth defiles (v.10-11).
4. A blind spirit defiles (v.12-14).
5. A corrupt heart defiles (v.15-20).

1 (15:1) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: Jesus addressed three different audiences with a different lesson to each.

1. The religionists are told that a traditional religion defiles (v.1-9).
2. The multitude is told that a foul mouth defiles (v.10-11).
3. The disciples are told that a blind spirit (v.12-14) and a corrupt heart defiles (v.15-20).

2 (15:2-9) **Religion—Tradition**: the first thing that defiles a man is a traditional religion. Note four points.

1. The audience was religionists, Scribes and Pharisees. They were a special delegation sent by the religious leaders from Jerusalem, the *religious capital*, to question Jesus. They came for one of two reasons: first, they were either genuinely perplexed by Jesus and needed to determine if He were the true Messiah (cp. Nicodemus, Jn.3:1f); or second, they were extremely disturbed by the news of Jesus' success, and they feared losing the loyalty of the people. Therefore, they were setting out to trap and stop Christ (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).
2. The charge against Jesus was that He broke tradition.

Thought 1. Religious people are often disturbed when their traditions, rituals, ceremonies, worship, rules, schedules, and habits are broken. Some become very disturbed.

3. The charge of Jesus was that the religionists broke God's law in order to keep their tradition. Christ gave an illustration which is difficult for us to understand in our day. Here are two translations that help.

> **"But you say, 'Whoever shall say to his father or mother, "Anything of mine you might have been helped by has been given to God," he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And thus you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition" (New American Standard Version).**
>
> **"But you say, 'Whoever tells his father or mother, "Everything I have that might be used for helping you, is devoted to God," is under no obligation at all to help his parent'" (Williams. *The New Testament In The Language of the People*. "The Four Translation New Testament").**

Thought 1. How many of us have little rituals, prayers, habits, ceremonies, and objects that we use to keep us religiously secure? So many of us seek religious security while at the same time we neglect the weightier matter of breaking God's Law.

4. The real transgressions or defilements are four in number (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.15:6-9 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(15:4) **Old Testament Reference**: Ex.20:12; cp. Jer.35:18-19.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(15:6-9) **Religionists—Traditions**: in this passage Christ covered the real faults or transgressions of a religionist. The same faults are found in religionists of every generation.

1. A religionist sets aside God's Word for tradition. Religious traditions may be described as institutional or personal.

a. Institutional traditions are such things as rituals, rules, regulations, schedules, forms, services, procedures, organizations—anything that gives order and security to the persons involved.
b. Personal traditions are such things as church attendance, little rituals, prayers, habits, ceremonies, and objects which a person uses to keep himself religiously secure.

Christ was attacking the fact that many put their traditions before God's Word. So many keep their traditions *while* neglecting and ignoring God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; 12:10).

"For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do" (Mk.7:8).

"Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye" (Mk.7:13).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pt.1:19-21).

2. A religionist is hypocritical: he gives lip service while keeping his heart far from God. He acknowledges God and attends worship, but this is about all he does. However, there are some who are just *religiously deceived* (cp. the Pharisees and Scribes). They study, witness, show care, help the needy, and keep the rules. They struggle and would fight to maintain religious tradition, yet Christ says they are hypocrites. Why? Because their hearts are not God's. They personally refuse to accept Jesus as the Son of God, as the Messiah and Savior of the world. They just do not know God personally, not in the depths of their hearts (Jn.14:6).

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Is.29:13).

3. A religionist worships, but with an empty heart. Christ taught...

- that true worship must be "in spirit *and* in truth."

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jn.4:24).

- that a person who denies Christ or denies God's Word cannot truly worship God.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn.17:17).

- that a person may worship, but his worship is empty, worthless, and unacceptable. The religionists of Christ's day were professing religion with their lips, but denying Christ, God's Son, in their hearts (cp.v.17-20).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

4. A religionist teaches tradition as God's commandment. He teaches his tradition as he practices it or proclaims it. Tradition is man's *idea* of what should or should not be done. Some traditions are good; some are bad. But even the good ones are not to be taught as though they were the commandments of God. As important as some traditions may be, they are not as important as God's Word.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8; cp. Ps.23:1f).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(15:7-9) **Old Testament Prophecy**: cp. Is.29:13.

3 (15:10-11) **Cursing—Tongue**: the second thing that defiles a man is a foul mouth. Note that the audience was the multitude. The defilement that Jesus now discussed was common to the multitude, that is, to the general public.

What defiles a man is not what he eats and drinks. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (Ro.14:17). What defiles a man is a foul mouth, a mouth full of foul words: curse words, filthy words, critical words, deceptive words, censoring words, harsh words, unkind words, uncaring words. Note: the word "defile" (koinoi) means to make common; to make unholy, unclean; to become polluted and defiled.

Thought 1. What comes out of a person's mouth shows what his thoughts are. A person's mouth reveals his mind and his world of thought.

> **"And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Mt.9:4).**
>
> **"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Ro.1:21).**
>
> **"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5).**
>
> **"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Ps.94:11).**
>
> **"The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words" (Pr.15:26).**
>
> **"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" (Pr.23:7).**
>
> **"The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men" (Pr.24:9).**
>
> **"Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth" (Ezk.8:12).**

Thought 2. A man's mouth pollutes and defiles him or makes him clean and holy. His mouth either confesses Christ or denies Christ (as the religionists). His words either bless God or curse God (Jas.3:9-10).

> **"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Mt.12:34-37).**
>
> **"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" (Ro.3:13-14).**
>
> **"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth" (Col.3:8).**
>
> **"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (Jas.3:6).**
>
> **"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the simulitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jas.3:9-10).**
>
> **"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (1 Pt.2:1).**
>
> **"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity" (Ps.10:7).**
>
> **"The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good" (Ps.36:3).**
>
> **"The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords" (Ps.55:21).**
>
> **"I said in my haste, All men are liars" (Ps.116:11).**
>
> **"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips" (Ps.140:3).**
>
> **"For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief" (Pr.24:2).**
>
> **"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).**

4 (15:12-14) **Blindness**: the third thing that defiles a man is a blind spirit. Note that the audience has switched again. This time the audience was the disciples. The point that Christ taught is an eye-opener. The disciples were extremely concerned over Christ's having offended the religious delegation from Jerusalem. Jesus said very pointedly, "*Even* religionists can be wrong. In fact, every plant, whether religious or non-religious, that my Father has not planted shall be rooted up."

"The religionists are not planted by my Father, so leave them alone and pay no attention to them. Let them be offended if they will. They are spiritually defiled and blinded, and they mislead the blind, all those who follow them. Both shall fall into the ditch."

Christ was brief and to the point, but the point is clear: religionists are not born of God, and they are doomed (2 Cor.4:4). Christ said six things about persons who are wrong and defiled.

1. They are not planted by God.
2. They are to be rooted up.
3. They are to be left alone, paid no attention to.
4. They are spiritually blind.
5. They mislead the blind among men.
6. They both shall fall into the ditch.

This should be noted: Christ was not only talking about the religionists as persons but their doctrines and traditions as well (v.3, 6, 9).

Thought 1. Note two tragic things about religionists.

1) They are in the visible church, but they have not been planted by God (see note—Mt.13:1-52).

> **"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:13-15).**

2) They and their man-made doctrines and traditions shall be rooted up.

Thought 2. Religionists are blind; therefore, they handle the Word of God deceitfully. Why?

> **"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4; cp. 2-4).**

Thought 3. Religionists are extremely blind, that is, deceived. (See outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.2:17-29 for more discussion.)

Thought 4. Note that the person who is misled is also judged. He, too, falls into the ditch. A man is personally responsible. He cannot blame his blindness and ignorance nor his wrong decisions on someone else. He will not escape; He will fall into the ditch.

> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
>
> **"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:5).**
>
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**
>
> **"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).**
>
> **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**
>
> **"But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 Jn.2:11).**
>
> **"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps.82:5).**
>
> **"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Pr.4:19).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(15:13) **Old Testament Reference**: it is a common practice of Scripture to compare men and doctrine with trees and plants (Ps.1:1; Is.5:7; 7:16-20; Lk.6:43-44; Jn.15:1-8).

5 (15:15-20) **Heart**: the fourth thing that defiles a man is a corrupt heart. Christ returned to the disciples. They were again His audience; however, Peter stood in the forefront. Note: Jesus rebuked the disciples for being so slow to learn. The defilement is clearly seen. The deeds of a corrupt heart are clearly understood, yet they are so often revelled in (v.19-20) (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.15:17-20).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(15:17-20) **Heart—Depravity**: food does not commend us to God (1 Cor.8:8). There is no connection between what we eat and spirituality. That is not to say that excessive eating and intemperance are not wrong. Lustful and excessive appetites come "out of the heart." But when it comes to the items themselves—the food and drink we take into our mouths—there is no merit or value, no morality or virtue to these within themselves. It is *what we do* with *things* that makes us either good or bad, spiritual or carnal.

It is the heart that determines what we do with *things*. What comes out reveals what our heart is. If good comes out, then our heart is shown to be *good*. If evil comes out, then our heart is shown to be bad. As Paul said, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself...all things indeed are pure; but *it is evil* for that man who eateth with offence" (Ro.14:14, 20). A man is not *made unclean* by things; he is made unclean because of his polluted heart. It is *he himself who* takes things and does unclean things with them. (See note—Mk.7:20-22 for a discussion of the sins that are listed.)

What man must see is that the human heart must be changed, that is, converted. Yet he refuses to face up to the fact that is so clearly seen: he must be changed; his heart must be reborn.

> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**
>
> **"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).**
>
> **"Put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:9-10).**

	G. The Messiah Teaches What It Takes to Receive Things of God, 15:21-28 (Mk.7:24-30)	she crieth after us. 24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me. 26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. 27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. 28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.	of the disciples c. Despite being undeserving
1 Jesus withdrew to Gentile coasts a. To the border of Tyre & Sidon b. A desperate woman approached Jesus[DS1]	21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.		**4 A spirit that worshipped Jesus as Lord**
2 A cry of need a. She cried for mercy b. She cried to the Son of David[DS2] c. She cried for another—for her daughter	22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.		**5 A spirit of humility and surrender** a. The need to learn humility b. The confession of humility: She accepted Jesus' verdict of her
3 A persistence that would not quit a. Despite Jesus' silence b. Despite the objection	23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for		**6 A great faith** a. Jesus' climactic commendation: "Great is thy faith"[DS3] b. Jesus' climactic reward: Granted her request

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

G. The Messiah Teaches What It Takes to Receive Things of God, 15:21-28

(15:21-28) **Introduction**: this is a difficult passage to understand because of Jesus' apparent attitude toward a person with such a desperate need. He was both silent (v.23) and pointed (v.24, 26). However, one thing needs to be remembered: we do not know what was happening in the heart of the woman, but Christ did. He knew every thought of her heart, and He knew exactly what was needed to lead her to a personal faith in Him.

In addition to this very basic fact, three other things are clearly known.

1. Christ was not rejecting the woman nor refusing to meet the need of a desperate person. He never turned from a person who genuinely sought Him.
2. Christ was not harsh or mean to the woman. His harshness (justice) is never manifested except against sin.
3 At first the woman saw Jesus only as the Son of David, a great miracle worker. She saw Him only in terms of earthly power, as a great man who was to liberate people from their ills and problems whether national or personal. She needed to grow in her concept of Christ.

The fact that the woman needed to grow in her faith is probably the key to interpreting what is happening between Christ and the woman. She simply needed to learn step by step that Jesus is the Lord who is to be worshipped (v.25). He is the Master of all lives (or dogs, v.26-27), and a person must persist and demonstrate humility in seeking Him.

1. Jesus withdrew to Gentile coasts (v.21-22).
2. A cry of need (v.22).
3. A persistence that would not quit (v.23-24).
4. A spirit that worshipped Jesus as Lord (v.25).
5. A spirit of humility and surrender (v.26-27).
6. A great faith (v.28).

1 (15:21-22) **Coasts**: Jesus withdrew to Gentile coasts. He withdrew to the northern border of Tyre and Sidon. The word "coasts" (ta mere) means the ports or borders. Jesus was deliberately withdrawing to the borders of Gentile country. He needed time and quiet to prepare both Himself and His disciples for the end. The only place He could find freedom from the crowds and from His opponents was in the northern area, the area bordering Gentile territory. No Jew was likely to enter Gentile areas. From this point to His re-entering the coasts of Magdala (Mt.15:39), the miracles He performed were in behalf of the Gentiles. In the present passage, a desperate woman approached Jesus (see note 2—Mt.15:22).

It should be noted that this event foreshadowed the spread of the gospel worldwide and God's great desire for all barriers to be broken down (see outline and notes—Eph.2:11-18; 2:19-22).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(15:22) **Canaanites**: they were not just ordinary enemies but ancestral enemies of the Jews.

2 (15:22) **Intercession**: a cry of need. The woman cried out for three things.

1. She cried for mercy. No matter the need, Jesus can never turn from a desperate cry for His mercy. But two things are essential: one must cry for mercy, and one must cry to Him, the true Lord. Many cry, but not to Him.
2. She cried for the Son of David to hear her (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.15:22).
3. She cried not for herself but for another person, her daughter. The woman had a desperate need—her daughter was under the power of Satan.

Note another fact. She had an inadequate concept of Jesus, yet she got Jesus' attention. How? She possessed two qualities from which Jesus can never turn.

a. She truly loved another person, her own daughter. She loved so deeply that she considered her daughter's problem her own: "Have mercy *on me*," she cried. Her love was much more than the normal love or sympathy. It was true oneness, a *union of living* between her and her daughter that she felt.
b. She approached the right person, Jesus Himself, and cried out for mercy. Despite her inadequate understanding of Him, she did the right thing: she approached the *true Lord* and cried for His mercy.

Thought 1. How many experience their children's living under the influence of Satan, in a different sense, perhaps, but nevertheless living in the sin and shame of the devil?

Thought 2. How many loved ones would have their needs met if we interceded for them as this woman did for her daughter?

1) Do we honestly love as she did?
2) Do we honestly cry out to the true Lord as revealed in Scripture or to our own idea of God?

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).**
>
> **"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).**
>
> **"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Ps.61:2).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(15:22) **Jesus Christ, Son of David**: note the woman called Jesus the Son of David. This is significant in understanding what happened. It reveals a limited concept of Jesus. She had apparently heard that the Jews expected a Messiah, a son of the great King David, who was to work miracles for them; and she had heard about Jesus, that He was delivering people from their sicknesses and healing them. However, seeing Jesus only as a miracle worker and healer is an inadequate concept of Him. It prohibits Him from working. What the woman needed was to grow, to understand just who Jesus is.

How gracious is our Lord! He knew her heart, every thought and every movement of it. He knew what she needed in order to be brought around to understanding His true Messiahship. Therefore, He began to lead her step by step to understanding His Lordship and to confessing her faith in a humble and worshipping spirit.

3 (15:23-24) **Persistence**: a persistence that would not quit. The woman faced three major obstacles.

1. There was the silence of Jesus. Note what really happened: the woman's love and sense of desperation were really seen. She loved so much that she was not going to let Jesus go until He helped her. She kept after Jesus...
   - despite His silence.
   - despite the objection of the disciples.
   - despite her being undeserving.
2. There was the objection of the disciples. It seems that two things happened to the disciples. The woman was creating an embarrassing situation by "crying after" them. Because of their aggravation and because of their life-long training, they judged the lady to be unworthy of Jesus' help because she was a Gentile. They expected Jesus to send her away. She must have followed them for some time. Jesus seemed to ignore her, so the disciples assumed He would not help such a despised person. The disciples had two lessons to learn.
   a. Faith has to be awakened in a person's heart before Christ can minister. A person cannot just haphazardly approach Christ at every whim and fancy and expect to receive help. There must be a true and sincere heart, a genuine seeking and an awakened faith. This is apparently what Jesus was doing with the woman: awakening her faith.
   b. The servant of God must minister from a heart filled with compassion for all. He must minister to the despised as well as to the accepted.
3. There was the strange statement of Jesus that she was undeserving: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." There was no rejection whatever in this statement to the woman. It was merely a statement of fact. Jesus had come primarily to the house of Israel while on earth. He had to concentrate His ministry if He were to achieve His purpose. But why make this statement to the woman? There were apparently two reasons.

a. The woman needed to learn persistence, humility, and trust.
b. The woman needed to learn that there is only one true religion and only one true Messiah. She was a Greek from a proud pagan society. She had been and probably still was a worshipper of false gods; therefore she was *undeserving* of being heard by the *true Messiah* or *true Lord*. She had recognized Christ as the Son of David, as the miracle worker of the Jews who was delivering them from their diseases, but what she needed was to see that He was the only Messiah *of all* and *the only hope* of all. No other religion, no other gods could do anything for her or for anyone else. He alone was her hope. He alone was to be the Lord and Master whom she was to worship. She had to learn the same lesson that the Samaritan woman at the well had to learn: salvation is of the Jews (Jn.4:22).

Thought 1. There is a difference in the way people seek Jesus and pray.
1) There is the prayer of chance or of no expectancy. Many people pray this way. They pray because they think God just might hear. They are not quite sure—they cannot point to any (and certainly not to many) instances when He really did answer, but they pray anyway just in case He might hear.
2) There is the prayer of persistence or perseverance, the prayer that will not take "no" or silence for an answer. This was the woman's prayer. She truly loved her daughter and she was desperate. She knew Jesus was her only hope, so she would not quit. She would not be discouraged by anything—not by silence, not by an objection, not even by an apparent rebuff.

Thought 2. There is a great lesson here for believers. The woman was a heathen, yet she knew and did something that so many of us have never learned.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8; cp. Lk.18:1-6).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**

4 (15:25) **Worship**: a spirit that worships Jesus as Lord. The woman came to Jesus and *worshipped* Him as Lord. She called Him "Lord" before (v.22), but now she took the one essential step: she worshipped Him as Lord.

Thought 1. At first, the woman did what so many do: she approached Jesus only as a great man, not as the Lord who is to be worshipped. God, of course, will never honor such a low view of His Son. What is needed is to experience what she did in this verse: a growth in seeing who Jesus really is, the true Lord who is to be worshipped by all.

> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21; cp. 7:21-23).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:11).**

5 (15:26-27) **Humility**: a spirit of humility and surrender. These words could be interpreted as harsh except for one thing: Jesus never spoke harshly or rejected anyone who came to Him with a desperate need. If a person was truly sincere and had the potential of trusting Him as Lord, He always accepted the person. So whatever happened, we know the words were not meant to be harsh or rejecting.

What do they mean then? Again, Jesus had to move the woman forward in faith and in trust and in a clear understanding of just who He is: the Lord and Master of everyone's life, not just of the Jews. He is much more than just the Son of David. He also had to teach her that salvation is of the Jews and that *He is that Salvation*, the Master of all lives. He is telling her this: "It is not right to take the bread of the gospel that belongs to the true worshippers of God and give it to the 'dogs,' that is, the heathen."

The woman was a Greek, a proud people with a rich heritage who despised the Jews. She was a worshipper of false gods, a heathen, an outsider, a sinner; and He was the Messiah, the Master of all lives. Was she willing to humble and surrender herself to Him as the Master of her life?

With great spiritual insight, she clearly saw and confessed in humility that she was nothing spiritually: she was only "a dog"; but being a dog of the family, she had the right to eat the crumbs that fell from His table.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).**
>
> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath deal to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).**

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Ph.2:4-5).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

6 (15:28) **Faith**: the woman had a great faith. One thing rises above all others in the experience of this mother: she believed that Jesus could meet her need, and she would not let Him go until He met her need. Her belief was so strong that she would not quit—despite being met with silence, irritation, opposition, apparent rebuff, and the attitude that she was undeserving (v.23-24). There is no way to describe the scene except "O woman, great is thy faith."

Imagine this also: she believed that Christ's power could overcome space and time. Her daughter was back home! What enormous faith!

But note a critical point: her faith in Jesus' power, as great as it was, was not enough. Her faith was not what caused Jesus to answer her prayer. What caused Jesus to answer her prayer was her personal humility (surrender) and worship of Him as Lord. Christ answers the prayer and exercises His power in behalf of those who (1) surrender (humble) themselves to Him and (2) worship Him as Lord.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (Jn.6:29).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

Thought 1. What is great faith? The steps taken by this dear woman tell us.

1) It is a desperate cry of need (v.22).
2) It is a persistence that will not quit (v.23-24).
3) It is a spirit that worships Jesus as Lord (v.25).
4) It is a spirit of humility and surrender to the Lord (v.26-27).
5) It is a faith that receives its request (v.28).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(15:28) **Faith**: there are only two individuals whose faith Jesus pronounced to be great: this woman's and the centurion. It is worth noting that both were Gentiles (Mt.8:10).

	H. The Messiah's Compassion for Man's Physical Need: How to Minister, 15:29-39 (Mk.8:1-9)	eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.	over their fainting c. By being determined to help
1 Jesus left Tyre by way of Sidon a. Went through Decapolis b. To the Sea of Galilee	29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.	33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?	**4 Step 3: Being willing to use what one has to meet the need at hand** a. By not offering objections
2 Step 1: Making oneself available to the needy a. Being among them b. Allowing them to bring their needs c. Meeting their needs: Healing them d. Result: They glorified "the God of Israel"	30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them: 31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.	34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. 35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.	b. By taking inventory **5 Step 4: Ministering to the need at hand** a. Preparing them b. Giving thanks to God c. Ministering to them **6 Step 5: Witnessing the Lord's power & provision** a. His provision satisfies all*DSI*
3 Step 2: Having compassion for their every need a. By observing what they do & have b. By being concerned	32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to	38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children. 39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.	b. His provision meets the need & more

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

H. The Messiah's Compassion for Man's Physical Need: How to Minister, 15:29-39

(15:29-39) **Introduction**: Jesus was doing two things in this passage.

1. As always, He was demonstrating His Messiahship in order to drive the truth more and more deeply into the disciples' hearts.
2. In a most direct way, He was teaching His disciples that they were to minister to the needy no matter who they were. In this event He was ministering primarily to Gentiles (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 15:29). The Jews considered the Gentiles to be heathen; they were lost and thought to be outcasts by God. The prejudice against the Gentiles ran deep. Nevertheless, Christ had come to save all, not only the Jews, and the disciples had to learn this truth so that they would go out and minister to all after His return to the Father.

In a very simple and forceful demonstration, Christ showed the disciples step by step how they were to minister to the lost, to the outcast, and to the needy of society.

1. Jesus left Tyre by way of Sidon (v.29).
2. Step 1: making oneself available to the needy (v.30-31).
3. Step 2: having compassion for their every need (v.32).
4. Step 3: being willing to use what one has to meet their need (v.33-34).
5. Step 4: ministering to their needs (v.35-36).
6. Step 5: witnessing the Lord's power and provision (v.37-39).

1 (15:29) **Jesus Christ, Ministry to Gentiles**: Jesus left Tyre by way of Sidon. In Mark's account of this event, the correct translation of the Greek says "Having departed from Tyre, He came by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee through the midst of the borders of Decapolis" (Mk.7:31).

What happened is significant. Jesus left Tyre and went north by way of Sidon. He went much farther into Gentile country. How long Jesus was there is not known. But we do know that when He fed the five thousand (right before leaving Jewish territory for Gentile country), the grass was green (Mt.14:19); whereas in this event, while he feeds four thousand, the ground is bare—a wilderness—indicating winter (v.33). Based on this fact and the distance travelled, it is estimated that He was in Gentile country for about six months.

The significance of this fact is twofold.

1. There is no record of Jesus' ministering to others during these six months other than the desperate woman and this event where He fed the four thousand. He had entered Gentile areas in order to prepare Himself and His disciples for the

end (see note—Mt.15:21-22). Apparently, the disciples had six months of uninterrupted and intensive training at the feet of Jesus. He was in particular indoctrinating them to the fact of His death and resurrection (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 16:21-28; 17:22).

2. When Jesus left the area of Sidon, He naturally turned around and headed South, but He headed *eastward* and went through the Decapolis which was an area surrounding a federation of ten Greek cities. The Decapolis was on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. The significance of this fact is that the feeding of the four thousand occured in Gentile country. The people to whom Jesus was ministering were primarily Gentiles. In the eyes of the Jews, they were the lost, the outcast, and the needy.

What was happening is probably this: the cross lay immediately before Jesus, and the end was at hand. Therefore, before leaving Gentile territory for the last time, Jesus sensed the need to reinforce in His disciples the great need to minister to all. He wanted *to foreshoadow* for them what they must do after He was gone: minister to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. They must reach all who were lost, outcast, and needy.

2 (15:30-31) **Ministry**: the first step in learning to minister is to make oneself available to the needy. Note what Jesus did.

1. Jesus was among them. He "sat down there" (v.29), that is, right in Gentile territory, right where the people were.
2. Jesus allowed the people to bring their needs. He was approachable. He treated no one as an *outcast*. No one was too repulsive, vile, vulgar, dirty, ugly, deformed, maimed, dumb, lost, or needy for Him to help—if they would only come to Him.
3. Jesus met their needs, healing everyone—every kind of sickness and suffering, both physical and spiritual. There is a critical lesson here. Jesus can conquer all the enemies of mankind, but one thing is needed. His disciples must bring people to Him. They must go after *everyone*, not just after the acceptable and appealing.
4. Note the result: the people glorified "the God of Israel," that is, Jehovah, the God of mercy who makes a covenant of mercy with His people. Jesus is seen to be the very special Messenger and Representative of God in ministering to people. The Gentile gods could not do what Jesus was doing. They could not help the people, so the people turned to the God of Israel as revealed in the compassion of Christ. Note also that this title, "the God of Israel," was being proclaimed by Gentiles. The Gentiles were proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah, that salvation was of the Jews (Jn.4:22. See notes—Mt.15:23-24; 15:25; 15:26-27.)

Thought 1. Something always needs to be remembered: the people who are *most needful* are neglected by men everywhere. As long as they are neglected, they have little chance to rise above their need.

> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).**
>
> **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).**
>
> **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living god, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).**

Thought 2. When people are brought to Christ three things happen.

1) Their needs are met.
2 They glorify God. God is praised more and more.
3) They make society and the world a little bit better. There is more witness for God and less wickedness than before.

3 (15:32) **Compassion—Ministry**: the second step in learning to minister is having compassion for every need. The disciples looked upon these people as outcasts. They were not God's people, so they were considered enemies of Israel. There was nothing attractive or appealing about them in the eyes of the disciples. The disciples...

- had no compassion for them
- did not observe them at all
- were not concerned for them
- had no thought of helping them

Christ had to teach His disciples compassion. He had already discussed the need for compassion with them (Mt.9:36-38), so now He tried to stir their compassion for the lost and outcast. He does this by demonstrating in clear terms what they were to do.

⇒ They were to look at every need.
⇒ They were to observe what the needy man did and what he had.
⇒ They were to be concerned over any lack, any "fainting."
⇒ They were to be gripped with a determination to help.

Thought 1. How like so many of us who profess Christ! We have no love or compassion for certain types of people. We do not observe what they do nor what they have. We have little concern for them and no thought of helping.

Thought 2. Note: these people were so hungry for God's Word that they spent three days with Christ—apparently three days without much, if any food. How often we complain if a preacher speaks more than twenty to thirty minutes! What a difference between those who truly hunger and thirst after righteousness and those who only attend religious services. How many of us esteem the Word of God more highly than food? These hungered for God's Word so much they went three days without food just to be with Christ.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Ps.38:9).**
>
> **"My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps.42:2).**
>
> **"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is" (Ps.63:1).**
>
> **"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee" (Ps.73:25).**
>
> **"My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times" (Ps.119:20).**
>
> **"I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments" (Ps.119:131).**
>
> **"I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land" (Ps.143:6).**
>
> **"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Is.26:9).**
>
> **"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD" (Amos 8:11).**

4 (15:33-34) **Ministry**: the third step in learning to minister is being willing to use what one has to meet the need at hand.

1. We must be willing to meet the need without objecting. Note the immediate objection of the disciples. The disciples thought of every objection and excuse.
   - ⇒ The place was a wilderness, beyond reach.
   - ⇒ Their resources were too little.
   - ⇒ The multitude was just too great to do that much good.
   - ⇒ They were too poor and needy themselves.

Thought 1. When resources are mentioned, many object. Few are willing to give what they have, especially to those who are thought to be outcasts.

2. We must be willing to meet the need by taking inventory. The Lord's true followers must take inventory and get ready to give. Christ *is going to ask* for what we have (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23. Cp. Mt.19:16-22.)

Thought 1. Here is a critical principle: these were hungering after righteousness; therefore, Christ met their physical needs (Mt.5:6; cp. 6:33).

5 (15:35-36) **Ministering**: the fourth step in learning to minister is ministering to the need at hand. Note: before the needs were actually met, three things were done.
- ⇒ The people were prepared.
- ⇒ God was given thanks.
- ⇒ Then the need was met.

Note also that the needs of the people were not met in a haphazard way. The needs were identified, then the people were arranged and organized to receive the provision. But something else was also needed: the people had to be obedient in following the Lord's instructions before their needs would be met.

Thought 1. *Being willing* to give is not enough. A person has to give. Regardless of what we say, there is *no willingness* unless we actually give.

> **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).**
>
> **"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea" (Acts 11:29).**

6 (15:37-39) **Ministering—God, Supply**: the fifth step in learning to minister is witnessing the Lord's power and provision. When the needy are brought to Christ, He meets their needs and His provision satisfies. In fact, He meets their needs and His provision is abundant (Jn.10:10).

Thought 1. This is critically important. They were physically fed because they were hungering and thirsting after Christ (Mt.5:6; cp. 6:33).

> **"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).**
>
> **"Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).**
>
> **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).**
>
> **"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).**

Thought 2. There is a great reward in bringing the needy to Christ. We get to see the Lord's power and provision in action. The more people we bring, the more of His power and provision we see; and the more we see of His power and provision, the more our own faith is strengthened. Bringing the needy to Christ is one of the most effective ways for growing spiritually.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(15:37) **Baskets** (spuridas): large wicker baskets, hamper-like baskets. These were the baskets used by Gentiles, and they were often large enough to carry a man inside. In contrast with the feeding of the five thousand Jewish followers, the baskets used among them were *kophinoi*. These were small pouch-like baskets usually carried by Jews to hold their food when journeying.

	CHAPTER 16		
	I. The Messiah Warns against The Leaven of Religionists: A Warning against Spiritual Blindness & False Teaching, 16:1-12 (Mk.8:10-21)		
1 The religionists sought more signs a. They plotted: Sought to discredit Jesus b. Jesus warned: Beware, v.6	The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven.	6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.	Bread forgotten b. The lesson: Beware of the leaven[DS2] of religionists
2 Beware of being blind to the signs a. The natural vs. the spiritual senses 1) Natural senses: Sharp, discerning 2) Spiritual senses: Dead, undiscerning b. The signs of the times should be discerned	2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?	7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. 8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?	1) The lesson misunderstood: Their thoughts were on earthly bread & cares 2) Jesus rebuked them: Their minds were on earthly things, not trusting God
c. The reason for blindness & for seeking more signs: Are wicked & adulterous d. The only sign to be given to a wicked generation: Jonah[DS1]	4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.	9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? 11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?	c. The two great lessons of life 1) To trust Christ for earthly bread & care 2) To be concerned with spiritual affairs: With leaven & with being misled spiritually
3 Beware of false teaching a. The chance to teach a much needed lesson:	5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take	12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.	d. The great spiritual lesson grasped: Bels. are to beware of the teaching of the religionists, the Pharisees & Sadducees[DS3]

DIVISION X

THE MESSIAH'S MINISTRY WHILE IN EXILE FROM HEROD, 13:53-16:12

I. The Messiah Warns against the Leaven of Religionists: A Warning against Spiritual Blindness and False Teaching, 16:1-12

(16:1-12) **Introduction—Signs—Pharisees—Sadducees**: it is strange to see the Pharisees and Sadducees joining together to oppose Christ. They were diametrically opposed to each other in their beliefs and behavior (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *3*—Acts 23:8). The Sadducees did not even believe in signs and supernatural events, yet they are seen joining forces with the Pharisees who were strict believers in the supernatural. The Sadducees, who are also called Herodians, opposed Christ on only one other occasion (Mt.22:16). Their opposition was due to two reasons.

1. They cooperated with the Roman government and were thereby put in positions of leadership and wealth. Christ preached a gospel of sacrifice and poverty in order to help a needy world. He was, therefore, a serious threat to them.
2. They did not believe that all Scripture was of God nor did they believe in the supernatural or in the resurrection of the dead. Christ, of course, did believe. Therefore, He was again a threat to their very existence.

The purpose of the Pharisees and Sadducees' tempting Jesus was to prove that He was an imposter and to discredit Him before the people. The Sadducees were sure that Jesus could not give "a sign from heaven" because there was no such thing as a supernatural event, and the Pharisees hoped that He would either refuse or fail in giving a sign. (See note—Mt.12:38-40.)

What Jesus did was take the request for *more signs* and give two great warnings—warnings that must be heeded by all. (See outline and notes—Mt.7:15-20. This is an important passage on false teachers.)

1. The religionists sought more signs (v.1).
2. Beware of being blind to the signs (v.2-4).
3. Beware of false teaching (v.5-12).

1 (16:1) **Religionists**: the religionists sought more signs (see outlines and notes—Mt.12:38-40).

2 (16:2-4) **Signs—Spiritual Blindness**: beware of being spiritually blind to the signs of the times.

1. There is a sharp difference between man's natural and spiritual senses. Man's natural senses can be very sharp and discerning. He is skillful in drawing conclusions from his observations and experiences of the natural world. *Weather is an example*; however, when it comes to the spiritual senses, man is dead and undiscerning. He does not observe nor does he experience the spiritual world, not really. *The signs of the times* are an example.

The people of Jesus' day had signs. They lived in critical times, times that foretold the coming of the Messiah. A thoughtful and genuinely spiritual person could see the signs. Two examples of persons who did see the signs were Simeon and Anna (Lk.3:25f).

Some of the signs were as following.

a. The sceptre, the lawgiver had come from Judah (Mt.1:2).
b. The weeks or ages predicted by Daniel were closing out (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.24:15).
c. The prophet Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah (John the Baptist), had come and proclaimed the Messiah to be Jesus (Mt.3:1-12).
d. The baby Jesus had been born in Bethlehem (Mt.2:1).
e. Many throughout the world were expecting the coming of some great person, some savior, some messiah (Mt.1:18).
f. Many godly Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah, God's great Deliverer of Israel (Lk.2:25f).
g. The message and works of Jesus were great evidence. They were phenomenal miracles given by God to substantiate His claims (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:11).

2. The signs of the times should be discerned. What greater signs can God give than the signs which radically change lives? Unbelief is without excuse. The problem is that men want signs of their own choosing, not the signs which God has chosen to give. Men are always wanting God to deal with them through...

- some spectacular sign
- some brilliant sight
- some astounding truth
- some irrefutable argument
- some miraculous experience
- some unbelievable deliverance

God's great concern is not "signs from heaven" or signs outside man. God's great concern is meeting people in their lives, within their hearts where they really need Him and really need help if they are to live abundantly and eternally. God wants to meet people in their sickness and sorrow and loss. Meeting man in the areas of his need are irrefutable signs given to every generation.

Thought 1. There are some very special signs of the times given "in these last days" in addition to the signs given to the Jews.

1) There is the completed work of Christ.

> **"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn.17:4).**
>
> **"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (Jn.19:30).**
>
> **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:3).**

2) There is the completed Scripture, the Old and New Testaments which God has established with man.

> **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pt.1:19-21).**

3) There is the presence of much that was prophesied about "the last days" (see outlines—Mt.24:1f; 2 Tim.3:1-9; 2 Pt.3:1-7; 3:8-10; 3:11-14; 1 Jn.2:18-23; Jude 17-19).

> **"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you" (Mt.24:3-4. Cp. v.5-15 for a list of the signs.)**

3. The reason for blindness and for seeking more signs: the human heart is wicked and adulterous. Men refuse to look at the signs of the times; they choose to be spiritually blind because they are wicked and adulterous. There are never enough signs or evidences to convince them, to change their lives and cause them to turn to God (see note—Mt.12:38-40).

> **"Light [Christ] is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**
>
> **"...neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).**

4. The only sign to be given to a wicked generation is the sign of Jonah (see notes—Mt.12:38-40, pt.6; Lk.11:29-36). The one irrefutable sign that is geared to unbelievers is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The fact that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead is proof that He is beyond question the Son of the living God. He is, therefore, able to change the lives of all who willingly believe and surrender to Him as Lord.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).**
>
> **"But ye denied the Holy One and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:14-15).**
>
> **"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).**
>
> **"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).**
>
> **"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).**
>
> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"[God's power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(16:4) **Jonah**: see notes—Mt.12:38-40, pt 6; Lk.11:29-30.

3 (16:5-12) **False Teaching**: beware of false teaching. Note that Jesus left the religionists to their own destiny: "He left them and departed" (v.4). When Jesus arrived on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, the disciples remembered something. They had forgotten to bring food. In this lapse of memory, Jesus saw another opportunity to teach a much needed lesson: beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (cp. Mt.13:33; Mk.8:15). By "leaven" Jesus meant the *false teaching* of the religionists, but the disciples misunderstood what He was saying. They thought He was rebuking them for not having bread. Their thoughts were, as is so often the case, occupied with earthly matters and cares.

Jesus rebuked such preoccupation with earthly matters. He called it distrust: "O 'ye of little faith" (v.8). Then He began immediately to teach two great lessons of life.

1. He will take care of the believer's earthly needs. He was almost shocked to think that His followers did not trust Him to take care of them.

> **"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:31-33).**
>
> **"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Lk.12:7).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron" (Ps.115:12).**

2. His followers are to be primarily concerned with spiritual matters, not with earthly affairs. Guarding one's mind and soul against the leaven, the false teaching, of the Pharisees and Sadducees is to be the believer's constant concern, not worrying and caring for earthly things.

   a. A person's thoughts must be dominated by the truth so that he may remain in the truth and not be misled spiritually.

> **"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt.15:19).**
>
> **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Ro.8:5-7).**
>
> **"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:3-5).**

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).

Thought 1. Distrust cuts the heart of God to the core.

"Therefore take no thought...." (Mt.6:31-34).
"Without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb.11:6).

b. The leaven, the false teaching of religionists and world leaders, is the great threat to human survival.

Thought 1. Note: the danger was not in eating bread with false teachers but in being misled by their teachings and behavior. Christ ate with them (Lk.7:36; 11:37; 14:1).

Note: the great spiritual lesson was grasped. The disciple of Christ is to beware of the teaching of the religionists (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.16:12 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(16:6) **Leaven**: see notes—Mt.13:33; Mk.8:15.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(16:12) **False Teaching—Pharisees—Sadducees**: What is the leaven, the false teaching, of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that is, the religionists? Very simply put, it is just what the disciples finally understood: the doctrine (teachings) of the religionists. They fermented, soured, and brought disease to everyone they touched (see DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—Acts 23:8; cp. Mk.8:15).

The Pharisees believed in a personal God and in the Scripture as God's Word to man, but they *added to* God's Word (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2). They added rules and regulations, rituals and ceremonies laying undue restrictions upon man's behavior. This led to three gross errors.

1. It led people to think that their good behavior and their religious rituals and ceremonies made them acceptable to God. A religion of good works—of trying to do enough good to become acceptable to God—was being depended upon for righteousness.
2. It led to a religion of social respectability, an external religion. If a person were respected socially and did all the right things, then he was judged acceptable to God.
3. It led to an attitude and an air of self-righteousness. If a person kept the rules and regulations, he naturally felt righteous and sometimes demonstrated it. There was a dependance upon himself, upon keeping the right rules and thereby becoming righteous.

The Sadducees or Herodians were the liberal minded of their day. Their leaven or false teaching was twofold.

1. They *took away* from God's Word, denying all Scripture except the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.
2. They were the free thinkers, the rationalists, the secularists, and the materialistic minded of their day. Thus, they were willing to collaborate with the Romans in doing away with Jewish culture and in establishing Roman and Greek culture. Because of this, Rome placed their leaders in the governing positions (the Sanhedrin) and gave them wealth. Their worldly mindedness, their secular philosophy, and their liberal theology were always a threat to any man (see note—Mt.16:1-12).

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt.15:9).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Ro.16:18).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision [the doctrine of the law and of works]: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Tit.1:10-11).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:18-19).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MATTHEW

SECTION 2

(Matthew Chapters 16:13-28)

OUTLINE OF MATTHEW
SECTION 2
(Matthew Chapters 16:13-28)

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	XI. THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP, HIS CHURCH AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27		
	A. The Messiah's Dramatic Revelation of Himself and His Church: Peter's Great Confession, 16:13-20 (Mk.8:27-30; Lk.9:18-21; cp. Jn.6:68-69)		
1 Christ in the area of Caesarea Philippi	13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?	19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.	**6 This confession assigns great responsibility to believers for the church** a. A responsibility to use the keys to the kingdom of heaven b. A responsibility to bind & loose on earth
2 This confession is not the confession of the world a. The first critical question b. The false confessions	14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.	20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.	**7 This confession must be understood before being shared with others**
3 This confession declares one's trust in Christ a. The second critical question, v.15 b. The true confession: A personal trust in Christ	15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.		
4 This confession is revealed by God alone	17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.		
5 This confession is the foundation of the church[DSI] a. Fact 1: His church b. Fact 2: He builds c. Fact 3: He protects	18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.		

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION:HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27

A. The Messiah's Dramatic Revelation of Himself and His Church: Peter's Great Confession, 16:13-20

(16:13-20) **Introduction**: Jesus withdrew to be alone with His disciples. He was facing the end very, very soon. There was much to reveal and teach them. It was time for them to learn that He was *building a church*—an assembly of people who would be confessing Him to be the Messiah. The present passage is one of the most dramatic revelations ever made. It is also one of the most demanding questions ever asked. It is demanding because the answer given determines a person's eternal destiny. How a person answers the questions determines where he will spend eternity, with God in heaven or apart from God in hell. And note: there is only one answer to the question that can qualify a person for heaven: "Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God." The importance of the question and its confession is clearly seen by glancing quickly at the points of the passage.

1. Christ in the area of Caesarea Philippi (v.13).
2. This confession is not the confession of the world (v.13-14).
3. This confession declares one's personal trust in Christ (v.15-16).
4. This confession is revealed by God alone (v.17).
5. This confession is the foundation of the church (v.18).
6. This confession assigns great responsibility to believers for the church (v.19).
7. This confession must be understood before being shared with others (v.20).

1 (16:13) **Caesarea Philippi**: Christ was in the area of Caesarea Philippi. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.8:27. This note will give the dramatic background for the Lord's pointed question. Jesus had withdrawn to be alone and to pray before this event and its profound revelation [cp. Lk.9:18].)

2 (16:13-14) **Profession, False**: Peter's confession is not the confession of the world. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus had asked a critical question: "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" We must know what others say about Jesus, just who He is. What men think of Jesus...
   - determines their destiny
   - determines how we are to reach out to them
   - determines their reaction to us as we witness to them
   - determines to a large degree the morality and justice of a society
2. There were false confessions regarding Christ. The popular opinions show that Christ was highly esteemed and greatly respected. He was considered one of the greatest of men. It should be noted that these opinions were not only untrue, but they were dangerous in that they contained only half truths. The result was tragic: people were deceived and misled by them.
   a. Some people said Jesus was John the Baptist. These people were professing Jesus to be a great spirit of righteousness, a spirit that was willing to be martyred for its faith. Herod and others thought this (Mt.14:1-2).

Upon hearing of Jesus' marvelous works, Herod fancied that either John had been revived or else his spirit indwelt the man about whom he was hearing.

The common people saw some similarity between John and Jesus: both were doing a unique and great work for God; both were divinely chosen and gifted by God; and both proclaimed the Kingdom of God and prepared men for it. Therefore, when some people looked at Jesus and His ministry, they did not consider Him to be the Messiah, but rather the promised forerunner of the Messiah (Mal.4:5).

b. Some people said Jesus was Elijah. Elijah was considered to be the greatest prophet and teacher of all time and was also predicted to be the forerunner of the coming Messiah (Mal.4:5). William Barclay points out that even today the Jews expect Elijah to return before the Messiah. In the celebration of the Passover, they always leave a chair vacant for him to occupy (*The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.150). Elijah had also been used by God to miraculously feed a widow woman and her son (1 Ki.17:14).The people connected Elijah's miracle and Jesus' feeding of the multitude.

c. Some people said Jesus was Jeremiah. They were professing Jesus to be a prophet who was revealing some very important things about God and religion to men. It had always been thought that Jeremiah was going to return to earth right before the Messiah and bring with him the tabernacle, ark, and altar of incense. He was said to have taken these and hid them in Mount Nebo right before he died (2 Maccabees 2:1-12; 2 Esdras 2:18).

d. Some people said Jesus was one of the prophets. They were professing Jesus to be a great prophet who had been sent for their day and time. He was thought to be one of the great prophets brought back to life or one in whom the spirit of a great prophet dwelt (cp. Dt.18:15, 18).

It should be noted that the same false confessions about Christ exist in every generation.

⇒ There are some people who think that Jesus was only a great man of righteousness who was martyred for His faith. Therefore, He leaves us a great example of how to live and stand up for what we believe.

⇒ There are other people who think that Jesus was only one of the great teachers and prophets of history.

⇒ There are still others who think that Jesus was only a great man who revealed some very important things to us about God and religion. Therefore, He can make a significant contribution to every man in his search for God.

⇒ There are some others who think that Jesus was just a great man and prophet sent to the people (Jews) of His day. We can learn about Him by studying His life.

> **"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).**
>
> **"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).**
>
> **"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 Jn.2:22-23).**
>
> **"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:3).**

Thought 1. Note three things about the world's opinions of Jesus Christ.

1) The world is not unanimous in its opinion of Christ. There are many different opinions, yet there is only one *truth*. He either is or is not who He claimed to be: the Son of God. As long as the world does not hold to the truth, it shall wander around in a maze of opinions, following guess after guess and hypothesis after hypothesis.
2) Most of the world's opinions of Christ see Him as a good and great man. The opinions are not accurate, but they at least elevate Christ above the average man.
3) The world's opinions are false and inaccurate. There are two bases for this statement.
   a) If Christ should not be the Son of God, then He is not a good and great man. He is the worst deceiver and biggest hoax to ever arrive on the world scene. Why? Because He claimed to be the Son of God and the God of righteousness, and He built His following on the claim. If Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, then every true follower of His is living in a *dream world* of *false hope* and denying himself many of the world's goods. He is also teaching a deceptive lie to others. If Christ should not be the Son of God, then He is not worth following.
   b) Scripture emphatically declares: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is who He claimed to be.

3 (16:15-16) **Confession—Jesus Christ, Names and Titles**: Peter's confession was a personal trust in Christ.

1. Jesus asked a second critical question, and He asked this question much more emphatically in the Greek: "But you, who do you say that I am?" The answer to this question is critical; it is all-important. It determines a person's eternal destiny.

2. The true confession declares one's personal trust in Christ. Note Peter's words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—a simple and yet momentous confession arising from a personal conviction. It is the confession that saves

the soul and the confession that lays the foundation for the church. The very life and survival of a man's soul and of the church as a whole rests upon this simple, yet profound conviction.

⇒ The *Christ*: the Messiah, the annointed One of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).
⇒ The *Son of God*: of the same being, the same substance; One with the Father (see note—Ph.2:6).
⇒ The *Son of the Living God*: the source and being of life; possessing the source, energy, and power of life within Himself (Jn.5:26; 17:2-3; 1 Th.1:9).

Peter probably did not understand all that was involved in Christ's being the Son of God (the cross and resurrection had not yet taken place). But his confession was made in simple trust arising from a heart that was truly convicted that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is simple trust which God desires and longs for—nothing more and nothing less. Peter was simply confessing step by step, "I believe you are..."

- the true Messiah,
- not a mere man,
- but the Son of God,
- sent by God,
- to fulfill all that the prophets foretold.

Thought 1. The question is personal. It is directed to every man: "Whom say ye that I am." Every man has to answer, and his eternal destiny depends upon his answer. But his answer is critical, for it is not a confession *about* Christ that Christ is after. He is after a belief, a confession in His deity, a trusting of His saving grace.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (Jn.1:41).**
>
> **"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him [the Messiah], of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn.1:45).**
>
> **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).**
>
> **"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (Jn.4:29).**
>
> **"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69).**
>
> **"She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27).**
>
> **"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God" (Jn.20:28).**
>
> **"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).**

4 (16:17) **Conviction—Holy Spirit, Work of**: Peter's confession was revealed by God alone. Only God can convict the soul of a man and lead a man to personally trust Christ as the Son of God. There are two reasons for this.

1 Man is only flesh and blood. A person cannot convict another person to trust Christ, not convict him in regenerating power. Conviction that leads a man to trust Christ—that leads to regeneration—is the work of God's Spirit (Jn.16:8-11).

2. The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor.2:14). Man is of the earth; he is earthly. Christ is of heaven and of God; He is heavenly. God is Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him *in spirit* and in truth (Jn.4:23-24). Man cannot come to know Christ in a personal way through natural wisdom or study. Humanly, the fact is as clear as can be, man cannot *recreate* himself. If he is to be reborn, he has to be *recreated* by Someone other than himself. He has to be recreated by God (Jn.3:3, 5-6).

⇒ Man cannot *quicken* himself; he cannot give spiritual life to himself—only God can.
⇒ Man cannot *regenerate* himself—only God can.
⇒ Man cannot *transform* himself—only God can.
⇒ Man cannot *redeem* himself—only God can.
⇒ Man cannot *infuse* himself with eternal life—only God can.

> **"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:13).**
>
> **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jn.3:6).**
>
> **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).**

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

Thought 1. Natural man has been led away from the spiritual...

- by pride, power, fame, wealth, and glory.
- by the prejudices of education, the philosophy of humanism, the limitations of scientific methodology, and the materialistic results of technology.
- by the pull to disbelieve, the lack of courage to buck the crowd, and the hesitation to surrender all of self and possessions to Christ.
- by the love of the flesh, the enjoyment of looking, the stimulation of touching, the sensation of experiencing, and the consumption of tasting.
- by the deceptions of the evil one, the lusts of the human heart, and the sins of personal behavior.

5 (16:18) **Church, Foundation**: Peter's confession is the foundation of the church (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Church*—Mt.16:18. Also see notes—Eph.2:20; 4:4-6 for more discussion.) Christ replied to Peter, "You are Peter [petros] and on this rock [petra] I will build my church." No matter how a person interprets this passage, one thing is sure: this was a tremendous compliment to Peter. But what did Jesus mean? Probably this: the rock was *Peter himself and his confession*, not simply Peter and not just his confession. The rock was *both*, but in a very special sense.

1. Peter himself was the rock in two senses.
   a. Peter was the first person to *fully* grasp who Jesus really was. He was the first to confess with *full* understanding that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Others had made similar confessions before (Jn.1:41, 45, 49; 6:69), but they had not yet been with Jesus long enough to *fully* grasp what being "the Son of God" really meant. Their confessions had been the earthly confessions of a simple child-like faith. But now Peter understood more fully; he *fully* grasped who Jesus was. Therefore, he became the first man, the first rock, the foundation *upon* which the church and all other "living stones" were to be built.

      Great weight is given to this meaning in Eph.2:20. The apostles and prophets are said to be the foundation of the church upon which all future believers or "living stones" are built (1 Pt.2:5). Jesus Christ is said to be the chief cornerstone. The picture is unquestionably clear. From the human perspective, the apostles and prophets work and build the church, and upon their work and effort the church depends. From God's perspective, Christ's power and work establishes the church (cp. 1 Cor.3:11; 1 Pt.2:4-8; see note—Mt.16:19).
   b. Peter was the one who launched and laid the foundation of the church. He was the early leader of the church who stood forth at Pentecost when three thousand souls were saved (Acts 2:41) and at Caesarea when the door of salvation was opened to the Gentiles (10:1f). Therefore, he was the rock and the foundation in that he was the first man who ever opened the doors of the church to both Jew and Gentile.
2. Peter's confession (or one might say, Christ Himself) was the rock. Christ said, "You are Peter and on this rock [I, Myself, the great truth of your confession] will I build my church." There is no question that the church is built upon Christ. He is unquestionably the builder of the church and the power behind its structure (1 Cor.3:11). It is He who takes every believer, all the "living stones," and places him into the structure of His church (1 Pt.2:4-8). The church *depends* upon Christ, not upon Peter nor any other man or combination of men. It was first *built* by Peter after Pentecost; but it is *held up and held together* by Christ, the only foundation.

Note the exact words spoken by Christ.

⇒ Fact 1: "My church." The church is Christ's not man's.
⇒ Fact 2: "I will build." Christ builds the church.
⇒ Fact 3: "The gates of hell shall not prevail." Christ Himself protects the church.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock" (Mt.7:24).

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?" (Mt.21:42).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph.2:20).

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (1 Pt.2:4-6).

Thought 1. The *true* church is universal. It is made up of *all* who genuinely confess Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. But note: He is the Son of the *living* God. If God is living, then Christ is living. He is, therefore, "*My* Lord, *my* God." A genuine believer, that is, a true church member, becomes a person who has surrendered himself to be a servant of God's Son, of God's Lord.

Thought 2. We should go to Christ often and confess our trust and faith in Him. We should do so alone, demonstrating strength, devotion, tenderness, and warmth. He desires such strong and warm devotion, for we are the "living stones" of His church.

Thought 3. Note a fact often overlooked. Christ not only loved and died for us individually—He also loved and died for the church as a whole (universally). "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph.5:25).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:18) **Church** (ekklesia): the word means to call out a gathering, an assembly. In the Greek, there is no spiritual significance ascribed to the word itself. An example is the town meeting in Ephesus which was "called out" (ekklesia). It was only an official city-wide meeting (Acts 19:32, 39, 41).

What is the difference then between such secular gatherings and the church of God?

1. It is God who calls together and gathers His church. His church is the body of people "called out" from the world by Him. They are His body of people, a people sanctified or *set apart* by Him to form the church of the living God.
2. God dwells within the very presence of believers when they gather together (see note—1 Cor.3:16-17).
3. The gathering of God meets together for two purposes—worship and mission. God is the object of worship, and His mission becomes the objective of the church. Therefore, God's church, the local assembly, gathers together to worship and to pool its resources in order to carry out the mission of God Himself. It should be noted that this is the first mention of the church in the New Testament. (See notes—Mt.16:18; Eph.2:20; 4:4-6 for more discussion.)

6 (16:19) **Christian Responsibility**: Peter's confession assigned great responsibility to believers for the church. The steward of the house is given the keys or the responsibility for the house. The steward has the responsibility to close (bind) and to open (loose) the house. The key is the gospel, the message of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It is the business of the steward to proclaim and teach the Gospel. By proclaiming and teaching, he opens the door; by not proclaiming and not teaching, he shuts the door.

Note: the keys are not the keys to the church but to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven that is the point. Peter was the first man to preach the gospel and open the door to Israel at Pentecost (Acts 2:38-42) and to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:3-48).

Note another point of critical importance: Peter claimed no power or authority beyond preaching the gospel and opening the door to unbelievers (Acts 15:7-11). His epistles say nothing whatsoever about man's acting in God's behalf and determining who will and who will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only God will determine who lives and who does not live in His presence. There is also this additional evidence: Peter claimed nothing more for himself than what other men claimed—to be gifted by God as an apostle (1 Pt.1:1) and an elder (1 Pt.5:1). This fact is clearly seen in his subservience to James. James presided over the Jerusalem Council, not Peter (Acts 15:19; Gal.2:11-14).

Thought 1. The servants of God, ministers and laymen alike, have been given the gospel, the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is every believer's responsibility to use the keys. The unbeliever who rejects the gospel in hostility and begins to persecute the believer is to be turned away from (Mt.10:11-14, 23). The one who receives the gospel and the believer is to have the door of the kingdom opened to him.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21; cp. Mt.20:28; Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

7 (16:20) **Witnessing**: Peter's confession must be understood before being shared with others. There were several reasons the disciples were forbidden to share that Jesus was the Son of God.

1. They still needed more preparation. They did not yet know the *full* gospel. The death and resurrection of Jesus, the very core of the gospel, had not yet taken place.
2. The disciples needed the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit if the message was to be effective, and the Spirit had not yet come. Pentecost had not yet taken place.
3. The people misunderstood the prophecies of the Messiah. If the disciples began preaching with force, the people might revolt against the Roman conquerors (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23).

Thought 1. Two things are essential before a believer can effectively proclaim the gospel.

1) He must understand the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:1-4).
2) He must be indwelt and infilled with the Spirit of God (Acts 1:8).

	B. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Future Glory (1st Time): Total Commitment, 16:21-28 (Mk.8:31-9:1; Lk.9:22-27)	men. 24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.	**2 His death demands total commitment from a man** a. Must will to follow b. Must deny self c. Must take up the cross d. Must follow Jesus
1 His death required total commitment on His part a. His death was necessary: He "must go" to suffer 1) In Jerusalem[DS1] 2) To suffer[DS2] 3) To be killed 4) To be raised	21 From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.	25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?	**3 His death offers four arguments for total commitment** a. An abandonment of this life saves a man b. A man's soul is worth more than the whole world
b. His death arouses natural man	22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.	27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.	c. A day of judgment is coming
c. His death shows man to be an adversary of God d. His death reveals man's true nature	23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of	28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.	d. A promise is given—the promise of never having to taste death

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27

B. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Future Glory (1st Time): Total Commitment, 16:21-28

(16:21-28) **Introduction**: a new stage was now launched by Jesus. Note the words, "From that time forth." More plainly than ever before and without reserve, Christ revealed that *the Son of the living God* was going to be killed and raised again from the dead. Never before had so phenomenal an event happened, and never again would it happen. History would be made. "Jerusalem...that killed the prophets" was going to commit the ultimate crime—they were going to kill God's own Son (cp. Mt.23:27).

Note two facts.

1. Christ had already been telling His disciples about His death and resurrection for some time, but they had not understood. There were two primary reasons for their blindness. First, the idea of a suffering Messiah differed radically from their own idea of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.8:27; notes—8:30; Lk.7:21); and second, the revelation had been hidden in pictures and symbols.

> **"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19).**
>
> **"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn.3:14).**
>
> **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).**

Now, however, there was a significant switch in how Jesus went about preparing His disciples for His death. The difference was that Christ no longer spoke in pictures and symbols. He now taught them in simple and direct words (Mt.20:18-20; Lk.18:31-33). A new stage in the revelation of God's plan for the world was now taking place: God's Son was to die and be raised again for the sins of the world. God's plan for saving the world was to take place through a suffering Messiah, not a conquering Messiah. God's Messiah was not going to deliver a *materialistic* world into the hands of His followers. God's Messiah was going to die; and through death, He was going to usher in the Kingdom of God, making it possible for His followers to live eternally in the very presence of God Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; cp. Jn.3:16; 5:24f).

2. The disciples now understood *more fully* that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16). They had taken a great leap forward in their understanding of His nature, just who He really was. Now they needed to learn two things: that the real way into God's kingdom and glory was through death, sacrifice, and self-denial. The path of suffering had to be taken not only by God's Messiah but also by the followers of God's Messiah (v.24-28).

Just imagine the radical difference between the two concepts...

- a suffering Messiah vs. a conquering Messiah
- a suffering believer vs. a conquering believer

Seeing the radical difference helps a person understand Peter's behavior and the reason why the disciples were so slow to grasp what Christ was saying. In fact, they never completely understood until after the resurrection (see outlines and notes—Mt.17:22-23; 20:17-19; Mk.8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34).

The lesson of Christ is clear: God's plan to save the world is through the death of His Son, His sacrifice and self-denial, and the way of salvation for man is the same. Man must undergo personal sacrifice, self-denial, and death (Mt.16:24-26).

1. His death required total commitment on His part (v.21-23).
2. His death demands total commitment from a man (v.24).
3. His death offers four arguments for total commitment (v.25-28).

1 (16:21-23) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus' death required total commitment on His part.

1. His death was necessary: He "must go to Jerusalem to suffer." The words "*must* [dei] *go*" are strong: a constraint, an imperative, a necessity was laid upon Christ. He had no choice. His death and resurrection had been planned and willed by God through all eternity. The prophets had predicted it; He must fulfill the will of God, for God had ordained His death (cp. Mt.26:54; Lk.24:26, 46).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was also necessary. Jesus' prediction of His resurrection is clear to us because we can look back upon it, but it was never clear to His disciples. Why? Very simply, it was to be a new experience. No one had ever risen from the dead never to die again. It was unprecedented. The apostles believed perhaps somewhat like Martha—that there was to be a future resurrection of all men (Jn.11:24-26). Such a belief is an expression of the hope that is within every man, the hope to continue on in some form of existence. Such a belief is easy to hold, but to think of a resurrection now, to think of a person's arising from the dead today is difficult. The actual resurrection of a dead person would be inconceivable to those who had not been grounded in its teaching.

Just what they thought Christ meant by *being raised again* is not known. The fact that they did not fully understand is clear from the fact that their spirits were crushed when He was killed. However, some of His followers seemed to grasp more of *a real bodily* resurrection than others. This is clear by an immediate remembrance of His words after His resurrection. There was John who believed immediately (Jn.20:8-9). Mary Magdalene was shown that He had risen just "as He said" (Mt.28:6), and she understood after seeing Him. But others were slower to understand and believe (Mk.16:11; Jn.20:24-25).

> **"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19).**
>
> **"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn.3:14).**
>
> **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).**
>
> **"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"[Christ] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Thought 1. Christ revealed His death and resurrection in stages—revealed it only as the disciples were able to receive and bear the fact. Christ always teaches us gradually and moves us along as we are able to learn. There is great truth in the saying that He does not put more upon us than we can bear.

Thought 2. Note that Jesus spoke of His resurrection when He spoke of His death. It was for the joy that was set before Him that He endured the cross (Heb.12:2). The joy and hope of spending eternity with Christ and His followers is what encourages us to bear *our cross* while here on earth (cp. Lk.9:23).

2. His death arouses natural man. Natural man rebels at the idea of the cross. Natural man wants another way other than the cross. This is what Peter was doing: rebelling against the idea that *God's Son* was to die, that His blood had to be shed for the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24). Peter could accept Jesus as "the Son of the living God" but not as the suffering Savior. Such an idea was repulsive and unacceptable to him. Therefore, he tried to stop the idea. Note the words, "Peter took Him" (proslabomenos). The Greek is strong; it means *caught hold of*. Peter took hold of Christ; he grabbed Christ and took Him aside for a conference.

Note also that Peter "began to rebuke [epitiman] Him." This again is strong. It is not just a wish but a forcible attempt to stop the idea of the suffering Savior. "This shall not be unto thee." *This must not and cannot happen to you. God forbid it* is the equivalent idea. The point is this: Peter was out to stop the cross. He was urging Christ to be the Messiah of power, fame, and sensation whom the Jews were expecting (see notes—Mk.8:27-9:50; 8:30; Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). Peter was urging Christ to follow his own human schemes instead of God's way; and by such urging, he was tempting Christ with the very same compromises that Satan used to tempt Christ—the compromises of power,

fame, and sensation (Mt.4:1-11). Peter was zealous for God, but he was mistaken and ignorant in his zeal. He did not understand that God was planning to save the world through the death of His Son (see note, pt.3—Mk.8:31).

Such behavior is the way of the world. It is the natural, carnal mind. Man rebels and recoils against the idea of a suffering Savior who had to die for the sins of the world—a Savior who demands the same sacrifice and denial of His followers. Such an idea is unacceptable and repulsive.

Thought 1. The natural man's idea of God and of God's plan for man is seen in three concepts.

1) Some think the path of life is love, so they live showing interest and care for others. God is seen as a giving, loving, and indulgent *grandfather type* of person—the indulgent grandfather who tolerates even the worst behavior, no matter how much human suffering and devastation is wrought by the hands of a person. To think of the cross and *the blood* of Christ as an emblem of suffering is repulsive and repelling. The cross is viewed only as an emblem of love, not of sin and shame. The way of love is thought to be the path of life which man is to follow.

2) Some think that comfort and pleasure is the path of life. God again is viewed only as an indulgent *grandfather type* who gives man the good things of life and helps man when he gets in trouble. God's will for man is thought to be comfort and pleasure, ease and plenty, health and leisure. Again the cross is only an emblem of love and care for the world, not of suffering and sacrifice and self-denial. The shame, pain, and agony of the cross and its purpose of reconciling a world lost in sin and reeling in desperate need is overlooked.

> **"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life; and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).**
>
> **"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).**
>
> **"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).**
>
> **"[They] shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).**
>
> **"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments" (Is.47:8-9).**

3) Some feel that triumph, victory, position, authority, power, and reigning supreme is God's way. This was the idea of most Jews in Christ's day. It was Peter's concept of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; 11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). The concepts of power, position, and authority are clearly seen in movements that stress *self-image*, *self-improvement*, and *personality development*. Developing one's self-image as much as possible and achieving all that one can are said to be God's plan and path for man. However, the idea of suffering and sacrifice and self-denial is rejected.

> **"They that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt.20:25-27).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).**
>
> **"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).**
>
> **"Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**
>
> **"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).**
>
> **"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).**

3. His death shows man to be an adversary of God. The literal meaning of Satan in the words "*get thee behind me, Satan*" is "adversary" (see note—Rev.12:7-9). Calling Peter "Satan" is stern, yet such sternness was necessary. Peter was tempting Christ with the very same temptation that Christ had faced in the wilderness (see notes—Mt.4:8-10). All the worldly glory that could be His flashed across His mind. The loyalty and allegiance of men without the cross was again being suggested to Him. How this must have cut Christ! This time the temptation was coming from one of His own disciples! When a man refuses to accept God's plan for life, he becomes an adversary to God. He opposes God's will. In essence, man says that he knows what is best; that he is *wiser* than God. Think! When a man does not accept God's plan for life, the crux of what he says to God is, "The cross is not necessary. Jesus' dying to save the world was a useless plan. It was not needed."

This is what Peter was doing and saying. He was opposing God's plan for life, that is, saving the world through the death of His Son. He was saying that he was wiser than God. Note: Christ abruptly turned to Peter before Peter could say anything else and stopped him in his tracks. He charged Peter with being Satan, with being under the authority of Satan, with speaking as Satan. He had become *as* Satan, an adversary to God and God's plan for His Son and for the salvation of the world.

> **"And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).**
>
> **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (Jn.8:44).**
>
> **"In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).**
>
> **"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).**

Thought 1. No man should instruct or counsel God. Our task is not to force our ideas upon God but to surrender to His will.

> **"For Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34).**

4. His death reveals man's true nature. Note the words "Thou savorest not [ou phroneis]." This means to think; to mind. Peter did not have his mind or his thoughts in line with God's mind and thoughts. His tastes were different from God's tastes. Peter's thoughts and tastes were worldly and self-pleasing, not spiritual and pleasing to God. He was using human reasoning not God's reasoning. The thought that God's Son had to die and shed His blood for the sins of the world was disgraceful to Peter. In his mind, such a concept was unfit for God.

Note how true Christ's words to Peter are! "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." The death of Christ reveals man's true nature, a nature that uses natural and carnal reasoning instead of spiritual reasoning.

> **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Ro.8:5-7).**
>
> **"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Eph.4:17).**
>
> **"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:18-19).**
>
> **"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he [God] reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight" (Col.1:21-22).**
>
> **"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit.1:15).**
>
> **"The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Ps.94:11).**
>
> **"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).**

Thought 1. Man feels a little more humane, a little more civil by denying "the blood of Christ" for the sins of the world. To reject what is sometimes called a "blood religion" makes a person feel more acceptable in a so-called *civilized society*. Two things need to be noted.

1) The cross should be viewed as repulsive. The cross is a symbol of sin and shame. Hanging upon the cross, God's *very own Son* bore our sins and the sins of the whole world (1 Jn.2:1-2). Sin and shame are always repulsive, and the fact that God's Son hung there *becoming sin for us* is abhorrent. Nothing could be any more distasteful than what actually happened.
2) The cross should be viewed as glorious. The cross is a symbol of life and of forgiven sins (1 Pt.2:20). Through the cross, God gloriously reconciles man to Himself and to one another (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18). So much comes through the glorious work of the cross that Paul just exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal.6:14).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:21) **Jesus Christ, Opposition**: note the three Jewish groups who were to take the lead in killing Jesus. These were the three groups who made up the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of Jewish justice. It was comprised of seventy members (cp. the historical basis for this structure, 2 Chron.19:5-11).

1. The elders: these were the older and most respected men of a community. The elders were judges of the civil courts and of temporal affairs (Ex.3:29; 12:21; 24:9; Num.11:25; 1 Sam.16:4; Ezra 10:14; Mt.27:12).
2. The chief priests: these were primarily the leaders among the Sadducees. They held most of the high offices of Jewish government under Roman rule (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 23:8). The chief priests were judges of religious affairs.
3. The Scribes: these were primarily Pharisees who held the teaching positions of the nation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2).

Thought 1. Note the three groups who opposed Jesus. They were the very people who should have been following Jesus, the very leaders who should have known God. They should have known God well enough to have recognized His Son the Messiah. But, as with so many in every generation, they were blinded by their own religion, power, wealth, fame, and position.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(16:21) "**Many things**": the sufferings of Jesus are spelled out in some detail in two passages (Mt.20:18-19; Lk.18:31-33). (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44 for a detailed description of Jesus' death.)

2 (16:24) **Jesus Christ, Death—Cross—Commitment**: Jesus' death demands the total commitment of a man. Christ gives four steps that are involved in total commitment (see note—Mt.16:25-28. The note is adequate for stirring thoughts for application.)

1. A person must *will* to follow Christ. The word "wills" (thelei) means to desire, wish, design, purpose, resolve, determine. It is a deliberate willing, a deliberate choice, a determined resolve to follow Christ. If a person really wills and deliberately chooses to follow Christ, then he has to do the three things mentioned. Note: the choice is voluntary; it is made by the person. It is the individual who wills and chooses; therefore, it is the individual who must act and do the three things mentioned.
2. A person must deny self. The word "deny" (aparnesastho) means to disown, disregard, forsake, renounce, reject, refuse, restrain, disclaim, do without. It means to subdue, to disregard one's self and one's interest. Very simply, it means to say "no." But note: the call is not to say "no" to some behavior or thing but to *self*. A person is to *deny self*; and this means much more than just being negative, that is, giving up something and doing without something. It means that we are to act positively, to say "yes" to Christ and "no" to self. It means to let Christ rule and reign in our hearts and lives, to let Christ have His way completely. Of course, if a person allows Christ to rule in his life, all negative as well as positive behavior is taken care of (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2,3*—Mk.8:34). In the Greek the word "deny" is an ingressive aorist which means that the person enters a new state or condition. It means, "Let him *at once begin* to deny self."
3. A person must take up the cross. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Self-denial*—Lk.9:23 for discussion.)
4. A person must follow Jesus. The word "follow" (akoloothei) means to be a follower or companion, to be a disciple. It has the idea of seeking to be in union with and in the likeness of. It is following Christ, seeking to be just like Him. Again, this is not a passive behavior but an active commitment and walk. It is energy and effort, action and work. It is going after Christ with zeal and energy, struggling and seeking to follow in His footsteps, no matter the cost. Note that the steps of Christ led to death before they led to glory (Mt.16:21).

3 (16:25-28) **Commitment**: Jesus' death offers four arguments for total commitment.

1. An abandonment of this life saves a person. What does it mean when Scripture says that a person saves his life by losing it and loses his life by finding it? The key is in the words "for my sake." Christ says that "whosoever will lose his life *for my sake* shall find it." The person who abandons this life—who sacrifices and gives all that he is and has for Christ—shall save his life. But the person who *keeps* his life and what he has and *seeks* more and more of this life, shall lose his life completely and eternally.

The person who "saves his life"...

- by seeking to avoid the aging of the body and death and yet denies Christ—that person shall lose his life eternally.
- by seeking to make his life more and more comfortable, easy, and secure (beyond what is necessary) and neglects Christ shall lose his life eternally.
- by seeking to gain wealth and power and fame by compromising Christ shall lose his life eternally.
- by seeking the thrills, excitement, and stimulation of this world by ignoring Christ shall lose his life eternally.

As said above, the person who loses his life for Christ—who sacrifices and gives all he is and has for Christ—saves his life, and he saves it eternally. The person who keeps his life and what he has for himself shall lose his life, and he loses it eternally. The call of Christ is just what He says: a life of denial that takes up the cross and follows in His steps.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**

2. A man's soul is worth more than the whole world. The word *soul* is the same word translated "life" (v.25). Christ uses the word *life* in two senses. There are *two stages*, two beings, two existences to the same life: the life that exists on this earth and the life that shall exist beyond this life. Once a person (life) is born into this world, he shall exist forever. It is just a matter of where he goes after this world: to be with God or to be apart from God.

No man can gain the whole world, but what if he could? All the pleasure and wealth and power and fame are nothing compared with his soul. There are four primary reasons why the soul is far superior to the things of this earth.

a. Everything fades and passes away. A person possesses something only for a short time.

b. Everything cannot be used all at once. Everything sits and remains unused most of the time.
   ⇒ Clothes sit.
   ⇒ A car sits.
   ⇒ Power goes unused.
   ⇒ Popularity and fame quickly pass and are forgotten.

c. The human soul is eternal. The soul never dies and never ceases to exist. It shall live forever either with God or apart from God.

d. The human soul is of more value than the whole world.

Once a man has lost his soul, it is lost. It cannot be bought back. The man forfeits and suffers the loss of it forever. Imagine! Even if a man possessed all the wealth of the world, he would not be able to buy back his soul. Why? Because it is gone; it has passed on forever. The man will never return to earth, not even for one day. He is gone forever.

"What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:25).

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom [false professions] shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:11-12).

"And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment [righteousness]? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:12-13).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor.9:27).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

3. A day of judgment is coming. When Christ returns, the true value of sacrifice vs. self-satisfaction will be clearly seen. Sacrifice for Christ will be abundantly rewarded; self-satisfaction will be condemned. Man is to be judged according to his works. The word "works" means doing, working, acting. It is not isolated acts, but continuous behavior. A person is to be rewarded on the basis of his continuous behavior, not isolated acts.

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23).

"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Mt.25:12).

"But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Lk.12:9).

"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).

4. A promise is given—a promise of never having to taste death. This verse is much clearer when it is compared to Mark's account: "Verily, I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk.9:1). It is the power of the kingdom to which Jesus refers; that is, His death and resurrection and Pentecost and to the many, many converts to His kingdom that resulted. After Pentecost the power of His Kingdom came—power beyond anything the disciples could have ever dreamed.

	CHAPTER 17		
	C. The Transfiguration: Strengthened to Bear the Cross, 17:1-13 (Mk.9:2-13;Lk.9:28-36)		
1 Jesus on a high mountain a. Time: 6 days later b. Three witnesses[DSI]	And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,	6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.	c. The disciples' reaction: They prostrated themselves—terrified
		7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.	d. The Lord's intercession: His closeness & presence
		8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.	e. The Lord's preeminence: They saw no man but Jesus
2 The strength of God's glory a. His face shone as the sun b. His clothes gleamed	2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.	9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.	**6 The strength of the resurrection**
3 The strength of great saints a. Moses: The lawgiver b. Elijah: The first great prophet	3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.	10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?	a. The misconception of the Messiah
4 The strength of a heavenly experience a. A taste of glory b. A staggering request	4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.	11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.	
		12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.	b. The misconception corrected
5 The strength of God's presence a. The cloud: The Shekinah glory was given b. The voice of God: Proclaimed Jesus to be His Son—hear Him	5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.		c. The Messiah must also suffer
		13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.	

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS,16:13-17:27

C. The Transfiguration: Strengthened to Bear the Cross, 17:1-13

(17:1-13) **Introduction**: the transfiguration of Christ is a most unusual experience, but Christ and the disciples needed *unusual strength* to face the future. The future held the cross for both.

Christ had just entered the last stage of training for the disciples (see outline and notes—Mt.16:21-28). It was most important that they grasp God's plan for the world: He was the Messiah, and He was to save the world through death and not through earthly power and conquest (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). He was to bear the cross for the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24), but they too were to bear the cross if they were to follow Him. For some days now, He had been drilling this message into them. Soon He was to face the reality of the cross, and they were going to fully understand the thrust of what He meant by their "taking up the cross" (see outline and notes—Mt.16:24-28). They both needed a very special portion of strength to face what lay in front of them.

The transfiguration was God's answer to their need. God used five things to strengthen Christ and the disciples. The same five things are applicable to the great needs we face. God will use the same kinds of things to strengthen us.

1. Jesus on a high mountain (v.1).
2. The strength of God' glory (v.2).
3. The strength of great saints (v.3).
4. The strength of a heavenly experience (v.4).
5. The strength of God's presence (v.5-8).
6. The strength of the resurrection (v.9-13).

1 (17:1) **Devotion**: Jesus was on a high mountain. Note that this event took place six days after drilling His disciples with the fact of His coming death and resurrection. Christ needed to get all alone with God. He took three disciples, Peter, James and John, with Him and climbed a high mountain. The place chosen is important. It was "an high mountain," an isolated place where they would not be interrupted. It was conducive, fitted for being alone with God. Four major things drove Christ to get alone with God. The same things should always cause us to get alone with God for an extended time:

- ⇒ pressure (from facing the cross)
- ⇒ a momentous decision (to bear the cross)
- ⇒ intensive training
- ⇒ the need for renewed strength

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(17:1) **Peter, James, and John**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.9:2 for the reasons these three were chosen.

2 (17:2) **God's Glory**: there was the strength of God's glory. The word "transformed" (metamorphothe) means a change into another form; a transformation; a change of countenance; a complete change. Luke said, "the fashion of His countenance was altered" (Lk.9:29). Note how the gospel writers described what happened.

> **"His face did shine as the sun and His raiment was white as the light" (Mt.17:2).**
> **"His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mk.9:3).**
> **"The fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening" (Lk.9:29).**

Apparently *the glory* of His Godly nature was allowed to shine through His body. "The glory which [He] had with God before the world" shone through His body right on through His clothes (Jn.17:5). Peter said, "We were eyewitnesses of His majesty." In John's vision of Christ in *The Revelation*, he described the glory of Christ as the sun which shineth in its strength (Rev.1:16).

The scripture says:

> **"God is light" (1 Jn.1:5).**
> **"[God]...dwelling in the light which no man can approach" (1 Tim.6:16).**
> **"[God] who coverest thyself with light as with a garment" (Ps.104:2).**

Thought 1. Believers experience some portion of the glory of the Lord.

> **"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor.3:18).**

Of course, our sense of God's glory is very much dependent upon our doing what Christ did: getting alone with God in an intensive session of prayer and devotion. We are to be transformed into the image of Christ, transformed in all His moral excellence. But we must learn that the change is brought about only by the Spirit of God and only as we seek His face in prayer and genuine trust.

> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**

3 (17:3) **Moses—Elijah**: there was the strength of great saints. Why did Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus? There seem to be two reasons.

1. To discuss Jesus' death (Lk.17:31). Jesus needed to be strengthened to bear the weight and pressure of the cross (see note—Mk.9:2-13. Cp. the Garden of Gethesemane experience and His cry on the cross, Lk.22:39-46; see note—Mt.27:46-49.)
2. To show that Jesus was the true Messiah, the Son of God, the One who was superior to the Law and the prophets. Moses represented the law; and Elijah, who was considered the greatest of the prophets, represented the prophets. These two men were honoring and ministering to Christ. By such, they were symbolizing that the law and the prophets found their fulfillment in Christ.
   - ⇒ Christ was the One of whom the law and the prophets spoke.
   - ⇒ Christ was the One to whom the law and the prophets pointed. The old covenant was now to be fulfilled in and superseded by Christ who was to usher in the new covenant (see note—Mk.9:2-4. Cp. outline and notes—2 Cor.3:6-18; Mt.9:16-17.)

Thought 1. Christ was soon to fulfill His prophetic and priestly offices. Moses and Elijah were symbolically transferring the old prophetic and priestly offices to Him.

> **"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished" (Lk.18:31).**
> **"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pt.1:10-11).**

Thought 2. Something very significant is seen here. Believers who have gone on before are as *alive*, if not more alive, than we are. They are living in a dimension other than our physical world, an eternal world that is perfect and free from all sin, suffering, and death. What a glorious hope!

> **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).**

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).

4 (17:4) **Spiritual Experiences—Glory**: there was the strength of a heavenly experience. The three disciples were tasting *glory*. They were in the very presence of God Himself and were tasting some of heaven's joy, peace, security, fulfillment, and perfection. They did not want to leave this hallowed ground.

Note what Peter did.

1. He offered to build three shelters (skenas) for Jesus and the two prophets. By this act, he hoped to extend the stay of the heavenly guests and the glorious experience. The shelters offered were the booths made of branches and grass which could be quickly built, the kind often built by travellers on their stops along the road night by night.
2. He said, "If thou wilt." Peter, even in a moment as glorious as this, would not act against his Lord's will. Imagine the devotion and loyalty!

Thought 1. There is a great need to learn something: God knows exactly how to meet every believer's need. He knows just what kind of experience is needed, and God will do whatever it takes to meet our need—if we truly seek Him.

However, we must remember something: our experiences must conform to God's Word. God will not go against His Word in order to give growth and experiences. The experiences that come from God are the experiences that conform to His Word. In fact, spiritual experiences and growth usually come about as a result of reading and studying God's Word.

Thought 2. A deep spiritual experience with God is always a glorious time. Nothing can compare to a session of deep communion with Christ, and there is always the wish that we could remain in His presence.

But such is not our calling, not now. Our present call is to bear the cross and its message, not to wallow around in deep spiritual experiences. Our spirits do occasionally need to be spiritually renewed, but they are always renewed for a purpose: to strengthen us for going out and bearing a much stronger witness for our Lord.

"Is it not [your purpose] to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Is.58:7).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous" (1 Pt.3:8).

5 (17:5-8) **Spiritual Experience—Heaven**: there was the strength of God's presence. The cloud also covered the disciples. It and the voice of God terrified the disciples and caused them to fall immediately upon their faces, prostrated and unable to look up. As mortal men, they were crouched in fear and paralyzed in terror. Note four facts.

1. The cloud was "a bright cloud." This was the Shekinah glory, the cloud that symbolized God's presence. It was the cloud that guided Israel out of Egypt and that rested upon the tabernacle (Ex.40:34-38) and above the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy Place. God dwells in unapproachable light upon which no man can look. The Shekinah glory is a light so glorious and brilliant that there is no need for a sun. It is a light that radiates splendor (cp. Rev.21:11, 23). Peter later called it "the excellent glory" (2 Pt.1:17).

"[God] only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto" (1 Tim.6:16).

The "bright cloud" overshadowing Christ was in contrast to the dark and threatening cloud that overshadowed the giving of the old covenant to Moses, that is, the law (Ex.19:18; 20:21). There is a point to be made here.

⇒ The law (old covenant) was dark and threatening (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.3:10).

⇒ The new covenant (the love of Christ) is bright and is given to save and bless, not to threaten and condemn (Heb.12:18-24. Cp. Heb.8:6-13.)

2. The voice speaking actually says in the Greek, "This is My Son, the Beloved One." Note the two facts stressed: Christ is God's Son, and He is the Beloved One. The idea is that Christ is the "only begotten Son" who was to be given for the world (Jn.3:16).
3. Note the disciples experienced a clear, intense sense of God's presence. They fell prostrate on their faces before the Lord.
4. The Lord stood there alone. The representatives of the Old Testament and covenant (law) had faded away. The bondage and darkness and terror of the law were now gone. Christ now stood in the law's place (see note—Mt.5:17-18). The new covenant was soon to take effect; the new covenant of light, love, and liberty was now replacing the old covenant of darkness, fear, and bondage.

The disciples' experience can be applied to the believer's future, to his appearance before God in *the great Day of Redemption*. In fact, that is just what is happening to Peter, James, and John. They find themselves in God's presence. The believer's experience when he meets Christ face to face will undoubtedly be very much like what they experienced.

1. The believer will experience the Shekinah glory and see its full manifestation upon Christ.
2. The believer will hear the voice of God proclaiming Christ to be His Son; expressing perfect approval of His redemptive work; and rejoicing that He has been heard and is to be heard throughout all eternity.
3. The believer will fall upon his face, prostrating himself before Christ in awe and adoration and worship.
4. The believer will experience the Lord's intercessory work. He will feel the Lord's hand reaching out to touch him and to lift him up, and the believer will stand in the Lord's righteousness and perfection, living in a state of glory forever.

Thought 1. How often God would grant a clear, intense sense of His presence—if we would only get alone with Him for long sessions of meditation and prayer! How much power would be present in our lives and ministries if we often got alone with God for long periods!

5. The believer will witness and experience the Lord's preeminence throughout all eternity.

Thought 1. The message of God was, is, and ever will be...
- this is my beloved Son,
- in whom I am well pleased,
- hear ye Him.

6 (17:9-13) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: there was the strength of the resurrection. The resurrection proves two things.

⇒ First, the resurrection proves that Jesus Christ is definitely the Son of God.

⇒ Second, the resurrection proves that the transfiguration actually happened—that it actually foreshadowed the supremacy of the new covenant and to some degree the believer's experience of heaven.

Jesus did not allow the three disciples to share their experience because it could not be understood. It was just too incredible to grasp until after the resurrection. This charge to keep silent baffled the disciples because the Scribes had always taught that Elijah was to come to proclaim the Messiah (cp. Mal.4:5). They had just seen Elijah with Christ. When would Elijah begin announcing Jesus to be the Messiah? And if he were going to proclaim the message, why should they keep silent about Jesus' Messiahship? Should they not also proclaim Him as Messiah? Jesus told them that John the Baptist was the prophesied prophet like Elijah who was to come. The people killed him, and the Messiah too was to suffer at the hands of the people.

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God. Belief in Him is absolutely essential.

> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69; cp. Jn.11:25-27).**
>
> **"But Saul [Paul the apostle] increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (Acts 9:22; cp. Acts 17:2-3).**
>
> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).**

	D. The Powerless Disciples: A Great Lesson on Faith & Power, 17:14-21 (Mk.9:14-29; Lk.9:37-42)	shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.	b. His patience was limited
		18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.	c. His power broke the power of Satan
1 Jesus after the transfiguration a. Joined the multitude b. Was approached by a desperate man	14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,	19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?	**4 The clear reason for no power: Unbelief**
2 The tragedy of no power a. A desperate need unmet	15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.	20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.	**5 The great power of faith promised**[DS3]
b. A frantic disappointment[DS1] c. An embarassing situation	16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.		**6 The two ways to secure great faith & power**[DS4,5] a. By prayer b. By fasting
3 The rebuke of no power[DS2] a. His presence will not always be available	17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long	21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.	

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27

D. The Powerless Disciples: A Great Lesson on Faith and Power, 17:14-21

(17:14-21) **Introduction**: this is an excellent study on *power and faith*. The points speak for themselves.

1. Jesus after the transfiguration (v.14).
2. The tragedy of no power (v.15-16).
3. The rebuke of no power (v.17-18).
4. The clear reason for no power: unbelief (v.19-20).
5. The great power of faith promised (v.20).
6. The two ways to secure great faith and power (v.20-21).

1 (17:14) **Devotion—Prayer**: Jesus after the transfiguration. What a contrast—the heavenly glory and the mountain-top experience of the transfiguration vs. the earthly problems and the valley experiences of the next day (Lk.9:37)! What a lesson for all of us! The glory of devotions is for the purpose of going out and meeting the multitudes in all their need. We do not stay on the mountain top; we come down to the valley, down to earth where people are.

No experience of Christ teaches the necessity for both devotions and ministry any more forcibly than this experience.

⇒ The transfiguration is an *end* in itself, but it is also a *means* to service.

⇒ The transfiguration calls us to a monastic life, but it also prepares us for going out and meeting the needs of a corrupt world.

⇒ The mount of prayer calls us to be renewed, but it also strengthens us to go forth and labor in a mixed up world.

⇒ God wants to meet us *daily* for our own soul's nourishment, but He also wants to send us out to meet the daily needs of a crying world.

⇒ God wants our private attention and fellowship, but He also wants to send us out to give attention and godly fellowship to a lost world.

2 (17:15-16) **Powerlessness—Unbelief**: the tragedy of no power (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.17:16). The son's illness seems to have been both physical and spiritual. The description of the illness in *The Gospel of Mark* points toward what is known today as epilepsy and demon-possession (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:17-18; Lk.9:39). The demon-possession in particular seems to have heightened and aggravated the condition, perhaps causing some suicidal tendencies (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:22). Throughout the gospels, this seems to be one of the major works of evil spirits: to *heighten and aggravate* existing conditions. The great tragedy of the event was unbelief and having no power. These tragedies plague so many servants of God. But note: they plague us only because "we ask not" (Jas.4:2). We fail to go up to the high mountain of transfiguration and receive the renewing of God's presence. Our lack of power too often results in three things.

1. So many *desperate needs* going unmet.
2. So many frantic disappointments being experienced.
3. So many *embarassing situations* happening.

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

Thought 1. Note two things.

1) The father was seeking and interceding for his child.
2) Christ's heart was tender and compassionate toward the child. There had been only one thing lacking—someone with faith and power to stand in the gap. There simply was no one.

How many children are gripped by desperate needs both physical and spiritual? How many are trapped by sin? Where are the parents who are concerned enough to seek Jesus, not half-heartedly and haphazardly, but genuinely? Where are the parents who seek Him, persevering until He answers? As in the above case, Jesus is willing to meet the needs of our children, but where are the parents who seek Jesus with the fervency of the father? And where are the servants of God who can lead parents to trust Christ?

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:16) **Power, Lack of**: Why do men lack power? (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.9:18 for discussion.)

3 (17:17-18) **Powerlessness—Unbelief**: the rebuke of no power. Christ rebuked the lack of power. A person with no power saddens and brings sorrow to His heart. What can He do to stir faith and power? He does all He can: He warns, yet He offers hope.

1. He warns that His presence will not always be available (Gen.6:3. See note—Mt.12:14-16.)
2. He warns that His patience is limited (cp.Pr.29:1. See note—Mt.12:31-32.)
3. He assures that His power breaks the power of Satan. Note that it is the Word of Christ that breaks the devil's power. Satan cannot stand before God's Word. Christ has spoiled the principalities and powers under Satan's control (Col.2:15).

Thought 1. A *faithless* person...

- cannot receive the blessing which he *might have had.*
- cannot do the works which he *might have done.*

Note the tone and ache of Christ's heart and words. He aches for us to receive what we should have and to do the works which we should do. He longs for us to live an abundant life of power and fulfillment (Jn.10:10).

Thought 2. There is a critical point to remember: the longer Christ has to put up with our *faithless* and *powerless* behavior, the more He is displeased with us. We must learn and learn quickly. His presence will not always be with us, and His patience is limited.

Thought 3. Note the glorious message of the gospel proclaimed and illustrated in this event. When the faith and power of men fail, when all other hope and help fails, we can go to Christ and know that He will hear and help us. He will have compassion and use His power to meet our need—no matter how desperate.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(17:17) **Perverse** (diastrepho): to distort, to twist; to turn aside or away; to be torn in two; to be corrupted (cp. Acts 20:30; Ph.2:15).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim.6:5).

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them" (Pr.11:3).

"A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised" (Pr.12:8).

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit" (Pr.15:4).

"Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich" (Pr.28:6).

4 (17:19-20) **Unbelief—Powerlessness**: the clear reason for no power was unbelief. What is unbelief? Why does faith weaken and turn into unbelief? The disciples had been given and promised unusual power earlier, and they had ministered effectively (Mt.10:1; Lk.10:17). But now the power seemed to be gone, and they were unable to minister. "Why?" they asked.

Pointedly, Jesus answered, "Because of your *unbelief*." Unbelief is four things, or to put it in the form of a question, "What is unbelief?"

1. Unbelief is doubting Christ Himself, the object of one's faith. It is questioning the power of Christ. Is He really strong enough to do what is needed: to save, deliver, heal, and help; and to remove evil empires, entrenched wickedness, destructive greed, and the threat of wars?
2. Unbelief is doubting the power of the Lord *within* oneself. It is questioning if one is close enough to Christ for Him to hear and answer or to grant enough power to meet the need.
3. Unbelief is doubting one's own faith. It is questioning the strength of one's own dependence and confidence in Christ.
4. Unbelief is doubting if the thing needed is God's will. It is questioning if one should be seeking such a thing or if God is willing to do what is needed.

> **"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).**
>
> **"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mk.16:14).**
>
> **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).**
>
> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me" (Jn.16:8-9).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**
>
> **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).**

The answer to unbelief is hungering and thirsting after God so much that we spend a great deal of time in God's presence—so much time that even food is forgotten. We do without in order to meet God (see note—Mt.6:16-18).

> **"Faith cometh by hearing [prayer], and hearing by the Word of God" (Ro.10:17).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe" (Lk.22:67).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).**
>
> **"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:24-25).**
>
> **"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" (Jn.12:37).**
>
> **"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" (Is.53:1).**

Thought 1. When things are not going well and we are not successful in life or marriage or ministry, note two things.

1) It tends to lead everyone to blame others:
   - ⇒ spouse blames spouse
   - ⇒ workman blames fellow workman
   - ⇒ congregation blames minister
   - ⇒ minister blames congregation
2) The fault usually lies at our own feet (not always, of course, but usually), and the cause is our unbelief. We are not trusting and seeking God like we should, not diligently.

Thought 2. Something displeases God enormously: distrusting any power or gift given by Him. So many confuse personal strength and gifts with God's strength and gifts. To deny His power and gifts is not humility; it is distrust. His power and gifts are to be used to the utmost.

5 (17:20) **Faith—Power**: the great power of faith is promised. The Jews clearly understood what Jesus meant by "removing mountains." The phrase was a Jewish idiom or proverb meaning "to remove difficulties" (cp. Zech.4:7; 1 Cor.13:2). The greatest difficulties in human life can be removed by faith. Prayer and faith can do anything for God.

They can remove all kinds of mountains: fear, disappointment, depression, despair, sickness, temptation, guilt, weariness, loneliness, persecution, heartache. Such mountains loom ever so large as a barrier before man's path. Such mountains can really defeat life. How can they be overcome? By prayer and faith—praying and believing God even to the point of fasting (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.17:20).

Thought 1. Every believer has two strengths and two gifts to offer the world. He has both his own strength and gifts (talents) and God's strength and gifts. (Cp. Ro.12:6f; 1 Cor.12:4-11; Eph.4:11.)
1) God's strength and gifts are as high as the heavens above our strength and gifts.
2) Our call is to learn to use God's strength and gifts.

Thought 2. An *active* faith can remove mountains (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.11:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(17:20) **Faith—Power—Mustard Seed**: what does Christ mean by "faith as a grain of mustard seed"? The mustard seed was known for its small size, the smallest of all plants; yet it grew to be one of the largest bushes (see note—Mt.13:32). Picture a mustard seed lying in a person's hand. It is *real* and it is *small*. Just imagine the potential for *growth and use*. So it is with faith: faith is "as a grain of mustard seed." It is real and small, yet it has enormous power for growth, for use, and for ministry.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).
"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

6 (17:20-21) **Faith—Power**: the two ways to secure great faith and power.

1. The first way to secure great faith and power is to pray (see note, *Prayer*—Mt.7:7-11; cp. Eph.6:18).
2. The second way to secure great faith and power is to fast (see note, *Fasting*—Mt.6:16-18).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(17:20-21) **Faith**: see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.11:6; cp. Mk.11:23; Heb.10:38; Jn.2:23-24.

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(17:20-21) **Power**: cp. 2 Tim.1:7; Eph.3:20.

	E. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Resurrection (2nd Time): Delivered Up by God, 17:22-23 (Mk.9:30-32; Lk.9:43-45)
1 He foretold His betrayal	22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:
2 He foretold the guilty party	
3 He foretold His death	23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.
4 He foretold His resurrection	

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27

E. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Resurrection (2nd Time): Delivered Up by God, 17:22-23

(17:22-23) **Introduction**: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be overstressed. They are of paramount importance: a person's destiny is determined by his response to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. His death and resurrection are the pivotal points of human history, the hub of God's plan for eternity. History itself revolves around the death and resurrection of God's dear Son. God works all things out for good to the praise of His dear Son. Even the evil and devastation of men are turned around and worked out for the good of Christ and for those for whom He died and arose again.

All that the Scripture says about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ speaks to every generation of men. (See outline and notes—Mt.16:21-23; 20:17-19; Mk.8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34.)

1. He foretold His betrayal (v.22).
2. He foretold the guilty party (v.22).
3. He foretold His death (v.23).
4. He foretold His resurrection (v.23).

1 (17:22) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Christ foretold His betrayal. Note two facts.

1. The phrase "while they abode" (anastrephomenon) means went to and fro. The point is this: while Jesus and the disciples went all about Galilee, He was drilling into them the fact that He was to be killed and raised from the dead.

Jesus had been in the extreme northern country for several weeks (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 15:29; 16:13). At some point He returned to the country of Galilee, but quietly (Mk.9:30). Apparently He just kept moving about rather secretly so that He could indoctrinate His disciples to the fact of His impending death and resurrection (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 15:29; 16:21-28). Interestingly, this fact is referred to by the angels in announcing His resurrection: "Remember how he spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again" (Lk.24:6-7).

Jesus had to continue talking about His death and resurrection because it was so hard to understand. There were three primary reasons why the disciples had difficulty in grasping the fact.

a. The Messiah's death and resurrection were new experiences, new happenings. History was to be made. The talk of a literal death and resurrection was bound to be understood in symbolic and spiritual language (see note—Mt.18:1-2). (How like so many to spiritualize the two events—even though the events really took place and are so strongly proclaimed by the disciples.) (Cp. 1 Cor.15:3-8. See notes—Mk.9:32; 9:34.)

b. The Messiah's death and resurrection were thought to be impossible. How could God die? Most men proclaim that God cannot die. Of course, the disciples had not yet seen what death really is—basically separation from God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27). They had to learn that God was dealing with spiritual and eternal life (and death), not just with physical and temporal life (and death) on this earth.

c. The Messiah's death and resurrection were contrary to all their hopes and expectations. It was just different from all the disciples had ever heard or been taught. The Messiah was thought to be a Messiah of power and sovereign rule not a Messiah who had to suffer and die in order to save man. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)

2. The word "betrayed" is actually *delivered up* (paradidosthai) which means that His death was ordained. Christ was saying that He was about to be *delivered up* to death—it was ordained, that is, determined in the counsel and plan of God. Christ was delivered up to death by three persons.

a. God delivered Christ up to be betrayed.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor.9:15).

b. Christ delivered Himself up to be crucified.

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour....Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:2, 25).

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

c. Judas betrayed and delivered Christ up to be crucified (see notes—Mt.26:21-25; 27:3-5; Mk.14:10-11; Lk.22:4-6; Jn.13:18; 13:21-26).

"And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (Mt.26:21).

"And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them" (Mk.14:10).

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" (Jn.13:18).

2 (17:22) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Christ foretold the guilty party. Jesus had already named the men who would kill Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.16:21). The order of the betrayal would be *Judas*, who identified Him for the *elders*, *chief priests*, and *Scribes*, who in turn would deliver Him to the *Gentiles* or Romans for execution (Mt.20:19).

Peter, in preaching to the Jews right after Pentecost, accused the Jews: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Thought 1. Men killed Jesus—men who so desperately needed Him.

1) The men who plotted and caused His death were the Jews. They were His own people by race and by God's choice. They were even expecting the Messiah, yet they did not know Him (Jn.1:11). They did not want the kind of Messiah He was claiming to be. They wanted a Messiah of power and fame and wealth that would give Israel the glory of an international government or theocracy (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23).
2) The men who carried out His death were the Romans. They were the very ones for whom He had come to open the door of salvation. Salvation had been closed to them. Now in Him, they could be saved and live eternally. They should have been grateful and received Him with open arms, yet they too rejected His claims. They tried and executed Him—all for political purposes.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:16-19).

3 (17:23) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Christ foretold His death. As simply as possible, Jesus Christ was killed for two reasons.

1. The religionists delivered Him up to the Gentiles because He was a threat to them (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; cp. 12:1-8. These are important notes for understanding just why the religionists killed Jesus.) Three passages will show this clearly.

"Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn.10:31-33).

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowldge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22-23).

"...the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us" (1 Th.2:14-15).

2. God delivered Him up to die for the sins and the life of the world. Most of the passages in the New Testament dealing with the death of Christ follow (see *JESUS CHRIST*, Death—Master Subject Index, for additional information on the death of Christ).

"As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mt.12:40).

"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas...From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Mt.16:4, 21; cp. Lk.11:30; Lk.9:22).

"But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist" (Mt.17:12-13).

"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men" (Mt.17:22).

"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mt.20:17-19).

"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28; cp. Mk.10:32, 34).

"But last of all he [God] sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him" (Mt.21:37-39).

"After two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (Mt.26:2).

"The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born" (Mt.26:24).

"This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt.26:28).

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt.26:39).

"O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done" (Mt.26:42).

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" (Mt.26:53-54; cp. Mk.14:24, 36, 39).

"And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk.8:31).

"For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day" (Mk.9:31).

"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mk.10:33-34; cp. Mt.20:18, 19; Lk.18:31-33).

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day" (Lk.9:22).

"When the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk.9:51).

"I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Lk.12:50; cp. Lk.22:15).

"First must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation" (Lk.17:25).

"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer....He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you" (Lk.22:15, 19-20).

"This that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end" (Lk.22:37).

"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk.22:42).

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn.1:29).

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:14-17).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....I lay down my life for the sheep...I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again...And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him" (Jn.10:11, 15, 17-18, 28-31).

"Consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (Jn.11:50-52).

"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit...Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (Jn.12:24, 31-33).

"He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he....Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me" (Jn.13:18-19, 21; cp. Mt.26:21; Mk.14:18; Lk.22:21).

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:1-3).

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more" (Jn.14:19).

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:28-31).

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).

"Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (Jn.16:20).

"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (Jn.18:11).

"Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin" (Jn.19:11).

"And now, brethren, I wot [know] that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:17-21).

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30).

"The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23).

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Ro.5:6-11).

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we

have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Ro.6:3-5).

"Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once" (Ro.6:9-10).

"God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).

"He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:34-35).

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:37-39).

"To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:17).

"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2).

"Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor.5:7).

"Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died" (1 Cor.8:11).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).

"[We are] always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:10-11).

"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:19-21).

"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"[Christ] who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal.4:4-5).

"He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:6-7).

"Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middlewall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:16).

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph.2:18).

"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:25).

"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:6-8).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:14).

"Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight" (Col.1:20-22).

"[Christ] blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:14-15).

"Whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Th.1:10).

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:14).

"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1 Th.5:9-10).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" (1 Tim.1:15-16).

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).

"[God] Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:9-10).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:11-14).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).

"Hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:2-3).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).

"As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb.2:14-18).

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:7-9).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb.7:25-27).

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb.9:12-17).

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb.9:25-28).

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb.9:26).

"We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).

"This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb.10:12).

"By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb.10:14-20).

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).

"To Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb.12:24).

"The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb.13:11-12).

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.1:2).

"Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pt.1:18-21).

"Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Pt.4:1).

"The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).

"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 Jn.3:16).

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 Jn.4:10).

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father" (Rev.1:5-6).

"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth...Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:9-10, 12).

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev.13:8).

4 (17:23) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Christ foretold His resurrection. God raised Christ for several reasons (see outline and notes—Acts 2:29-31; Col.3:1-4).

1. He was raised to reign with God.
2. He was raised to deliver His soul from hell.
3. He was raised to deliver His flesh from corruption.
4. He was raised to do seven wonderful things for us (see note—Col.3:1-4 for discussion).

(See *JESUS CHRIST*, Resurrection—Master Subject Index, for additional information on the resurrection of Christ.)

Most of the passages in the New Testament dealing with the resurrection follow. One of the most precious and profitable studies a person can make is to place each passage under some subjects such as: Purpose, Results, Meaning, Importance, Power of, Effects, Object of, Predicted or Prophesied, Proof of, Necessity of, Sign of, Fact, etc.

"As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mt.12:40).

"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem...and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Mt.16:21; cp. Mt.17:23; Lk.9:22, 31; 24:7).

"[They] shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mt.20:19; cp. Mk.10:34).

"After I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee" (Mt.26:32; cp. Mk.14:28).

"And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (Mk.9:9-10).

"And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again" (Lk.18:33).

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Lk.24:46).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up...He spake of the temple of his body" (Jn.2:19, 21; cp.Mk.14:58).

"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father" (Jn.16:16).

"[The apostles] to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

"[Must] one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1:22).

"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance" (Acts 2:24-28).

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear....Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ....Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:32-33, 36, 38).

"And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:15).

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:10).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Act.5:30-32).

"Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:40-41).

"But God raised him from the dead: And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, now that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption" (Acts 13:30-37).

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ...He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:2-3, 31).

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness" (Acts.26:22-25).

"[Christ] declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

"...it shall be imputed, if we believe on him [righteousness] that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).

"If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:10).

"Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father. If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection...Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Ro.6:4-5, 9-10).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God" (Ro.8:34).

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (1 Cor.6:14).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures....And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor.15:20-23).

"[We are] always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:10-11).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

"Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God" (2 Cor.13:4).

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)" (Gal.1:1).

"[Power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection" (Ph.3:10).

"[He is] the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).

"[Ye are] buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead" (Col.2:12).

"And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (1 Th.1:10).

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:14).

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2 Tim.2:8).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands... but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:26-28).

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb.10:12).

"Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb.11:19).

"The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus" (Heb.13:20).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"By him do [we] believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory" (1 Pt.1:21).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

"Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:21-22).

"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead...I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev.1:5, 18).

	F. The Messiah Reveals Himself through Good Citizenship, 17:24-27 (cp. Mk.12:13-17)		**citizenship** a. He is the Son of a King, of God b. He is of another Kingdom, of heaven c. He is free of the earthly kingdom
1 Jesus was visited by tax collectors a. They questioned Peter instead of Jesus b. They asked if Jesus were a tax-dodger	24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?	earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?	**4 Jesus set the standard for citizenship: To keep others from stumbling**
2 Jesus demonstrated good citizenship: He paid taxes	25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him saying, What thinkest thou, Simon?	26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.	**5 Jesus demonstrated His citizenship & Messiahship: He paid the tax miraculously**
3 Jesus made a unique claim about His own	of whom do the kings of the	27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.	

DIVISION XI

THE MESSIAH'S DRAMATIC REVELATION: HIS MESSIAHSHIP HIS CHURCH, AND HIS CROSS, 16:13-17:27

F. The Messiah Reveals Himself through Good Citizenship, 17:24-27

(17:24-27) **Introduction**: Jesus had been carrying His disciples through intensive training for some time now. He had been zeroing in on His death and resurrection (see notes—Mt.16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22-23). In this passage, Jesus showed just how capable a teacher He really was. He was able to take the visit by a tax collector and continue to make the unique claims of Messiahship and at the same time teach the importance of good citizenship. He is God's Son, and every believer is responsible to be a good citizen.

1. Jesus was visited by tax collectors (v.24).
2. Jesus demonstrated good citizenship: He paid taxes (v.25).
3. Jesus made a unique claim about His own citizenship (v.25-26).
4. Jesus set the standard for citizenship: to keep others from stumbling (v.27).
5. Jesus demonstrated His citizenship and Messiahship: He paid the tax miraculously (v.27).

[1] (17:24) **Tax, Temple**: Jesus was visited by a tax collector. Perhaps Jesus was behind in His tax payments because He had been away for so long. The tax collectors approached Peter instead of Jesus because it was Jesus' habit to lodge in Peter's house when in Capernaum or perhaps because they feared Jesus.

The tax spoken of is the temple tax. The temple was an extremely expensive building to maintain just as any large building is. Time deteriorates furnishings, even stone and mortar, and all has to be replaced. In addition, there was the upkeep of the priests, their shelter, food, and clothing. There was the provision of the animals, incense, wine, flour, and oil used in the sacrifices which had to be offered every day—and the list could go on and on. Upkeep of the temple was so expensive that a nation-wide tax had to be imposed upon every male Jew over twenty years old. It was just a small tax (one half-shekel) for each man, amounting to about two days work; nevertheless, it had to be paid. It was collected annually by the tax collectors setting up their *tax collecting* booths in strategic locations throughout the country. (Cp. Exodus 30:13-16.)

[2] (17:25) **Citizenship—Taxes**: Jesus demonstrated good citizenship. He paid taxes. It was His practice to pay taxes, and Peter knew this. Therefore, Peter was able to answer, "Yes, the master pays taxes."

Note a point which really strikes out at those who say they do not attend church because the church has too many hypocrites in it. In Christ's day, the temple was *a den of thieves,* and much of its worship was hypocritical and corrupt; yet Christ supported it (Mt.21:13; Mk.11:17). Why? There are at least three reasons.

1. Despite its corruptions, the temple was still the house of God and the house of prayer.
2. Christ benefited from the temple. When He entered the temple, His spirit was right with God, so He was able to worship and minister within its walls despite the hypocrisy of so many and the corruption of so much.
3. The temple was where God's people were thought and expected to be. The world expected God's people to be in the temple and not somewhere else when it was time for worship. Christ could be nowhere else "lest He should offend them" (v.27). (See outlines and notes—Mt.22:15-22; Mk.12:13-17; Lk.20:19-26 for more discussion.)

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).

[3] (17:25-26) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: Jesus made a unique claim by sharing an illustration. The illustration is brief and yet forceful. Jesus asked Peter a simple question: "From whom do kings collect their taxes? from their own children or from the citizens?" The answer is obvious: "He collects taxes from the citizens, not from his own children." And then Jesus made the phenomenal claim: "Then the children are free."

The tax was the temple tax. The temple was God's, and Jesus was the Son of God. As the Son of God, He was free from the tax. He did not owe the tax.

Christ was not trying to keep from paying taxes. His point was to make a unique claim, a threefold claim.

1. He was the Son of a King, the Son of God Himself. (See notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:39; note—3:16-18; DEEPER STUDY # 1—5:25; notes 6:38-40, 44, 57; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:32; notes—9:35; 10:32-33, 36-38; 1 Jn.5:5, 9-12.)
2. He was of another kingdom—the Kingdom of Heaven (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31; notes—6:33; 6:38; 6:41-51; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:23; 16:28).
3. He was free of the earthly kingdom. He had no obligation to pay taxes. If He paid them, it was because He willingly and voluntarily paid them.

There is more than meets the eye to the fact that Christ is free of the earthly kingdom. He is free of it because He is of God. His citizenship is of heaven; therefore, He has no obligation to the earth. The world and man neither merit nor deserve any attention from God. Man has forfeited his right to God's attention by his sin—by his degradation, depravity, evil, rebellion, and treason—all manifesting themselves in daily acts ranging from thoughts of selfishness to the slaughter of human life. Whatever God does for man and the world is of grace and mercy; it is because He loves man and the world. It is not because He is obligated or in bondage to serve man by meeting his need.

The above truth, however, is not true of the believer. When the believer trusts Christ as his Savior, he receives the divine nature of God. He becomes a new man and a new citizen of heaven; however, he is still of the earth. He is a new creature born from heaven above, but he is still flesh—still of the earth as well (2 Pt.1:1; see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Eph.4:24; note—Ph.3:20). Therefore, he has an obligation not only to be a good citizen of heaven but also of the earth. God expects him to live for heaven by living a pure life and to live for the earth by sharing the good news of salvation with the rest of the world.

Thought 1. The three claims made by Christ are eye catching (glance at the outline points). There is a sense in which the same claims become the claims of the believer.

1) Even as Christ is the Son of a King, the Son of God, so the believer is adopted as a child of the King (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.4:5-6).
2) Even as Christ is of another kingdom and of another world—of heaven itself—so the believer is made a citizen of heaven (Ph.3:20; 1 Pt.1:4; cp. Lk.22:30).
3) Even as Christ is free of the earthly kingdom, so the believer is made free of the earthly kingdom. But remember: he is free only in a very special sense (Ro.6:18, 22; 8:2; Gal.5:1). He is free of the sin, bondage and death of this world, not free of the responsibility for this world. Even after being saved and made a citizen of heaven, he is still a citizen of this earth. He is a citizen of both earth and heaven, and as such he is obligated to care for the earth (cp. Mt.22:15-22; Mk.12:13-18; Lk.20:19-26. See outline and notes—Ro.13:1-7; 1 Tim.2:1-4; Tit.3:1-2; 1 Pt.2:13-17. Cp. 1 Cor.9:19; 1 Pt.2:16.)

> **"Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Mt.22:21).**
>
> **"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).**
>
> **"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Tit.3:1).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (1 Pt.2:13-14).**

4 (17:27) **Citizenship**: Jesus set the standard for citizenship—to keep others from stumbling. Note the word offend (skandalizo, verb; or skandalon, noun). When used as a verb the word *offend* means to put a snare or stumbling block in someone's way; to cause someone to trip or fall. When used as a noun the word *offend* means something that causes someone to stumble, trip, fall, or slip back. It is anything that arouses prejudice within others; anything that is a roadblock or a hindrance to others; anything that causes others to fall by the wayside. It is important to note that the stumbling block is sometimes good, and those who stumble are the ones in the wrong. For example, Christ is said to be a "rock of offense" (Ro.9:33) and His cross is said to "offend some"; that is, it is a stumbling block to some (Gal.5:11).

Christ was saying that He must not set a bad example by not paying His taxes. He was not obligated to pay them, but if He refused, then He would be encouraging poor citizenship. Therefore, He would forego His freedom in order to keep from causing others to stumble. He must not offend others, cause them to slip, stumble, or fall—under any circumstances.

Note two things.

1. Christ *never did* anything that would cause others to minimize or think less of their duty toward others (whether individuals, groups, or government). He did the very opposite. He always encouraged others to fulfill their duty so long as the duty was a legitimate act.
2. Christ never did anything that would cause others to stumble. Even when He was allowed or had the right to do something, He refused to do it if it would offend or hurt someone.

Thought 1. Many things may be lawful for us, but they may offend others. In such cases, abstinence is our Lord's command.

> **"[Let] no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat [act], now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of" (Ro.14:13-16).**

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me" (Ro.15:1-3).

5 (17:27) **Citizenship**: Jesus demonstrated His citizenship and Messiahship. He paid the tax miraculously. This miracle demonstrated beyond question the three claims Christ had just made. His knowing (omniscience) that a coin was in the mouth of a fish showed Peter that He...

- was of royalty, the Son of God.
- was of another kingdom that was superior to this earth and its seas.
- was free of the earth and its restrictions and obligations. How could Christ better demonstrate His Messiahship and Deity?

Why would Jesus Christ pay taxes if He were really of heaven? Why would He who did not belong to this earth subject Himself to civil and religious law?

There seem to be several reasons.

1. Christ was made (born) under the law (Gal.4:4). He was exactly who Peter had confessed Him to be: "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16). Yet, He had deliberately subjected His glory and humbled Himself to become a man. He was the God-Man. As God, He was not obligated to the earth; but as Man, He was willingly subjecting Himself to the laws of men. The disciples needed to know this. What He and the Father were doing for man was not out of obligation but out of love and care.
2. Christ wished to foreshadow the atonement that He was soon to make for man. The temple tax was called "an atonement for the soul" (Ex.30:15. Cp. Ex.30:13-16.) Atonement means *a covering* for a person's sins, a covering that makes reconciliation between man and God possible. The tax was paid as an atonement for a person's sin. It was to be paid in an act of faith, believing that one's sins would be covered and forgiven and that one would be reconciled and accepted by God anew and afresh. It was intended by God to be a renewed dedication of life.

Christ was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Ro.8:3), and He became sin for us (2 Cor.5:21). But Christ was not sinful. He had no sins for which to atone. Therefore, He had to declare to the disciples that He was free of the tax; for He was truly the Son of God, and He was truly free of sin. His payment of the tax was an entirely willing and voluntary act. As such, it foreshadowed the *voluntary atonement* He was to bear for man.

3. Christ wished to reinforce that He was the Son of God. He could have paid the taxes without comment, but by declaring that He was free of the tax because He was God's Son, He reinforced who He was to the disciples.
4. Christ wished to set an example for man. Every person is to "fulfill all righteousness" (Mt.3:15). Since Christ proved to be a good citizen, so must all who follow Him.
5. Christ held both the temple and government in high regard (see outline and notes—Ro.13:1-7). While on earth He had benefited from the temple: He had worshipped and ministered there, and He had reaped benefits from the temple. Therefore, He was now setting an example of how man is to return a portion of his income to help in the temple's (church's) support.
6. Christ did not wish to offend or to be a stumbling block to anyone. If He refused to pay the taxes, He would offend some. They would feel He was not carrying His load, and He would be a stumbling block to others. He would be setting an example of rebellion and lawlessness. If He refused to support the government and temple and everyone followed His example, then all governments and temples would collapse and cease to exist. Therefore, Christ demonstrated good citizenship for a very solid reason.

Thought 1. What is it that makes us pay attention to Christ and do what He taught? The fact that He proved His Messiahship and that He is truly the Son of the living God. It is because of who He is that we are driven to trust Him and to be the very best citizens we can.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal.5:14).

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

	CHAPTER 18 XII. THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35 A. The Conditions for Greatness, 18:1-4 (Mk.9:33-37;Lk.9:46-48)	Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.	is in the Kingdom b. There are degrees of greatness c. Jesus gave a living demonstration: A child **2 Condition 1: Conversion** a. How: By turning & becoming as a child b. Why: Non-conversion brings rejection **3 Condition 2: Humility** a. How: Live as a child b. Result: Will be the greatest in heaven
1 Two assumptions a. A person is great if he	At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying,		

DIVISION XII

THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35

A. The Conditions for Greatness, 18:1-4

(18:1-4) **Introduction—Greatness**: the disciples argued over who should hold the highest positions in the kingdom of God. This conflict arose on several occasions (see outlines and notes—Mt.20:20-28; Mk.9:33-37; Lk.22:24-30). Their desire was for recognition and honor in an earthly kingdom. Jesus had to reeducate their thinking. The disciples' struggle for position and power should not surprise us, for all men have the same needs, the needs for...

- some recognition
- some position
- some prestige
- some money
- some authority
- some esteem
- some challenge
- some physical sastisfaction

There is nothing wrong with these needs. They are human and legitimate needs and they must be met. But men allow their hearts to be overtaken with *selfishness* and begin to want more and more to the point of lusting and consuming and hoarding. They become prideful, covetous, worldly, ambitious, envious, and hurtful even to the point of destroying and killing.

What Christ sets out to do is to change the lives of men and reeducate men in their concept of greatness.

1. Two assumptions (v.1-2).
2. Condition 1: conversion (v.3).
3. Condition 2: humility (v.4).

1 (18:1-2) **Children—Jesus Christ, Nature—Greatness**: note the two assumptions in the question of the disciples. First, a person is great if he is in the Kingdom of Heaven. Second, there are degrees of greatness. Christ did not refute or deny these assumptions. On the contrary, He taught both: a person is great if he is in the Kingdom of Heaven. Everything and everyone in heaven is great, even perfected. As Christ says, a person can be *the greatest* in the Kingdom of Heaven (v.4. See scripture and notes—Mt.13:8, 23; 25:20-30; Lk.12:41-48; 16:10-12; 19:15-23). The question is not "who shall be the greatest" but how does one become *great* in God's kingdom? How does one prove that he is trustworthy and responsible before God? How does one show God that he can be trusted and depended upon and should be rewarded with responsibility in heaven (see notes—Mt.25:20; Lk.19:15; 22:28-29)?

Note several things about the question asked by the disciples.

1. Note what they meant. By "the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," they did not mean the greatest in quality or character but in name and position. They were thinking in terms of power, fame, wealth, position, and name (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23 for a picture of their concept of the Messiah).
2. Note the reasons why they asked the question.
   a. They sensed that Christ was about to set up His kingdom, that He was about to assume His throne. They were looking forward to becoming chiefs of state in His kingdom.
   b. They had seen three of them honored in special ways (Peter, James, and John—Mt.17:1-13), and one of them in particular had been distinguished (Peter, Mt.16:17-19). Who were the leaders to be in the Lord's kingdom? They were apparently gripped with jealousy, envy, ambition, and some rivalry.
   c. They had just been arguing among themselves about who the greatest was going to be. Mark says that the argument had begun immediately after Christ began to intensify His teaching on His death and resurrection (Mk.9:33-34; cp. 9:30-37). They misinterpreted what He was saying, spiritualizing it instead of taking His Word at face value (see note—Mt.17:22). Apparently they connected the thought of *rising from the dead* with the setting up of His kingdom and began to argue over the top positions of leadership.
3. Note: they did not yet understand what the Kingdom of Heaven is. They still saw an earthly, temporal kingdom and not a spiritual, eternal kingdom. It is interesting what Christ said in v.3. He was speaking to the disciples, and He *actually said* that they would not enter the kingdom of heaven unless they became as little children.

Christ gave a living demonstration of greatness. He "*called* a little child unto him." The child was not an infant, for he was personally *called* to come to Christ. Note how the child immediately demonstrated several traits of children. He *trusted* Christ enough to respond (trustfulness) and did what Christ requested (submission, humility, and obedience).

This says something about the nature and character of Christ as well. He demonstrated enough warmth and openness for the child to feel free to respond and to enter a group of adults who were sitting together in a formal session.

Thought 1. The thoughts of the average person focus upon appearance, personal image, self-esteem, possessions, privileges, position, and glory, and he spends much time in thinking of these things. He imagines and fancies himself to be the center of attention, the *hero* of the game or play, the main attraction, the one considered most honorable and esteemed. It is such thoughts and ambitions that Christ wants to change. Our thoughts and minds are to be centered on Christ and others and upon things that are true, not on self (Ro.12:2; 2 Cor.10:5; Ph.4:8).

Thought 2. How often we think in terms of *earthly and fleshly greatness*. If we are asked who are the *greatest* people in a city or country, we answer by naming the famous, the prestigious, the wealthy, the powerful, and the educated. We think little, if any, of those who serve and minister.

2 (18:3) **Greatness—Conversion**: the first condition for greatness is conversion. The word "conversion" (straphete) means to turn, to turn around; to be converted; to turn from one thing to something else (1 Th.1:9, "how ye turned to God from idols"). (Cp. repentance for the same idea.)

The meaning here is that the disciples must *turn*; they must turn completely around. Christ warned them: "Unless ye turn." Turn from what? Their sins were many, sins that are so common to men as they walk in selfishness day by day.

Note that they were possessed by a selfish desire for...

- position
- power
- prestige
- fame
- wealth
- fleshly stimulation

Note that they were possessed by a spirit of...

- pride
- covetousness
- ambition
- jealousy
- worldliness
- envy
- rivalry

Conversion is one of the great subjects of the Bible. The reason is made clear by Christ: "Except ye be converted...ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (v.3). Whether or not a person is converted determines his eternal destiny.

1. How is a person converted? By turning and becoming as a little child. What does it mean "to become as a little child"? When Christ *called* the child to Him, the child demonstrated exactly what Christ meant.
   a. The child *trusted Christ*. The child responded to the call of Christ. He sensed the openness, warmth, tenderness, care, and love of Christ; so he felt free to respond and to trust Christ's call.
   b. The child *surrendered* himself to Christ. He was willing to give up what he was doing and go to Christ, willing to surrender whatever it was that was occupying his thoughts and behavior.
   c. The child was *obedient* to Christ. He obeyed and did exactly what Christ requested, and it was probably difficult to do so. There were at least thirteen adult men standing or sitting there, and the child was being asked to walk into the midst of these men. Note that he obeyed despite the difficulty and obeyed simply because Christ asked him.
   d. The child was *humble* before Christ. All the above traits show humility. However, there is something often overlooked and abused by the adult world. Little children do not push themselves forward. They are not interested in prominence, fame, power, wealth, or position. They do not want to be placed in the midst of a group of adults, for they prefer to be in the background, away from staring, gawking eyes. Such embarrasses them and makes them feel self-conscious. Therefore, they prefer to be left in their obscure world. They are by nature humble, knowing little if anything of the competitive world that surrounds them; that is, they know little of it until they are brought into it by adults.
2. Why is a person to be converted? Because non-conversion brings rejection and loss of greatness. Note that the warning is severe: "Except ye be converted...ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." And Christ is speaking to the disciples. "Unless they are converted and become as little children, they shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

If the disciples were warned, how much more are we and everyone else warned! The absolute necessity of conversion is hereby stressed.

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas.5:19-20).

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps.19:7).

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Ps.51:12-13).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).

Thought 1. Note that the very traits possessed by a child are the essentials for conversion or salvation: trust, surrender, obedience, and humility.

Thought 2. What Christ is after is the total conversion of a person, a conversion that is complete and thorough: a conversion of heart, life, and thoughts. Our thoughts make us what we are. And, oh, how they are centered on self, making ourselves the center of attention.

"Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps.131:1-2).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).

3 (18:4) **Humility**: the second condition for greatness is humility.

1. How does a person become humble? By living as a child. The child had humbled himself to come to Christ. Christ said so.
   a. The child had given up what he was doing. Whatever it was that was occupying his thought and time, he walked away from it. He humbled himself in order to come to Christ.
   b. The child had obeyed Christ. He went to Christ. Obedience always demands humility, a humbling of oneself (thoughts, energy, time, effort) in order to do whatever another asks.
   c. The child overcame feelings he had in order to respond to Christ. Because of the twelve men surrounding Christ, there was bound to be some hesitation, dread, apprehension, or fear; yet he humbled himself and went to Christ despite all. Humility has always been one of the most *insignificant* traits among men, yet it determines whether a man enters heaven or not. It is of critical importance.
2. The result of humility is greatness. The greatest persons in the Kingdom of Heaven will be the persons who have been converted and walked the humblest among men. 1 Cor.13 says exactly what Christ is demonstrating.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things...And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (1 Cor.13:4-7, 13).

Thought 1. Men fear humility. They feel that *humility* is a sign of weakness and cowardice. They fear humility will make them the object of contempt and abuse. They fear humility may cause them to be passed over, but the very opposite is true. Humility leads a person to Christ and to conversion. It leads a person to realize his full potential. It causes a person to evaluate himself and to work at improving himself. It leads a person to become all that he can and should be. It also leads to better and more healthy relationships and to a stronger and more productive community and world.

When men consider others (humble themselves), they win friends and influence people. They build and strengthen everyone and everything involved.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

	B. The Warning against Offending a Child, 18:5-10 (Mk.9:42-48)	8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to cast into everlasting fire.	c. The way to handle the sin of being a stumblingblock 1) Cut off the hand that sins 2) Cut off the foot that sins 3) Pluck out the eye that sins
1 The child represents Christ	5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.	9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.	d. The escaping of the punishment is worth any price 1) It will be everlasting fire[DS1] 2) It will be hell fire
2 Offense 1: Leading a child astray a. A child who believes b. The worst conceivable sin	6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.	10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.	**4 Offense 3: Despising a child** a. A caution: Take heed b. The reason: Children have direct access to God[DS2]
3 Offense 2: Being a stumbling block a. The certainty of sin in a sinful world b. The warning to the sinner	7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!		

DIVISION XII

THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35

B. The Warning against Offending a Child, 18:5-10

(18:5-10) **Introduction—Christians—Responsibility**: Christ used *the child* (cp. Mt.18:1-4) as an object lesson to teach that believers have an awesome responsibility for watching over one another. The Jews used the word *child* in two ways. It referred either to a small child or to a disciple of some teacher, a beginner in the faith. In this passage, Jesus used the word *child* to refer to three persons (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.9:42).

1. It means a small child.
2. It means a beginner in the faith, someone who has just been converted and become a newborn child of God. This person is a new Christian; therefore, he knows little about the Lord and about how he is to live. Hence he is very impressionable, and he can be easily misled or confused.
3. It means any believer who has a childlike spirit and character. This childlike spirit is the very spirit about which Christ has just spoken (Mt.18:3-4). It is the spirit He desires and expects in every follower of His.

Christ cares deeply for children, for all who have the childlike spirit and character. He calls those who follow Him "little ones" (18:6; 10:42). The depth of His care is clearly seen in this passage, a passage that lays a terrible responsibility upon all men—a responsibility that is unmistakably clear and so desperately needed. Christ gives three terrible warnings against offending a child, and He spells out the three terrible offenses against a child, "little ones who believe in" Him (v.6).

1. The child represents Christ (v.5).
2. Offense 1: leading a child astray (v.6).
3. Offense 2: being a stumbling block (v.7-9).
4. Offense 3: despising a child (v.10).

1 (18:5) **Children**: the child represented Christ. The word for "shall receive" (dechetai) means to receive a child in every way possible.

⇒ It means to receive the child as a *person*: with tenderness, warmth, care, affection and love—no matter how low or unimportant or poor. Christ is contrasting *the child* with *the greatest person*, the person over whom the disciples had just been arguing (see notes—Mt.18:1-4; 18:1-2).

⇒ It means to receive the child when he is in need *physically* or *materially*: to feed, cloth, shelter, visit, and help him (Mt.25:35f; Jas.1:27).

⇒ It means to receive the child *spiritually*: to help him grow, build him up, encourage, and motivate him to follow Christ and to share his faith.

Note two reasons why we are to receive the child.

1. The child represents Christ. To receive a child is to receive Christ. Whatever is done for the child is done for Christ.
2. Christ cared for each child, every single one. He said, "one such little child"; that is, that single child is important to Christ. Christ does not want that child...
   - left out, feeling like a non-person, uncared for and unloved.
   - left in need physically or materially, having to scrap and scrounge around, surviving all alone.
   - left alone, not knowing how to follow Christ and how to grow spiritually.

Christ clearly said: to receive and help "one such child" is to receive and help Him (cp. Mt.25:35f).

Thought 1. Welcoming and being receptive and open to people and their needs are of utmost importance to Christ (see outline and notes—Mt.10:40-42).

Thought 2. There is an unbelievable lesson here, a lesson that is so often unheard of among men: to minister to people is much more important than "being the greatest" in an earthly kingdom (see notes—Mt.18:1-4; 18:1-2). The point is simply this: *to receive another person is to receive Christ*, and receiving Christ is much more important than *being the greatest*.

2 (18:6) **Sin, Leading Others**: the first warning is against leading a child astray. Leading a child, a follower of Christ, astray is the worst conceivable sin. There is nothing worse than leading another person into sin. In fact, it would be better to hang a millstone about one's neck and cast oneself into the depths of the sea than to lead another person astray. This sounds severe, very severe. And it is. But note: Christ meant what He said and said what He meant. How do we know this? From three facts.

1. The "millstone" (mulos) spoken of by Christ was the huge millstone, the one that the oxen or donkey pulled around to grind the grain. It was not the small hand millstone used by the women to grind a little grain at a time. The very fact that Christ chose the huge millstone to illustrate His point shows just how great this sin is. The person would be held at the bottom of the sea by the most awful and terrible weight. The sin of leading a child astray is the worst imaginable sin; therefore, its condemnation shall be the worst punishment imaginable.
2. Drowning was a form of criminal punishment used by the Romans but never by the Jews. The Jews saw drowning as a symbol of *utter destruction and annihilation*. They feared it. Even the Romans reserved it only for the worst criminals.
3. Christ *added to the fear* of His audience. He painted the picture of a stone around the offender's neck so that the body could never rise to the top and be recovered for proper burial. And then He added even more to the fear. He pictured the huge millstone, not the small one. Why? Why did He strike fear into the hearts of His hearers? The answer is clear: the sin of leading another person astray is terrible, and the offender must know the fate that is awaiting him.

There are several ways we cause others to sin.

⇒ By leading them into sin and teaching them to sin: "Oh, come on, no one will know. It's not going to hurt you."

⇒ By example; by the things we do. Example is not a direct proposition, so we are not necessarily aware that *the child* sees or is observing us. Nevertheless, he sees and learns from what we do: "If it's all right for him, then it is bound to be all right for me." "If he can do it and still work and play and get by as well as he does, then I can too."

⇒ By overlooking or passing over wrong; by giving soft names to it; by considering some sins to be merely *white sins*: "Oh, that's all right. There's not that much to it. It isn't going to hurt anyone. Don't pay any attention to it. Just forget it."

⇒ By ridiculing and poking fun at, or joking and sneering at a person's attempt to do right: "Oh, don't be a fuddy-duddy. You're acting like a fanatic. You and your religion."

⇒ By looking, touching, and tasting some things that are socially acceptable but sinful to God. They are harmful and habit forming and physically stimulating when they should not be: "Wow, look at that." "Taste that." "Man! What a stir!"

⇒ By persecuting and threatening *a child* or a believer. The threat can range all the way from loss of promotion, job, friendship, or acceptance, to abuse, imprisonment, and death.

Thought 1. A genuine believer, no matter how young or immature as a Christian, has "obtained like precious faith with us." Standing before God, a believer is on equal footing with all other believers. Of course, this does not mean they are to be given positions of leadership while they are young believers (1 Tim.3:6, 10). It simply means that they are to be focused upon and taught and developed in Christ, not ignored and overlooked because they cannot yet contribute much to the work of God's kingdom.

Thought 2. There are some things that seem innocent enough, yet they can lead others astray (1 Cor.8:10-11). A mature believer is not to abuse the young believer by his liberty (see outline and notes—Ro.14:1-23).

3 (18:7-9) **Stumbling Block—World, Sinful**: the second warning is against being a stumbling block. Note the outline points of the Scripture.

1. There is the certainty of sin in a sinful world. This is a sinful world, full of evil behavior. No one can walk out into the world without facing temptation after temptation and pull after pull to look, touch, and taste—to experience the *good life* of physical gratification and earthly comfort and personal fulfillment. We are tempted, seduced, and influenced by it at every turn. There is no escape (cp. Ro.3:9-18).

"The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn.5:19).
"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

2. There is the warning to the sinner. Every man is personally responsible for his sin. The fact of a sinful world does not lessen a man's personal responsibility. He cannot blame the world, society, or others; for man...

- has free will.
- has the knowledge of much good.
- has the pull to do good (at least initially).
- usually has examples of goodness.
- can choose to do good.
- can work to overcome and strengthen his weakness.

Most of all, man has God who provides a way to escape temptation (1 Cor.10:13). The sinner is personally responsible. Every sin becomes a stumbling block to others! The man who sins becomes the stumbling block over which others can fall!

3. There is the way to handle the sin of being a stumbling block. Again, the severity of the language shows the severity of the sin. There is no greater sin than being a stumbling block to one of God's dear children.

a. Christ says "cut off the hand that sins": force the hand away, pull it back, push it aside. Let the hand that sins have no part of you. Deny the hand's presence, its existence.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**

b. Christ says "cut off the foot that sins": Remove it, take it away from the sin. Make the foot of no use and the body will be immobilized for you. Remove the foot and your body cannot go to the sin; take the foot far enough away that you will have time to think of the consequences. Deny the foot's presence, its existence.

> **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" (Eph.5:15).**
> **"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).**
> **"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).**

c. Christ says "pluck out the eye": Turn away from the sight; leave it; don't look. In fact, make sure you cannot look upon sin. Deny the eye's presence, its existence.

> **"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:28).**
> **"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).**
> **"He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow" (Pr.10:10).**
> **"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccl.1:8).**
> **"Neither is his eye satisfied with riches" (Eccl.4:8).**

Note that it is the *hand that touches* the sin, the *foot that takes* one to the sin or to the place of sin, and the *eye that looks* upon the sin and leads to the desire and lust for the sin. The way to escape is to deny self (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; see outline—Ro.6:11-13) and to draw nigh to God (see outline—Jas.4:7-10).

4. There is the escaping of the punishment, which is worth any price. The most horrible death imaginable is death by fire. Just imagine burning and burning in everlasting fire. There is no more terrible punishment than that described by Christ. How horrible eternity apart from God must be. The severity of hell again stresses the severity of the sin in God's eyes.

> **"Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones" (Lk.17:1-2).**
> **"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).**
> **"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).**
> **"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).**
> **"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (1 Cor.10:32).**
> **"Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor.6:3).**
> **"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (1 Jn.2:10).**

Thought 1. The world is full of people who are stumbling blocks, people who are...

- bad examples
- tempters
- false guides
- seducers
- deceivers
- persecutors

Thought 2. Note several logical facts.

1) *A righteous God* knows unmistakably who is a stumbling block to the *little child.*
2) *A righteous God* knows exactly at whose feet to lay the guilt for causing a *little child* to stumble.
3) *A righteous God* knows precisely who ruins the precious soul of a child, preventing the child from being saved.
4) *A righteous God* will reckon with the man who causes a *little child* to stumble—severely and eternally. He is righteous; therefore, He has to deal severely, matching the punishment to the evil.

Thought 3. Note a critical fact: the hand, the foot, and the eye are the sinner's own hand, foot, and eye. He is sinning as well as causing another to sin. He is damaging and destroying his own life as well as the life of a child. He is dooming himself to hell as well as the child.

Thought 4. This is strong language, very descriptive and severe in its point. But honesty and thought are called for in seeing the point of Christ. What on earth is more horrible than leading a child astray and being a stumbling block to his salvation, dooming him to what Christ calls "hell fire" and "everlasting fire." If God really loves the *little child* as Christ says, and if *hell fire* is real, then strong and severe language is needed to awaken the world to the truth.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:8) **Hell Fire—Everlasting Fire** (to pur to aionion): this is the first time the words *everlasting fire* are used. The words point to an awful fate, a terrible and horrible eternity. Everlasting means for the duration, on and on without end. The fact that the unforgiven sinner is to suffer so great a punishment should cause all sinners to cease being stumbling blocks. It should stir them to become stepping stones to God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Lk.16:23; DEEPER STUDY # 4—16:24).

"Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Mt.3:12).

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:42).

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire" (Mt.18:8).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Is.33:14).

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh" (Is.66:24).

4 (18:10) **Children, Sins Against—Despite**: the third warning is against despising a child. There are several ways that a child or a believer is despised.

1. By considering the child unimportant. He is not considered as competent as others; therefore, he is neglected, ignored, or pushed aside. As a result, his growth and potential for life and service are untapped, or stiffled and stunted.
2. By doing unbecoming things in the child's presence; by disregarding the child's presence and going ahead with one's *off-color* language and jokes, *little white lies*, and socially acceptable but sinful habits.
3. By twisting the child's mind or body into evil behavior and sin. This can range all the way from sinful ambition and self-seeking to child abuse through sexual deviation and murder.

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13:41).

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Ro.2:4).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good" (2 Tim.3:1-3).

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:28-29).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government [discipline]. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities [authorities]" (2 Pt.2:9-10).

Thought 1. Children have a most favored position before God. The fact that their guardian angels "*do always behold*" God's face shows this. There could be no greater privilege than to be before God always "beholding His face." Children are very, very precious to God. For this reason alone, we should do all we can to rid ourselves and the world of evil.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(18:10) **Angels**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.1:4-14. We must always remember that Christ came from (ekfp, out of) the spiritual world, out of the dimension of heaven, to reveal heaven to us. He taught the reality of angels, that is, heavenly messengers. Here He teaches that children have "guardian angels" who have direct access to God. This fact is a warning to the offender: every sin and stumbling block placed before His children (believer, v.6) is brought before Him, so no offense will go unpunished. It is also an encouragement to every child of His: the child will be vindicated and can depend upon God Himself to vindicate Him.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb.1:14).

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance....Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Lk.15:7, 10).

"The angel of the lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Ps.34:7).

"For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps.91:11).

	C. The Parable of the Lost Sheep: The Supreme Example of Caring, 18:11-14 (Lk.15:1-7)	doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? 13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.	c. The sheep was sought: In the mountains*DS1* **3 Jesus may or may not find the lost one** **4 Jesus forgives & rejoices over the recovered one** **5 God wills that not a single one should perish**
1 Jesus came to save the lost **2 Jesus seeks every single one that is lost** a. The sheep went astray b. The sheep was sought: By the shepherd	11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. 12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray,		

DIVISION XII

THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35

C. The Parable of the Lost Sheep: The Supreme Example of Caring, 18:11-14 (Luke 15:1-7)

(18:11-14) **Introduction**: this is one of the most famous parables shared by Jesus—the parable of "The Lost Sheep" or the parable of "The Seeking Shepherd." It holds a great message for both the believer and the unbeliever, and Jesus applies it to both. Two things show this.

1. The words "these little ones" refer to genuine Christian believers, and the word "perish" refers to the lost (see note—Mt.18:5-10).
2. On this particular occasion, Jesus was speaking to His disciples (Mt.18:1). In Luke Jesus shared the same parable with a different audience and directed it more toward the lost.

Some believers are weak, never having grown in the Lord; others cool off and wander away; still others backslide into sin and shame. Some are stubborn toward the Lord, and some become self-centered because of hurt and neglect. Others allow the hurt and neglect to develop into bitterness and hostility against a person, and go out and sin in anger. There are innumerable reasons for sinning, but believers do sin, and some sin rather seriously.

The one who strays and the one who is lost are always with us. The thing to remember is this...

> **"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Mt.18:11).**
> **"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Mt.18:14).**

1. Jesus came to save the lost (v.11).
2. Jesus seeks every single one that is lost (v.12).
3. Jesus may or may not find the lost one (v.13).
4. Jesus forgives and rejoices over the recovered one (v.13).
5. God wills that not a single one should perish (v.14).

1 (18:11) **Jesus Christ, Savior—Man, Lost**: Jesus came to save the lost. This is the Messiah's great statement of purpose; this is why He came to earth. He came to save the lost. There is a world of meaning in this great statement.

1. It means that Christ willingly and deliberately *left* the glory of heaven and His equality with God and "emptied Himself" of that glory and equality (see notes—Ph.2:6; 2:7).
2. It means that both the world as a whole and man as an individual have gone astray. Each person has strayed away from God, is lost, and is wandering about in a wilderness of sin; and each person is doomed to be destroyed by that wilderness unless he is reached and saved by Christ. Everyone needs to be saved (Ro.3:10-18, 23; 10:13; Jn.3:16; Acts 10:43; 1 Jn.5:1).
3. It means that *God lost man*. God lost man's worship and service and life. Not only has man *gone astray*, not only is man *not seeking* after God and gone out of the way—but he has become unprofitable, *lost to God* (Ro.3:11-12). While man remains lost *in the wilderness*, God has no hope of fellowship with man. Man's worship, service, and life are lost to God as long as man remains lost. The words "that which was lost" should be noted. They are in the Greek neuter participle. This means that the person lost is not only man (masculine) but woman (feminine) as well. "That [neuter] which was lost" and sought after is both man and woman. The point is to show the span of Jesus' love: He loves all who are lost, both man and woman. No one is outside the scope of His love and seeking. He loves and seeks after all.

> **Thought 1**. Note a striking truth: not only is man lost, but God has lost man and man has lost God. Both lose out and suffer when man chooses to wander out into the wilderness of the world and sin. Man has so much to gain from following God (Jn.5:24; Gal.5:22-23), and God has so much to gain by man's choosing to follow God (worship and service eternally).

2 (18:12) **Jesus Christ, Seeking—Shepherd**: Jesus seeks every single sheep that is lost. Christ made three significant points.

1. The sheep went astray (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.18:12).
2. The sheep was sought by the shepherd. Note several facts.
   a. The Shepherd takes care of the whole flock, the ninety-nine, in a very special way. While seeking the lost sheep, He leads the flock *into the mountains or hills* where the pasture is thick with grass and safe and secure. He makes sure that they are secure (Jn.10:27-29).
   b. The Shepherd's concern is for the individual, no matter how large the flock. He loves the individual. He is unwilling to lose a single one.
   c. The Shepherd is the One who does the seeking. He does not hire or send another person after the lost sheep. Neither does He wait for the sheep to return, and most interesting, He does not even allow the care of the ninety-nine to keep Him from going after the one lost sheep. The fact that the sheep is lost is so important a matter to Him that He personally goes after the sheep—no matter the cost.
   d. The Shepherd is patient and enduring. He seeks and seeks after the sheep until He has either found it or else He knows there is no hope of the sheep's being alive.
   e. The Shepherd seeks every path, ridge, and crevice; He uses every means at His disposal to find the lost sheep.
      ⇒ The Shepherd depends upon the hardness, danger, trials, and sufferings of the wilderness and the heart, conscience, and memory of the sheep to turn it around and begin seeking a way out.
      ⇒ The Shepherd depends upon his own knowledge of the sheep and wilderness to search for the sheep. The Shepherd knows every ridge and crevice of the wilderness. It is just a question of finding the sheep soon enough. Has the lost sheep gone too far out on a ridge, too far down into a crevice to be found? Has the lost sheep already been killed by enemies or the roughness of the wilderness?
      ⇒ The Shepherd depends rather heavily upon His voice to reach the ears and the heart of the lost sheep.
      By calling and calling, He hopes the lost sheep will hear Him. Whether He hears or not depends upon two things. (1) How far out into the wilderness the lost sheep has wandered? Can the sheep hear the voice of the Shepherd? (2) Does the sheep still have strength enough to answer (respond) even if he hears the voice of the Shepherd? Is the sheep so drained and sapped by the wilderness that he cannot answer? Or is the sheep injured or dying, unable to answer the call of the Shepherd?

> **"How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Mt.18:12).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (Jn.9:35).**

3. The sheep was sought in the mountains (see note 3—Lk.15:4 for the reasons a sheep goes astray. The reasons are simply stated here.)
   ⇒ The sheep is attracted by something "out in the wilderness" away from the flock and shepherd.
   ⇒ The sheep is aimless, not paying attention to what is going on.
   ⇒ The sheep refuses to heed the shepherd's warnings and the other sheep's example.
   ⇒ The sheep is not attached enough to the shepherd or to the other sheep.

Thought 1. The Shepherd knew "the lost sheep." He had a large flock to tend, but He knew every single one. When "the lost sheep" got lost, the Shepherd knew it. He missed the sheep, and He went after it.

Thought 2. When a child is lost, a family stops everything to seek for the lost child. It does not matter how large the family is, the child is sought.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(18:12) **World—Wilderness**: see note 4—Lk.15:4 for a picture of the wilderness.

3 (18:13) **Lost—Unsaved**: Jesus may or may not find the lost sheep. Finding the sheep is not a sure thing. It depends on so much...

- How far astray has the lost sheep wandered? Can the lost sheep hear the voice of the Shepherd? Or is it too far off?
- Is the lost sheep willing to respond when it hears the Shepherd's voice?
- Is the lost sheep *going on and on*, farther and farther into the wilderness?
- Has the lost sheep been so careless and unconcerned that it has been injured by falling into a deep crevice?
- Is the mind of the lost sheep so numb that it is unconscious of the Shepherd's presence and voice?
- Is the lost sheep aware that it is lost? If so, how concerned is it over being lost?
- Is the lost sheep concerned enough to begin searching for a way out of the wilderness?
- Has the patience of the Shepherd ended? Has he given up? Has so much time passed that He knows there is no longer any hope?

Thought 1. A person may resist the spirit of God so long and wander so far into the wilderness of the world that he can never be found (see thought 1—Mt.12:14-16).

"And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).
"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

4 (18:13) **Joy—Salvation**: Jesus forgives and rejoices over the recovered sheep. The extreme joy is not because the lost sheep means more than the other sheep. The safe sheep have always filled the Shepherd with joy and peace, but there is a special moment of joy and celebration when a lost sheep is found. There are at least two reasons for this.

1. The lost sheep was almost *lost forever*, never to be known again or to share in and contribute to the life of the flock. All that the lost sheep meant and was capable of contributing was almost lost forever. There is bound to be great joy and glory over his being snatched out of the claws of danger and death.
2. The lost sheep cost so much of the Shepherd's life: His thoughts, energy, effort, time, and sufferings. There is great joy and glory when the trial is over and the task is successful. The effort was well worth the price.

Note the great appeal to the lost sheep to return to the Shepherd. There is...

- no grudging
- no contempt
- no lecture
- no rebuke
- no threat
- no punishment
- only love
- only concern
- only seeking

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Lk.15:6-7).
"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:36).
"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Th.2:19-20).
"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).
"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:6).

5 (18:14) **God, Will of—Salvation**: God wills that not a single sheep should perish. In verse ten Jesus had said "My Father," but here He switched to "your Father." This is significant: when the Savior *finds* each of us, we become a member of *our Father's* family. As a member, He expects our help in reaching the lost sheep and in caring for the flock. Being a member of the family carries with it the responsibilities of reaching the lost and of helping to care for the other members of the family.

Note two things.

1. The Father is not willing that any should perish.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).
"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

2. Christ died for the weak brother as well as for the lost.

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).
"And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" (1 Cor.8:11).

Thought 1. This is critical: God cares for every single person. What a contrast with our lack of concern when just one or two wander off. What a lesson for us! The concern of God for a single soul!

	D. The Steps to Correcting Offending Brothers, 18:15-20 (Lk.17:3-4)	church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.	**brother**[DS2] a. The earthly discipline
		18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.	b. The heavenly support of God
1 Step 1: Attempt reconciliation[DS1] a. Go to the brother alone	15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.	19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.	**3 Step 3: The essential step—bathe the matter in prayer**[DS3] a. Seeking agreement b. Seeking God's will & approval c. Seeking unity in His name d. Result: His presence
b. Go to the brother with witnesses	16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.	20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.	
c. Go before the church **2 Step 2: Discipline the**	17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the		

DIVISION XII

THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35

D. The Steps to Correcting Offending Brothers, 18:15-20

(18:15-20) **Introduction—Division—Church Discipline**: sinning against a brother is a matter of great concern to God. It is so serious that if the offending brother refuses to rectify the matter, he is to be severely disciplined (v.17). However, when dealing with discipline, two critical points are to be noted.

1. The sinning brother *is a brother*, a *genuine* believer. He sins against another brother. The breach is between two genuine believers who are *in the church*.
2. The trespass is a personal offense; that is, the wrong and harm are done against another person. A fellow Christian believer is injured, hurt, and damaged in some way.

God has one great concern: He wants peace restored. He wants peace between the brothers, and He wants peace within the church. The disturbance caused by two offending brothers is so damaging that God lays down very specific steps as to how the matter is to be handled; and if the sinning brother refuses to be reconciled and to rectify the wrong, God says the disturbance is not to be tolerated any longer.

1. Step 1: attempt reconciliation (v.15-17).
2. Step 2: discipline the brother (v.17-18).
3. Step 3: the essential step—bathe the matter in prayer (v.19-20).

1 (18:15-17) **Believers, Sin Against—Reconciliation**: the first step in correcting an offending brother is to attempt reconciliation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.18:15). Note when a brother disturbs or offends us, we do not wait on the *offending brother* to come to us. We are to go immediately to him. There are three specific steps to be taken.

1. Go to the brother alone and "tell him his fault." This seems to indicate that he may not know that he has done wrong and offended us. If we do not go to him, he may never know or be able to correct his behavior. If he does know he has offended us and we do not approach him, then the breach remains, and the guilt of the sin continues. The division and damaging effects of the division can only grow and deepen.

Something else can happen: our own heart and mind can brood, be poisoned, become resentful, even bitter and grudging and revengeful. We desperately need to do all we can to resolve the matter.

a. He is to be approached alone. We are not to share the matter with anyone else, nor are we to openly rebuke him. This only deepens and hardens the feelings and division, causing bitterness and hostility.

b. The words "between thee and him alone" hint at how he is to be approached:

⇒ humbly; searching our own hearts (to see if we did anything to cause the offending behavior—knowing that we too can offend others ever so easily).

⇒ being soft spoken and gentle.

⇒ expressing our desire for understanding and straightening out the matter so that we may be reconciled.

> **"Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Mt.5:24).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Ph.2:3).**
>
> **"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" (2 Tim.2:14).**
>
> **"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim.2:24).**

Thought 1. When a brother offends us, our response becomes critical to Christ. There are four responses common to human flesh that we are to guard against with all diligence.

1) *A self-centered response*: acting babyish, innocent, or as a martyr; brooding, hatching, and pondering the evil and hurt done to us; being consumed with the wrong done; keeping our minds on the personal injury until the whole divisive affair poisons our hearts and minds. Remember: this is common to human flesh, a tendency among us all.
2) *A withdrawing response*: avoiding the brother; being apprehensive, perhaps even fearing to face or associate with him; showing displeasure or getting back at him by ignoring or neglecting him.
3) *A gossiping response*: a self-justifying sharing; a self-vindicating sharing; a tendency to share hurt and evil and wrong done, to share with close friends in order to picture ourselves as blameless. The problem with sharing the division with others is that Christ says we are to go to the person first. Then if he does not respond to our appeal, we are to seek loving and wise counsel.
4) *A retaliating response*: becoming embroiled in the divisiveness and wrongdoing ourselves; reacting and lowering ourselves to the level of the wrongdoer; getting back at the wrongdoer.

Thought 2. When a brother offends us, the most important response (after prayer, of course) is to go to the brother alone. There is great wisdom in this instruction, wisdom that teaches both brothers to subject the flesh and to give prominence to the spirit.

1) Wisdom for the *offended brother*. Human nature tends to react, brood, share the evil, and seek retaliation—whether simply withdrawing or attacking. Christ demands that we conquer the urges of the flesh to react and that we control the situation through the Spirit. We are to keep quiet and pray. Then we are to go to the brother and discuss the matter, seeking reconciliation. Simply put, we are to be spiritually minded.
2) Wisdom for the *offending brother*. Human nature avoids and is slow in admitting wrong. A humble, loving, and caring visit to seek reconciliation is *an encouragement* for a brother to confess, apologize, and be reconciled.

Thought 3. Note just how wise the Lord's instruction really is. Just think what enormous lessons and qualities are learned and developed by three brothers' sitting down to seek reconciliation—the very qualities of the Spirit's fruit...

- love
- joy
- peace
- long-suffering
- gentleness
- goodness
- faith
- meekness
- self-control

Thought 4. Think what a different world this would be if this step alone was practiced by all: the difference in human relationships personally, nationally, and internationally; the difference in health emotionally and physically (ulcers, blood pressure, heart attacks, etc.).

2. Go to the brother with witnesses. Some Christian brothers are stubborn; others are immature; still others are gripped by selfish and sinful motives and behavior. Therefore an offending brother may not be willing to be reconciled nor willing to admit his wrong. In such cases, one or two loving and wise brothers are to be taken with us to the offending brother. This act does several things.

a. It shows the brother that there is deep concern; a number of people do care and want to help.
b. It also shows that the offense is known by more than one or two people. At least several know.
c. It also provides objective and wise counsel between the two differing parties. Agreement and reconciliation are more likely to arise from this.
d. It helps to prevent bias, selfish reaction, and partial interest.

Thought 1. This step should never be taken until the brother has been approached alone. We are not to talk about or share a brother's wrong with anyone else—not ever—not until we have sat down with him personally in the love of Christ.

However, this step *is* to be taken if he persists in his divisiveness. But it is always to be done in a spirit of humility, love, care, and personal unworthiness.

Thought 2. There is sometimes a tendency to give up after a divisive brother refuses reconciliation—to let him suffer whatever punishment follows. However, Christ says, "Keep on; stay after him. Don't give up." Note: this is the demand of Christ throughout the whole course of discipline. Christ never gives up reaching out to the sinning brother. Therefore, the church is never to give up (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.18:17). The divisiveness of the Galatian church and its personal attack upon Paul are prime examples of this fact. Paul was constantly reaching out to those who were so imperfect and ever failing (cp. Gal.4:19f).

3. Go before the church (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.18:17 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:15) **Believers, Sin Against—Reconciliation**: how does a Christian brother trespass or offend another brother? There are many ways.

1. By his behavior and Christian liberty: doing that which is allowed but is offensive and misunderstood by a weaker brother. (Cp. Ro.14:1-23; 1 Cor.8:12.)

⇒ offending his conscience ⇒ being a stumbling block
⇒ grieving his spirit ⇒ being a bad example

2. By confronting him face to face.
   - ⇒ insulting ⇒ degrading ⇒ showing bitterness
   - ⇒ abusing ⇒ arguing ⇒ being angry
   - ⇒ humiliating ⇒ showing disrespect ⇒ being hostile

3. By tearing him down behind his back.
   - ⇒ talking about ⇒ gossiping ⇒ criticizing
   - ⇒ lying ⇒ murmuring ⇒ spreading rumors

4. By encroaching on his rights or property.
   - ⇒ deceiving ⇒ stealing ⇒ envying
   - ⇒ cheating ⇒ lying ⇒ bypassing

2 (18:17-18) **Church Discipline**: the second step in correcting an offending brother is to discipline the brother. Christ discusses two points in dealing with the actual disciplining of an offending brother.

1. The earthly discipline. If the offending brother refuses to be reconciled after the appeal by two or three believers, then the matter is to be carried to the church. Why would Christ say that personal offenses are to be taken before the church and made public?

   a. The offending brother has already refused two humble and loving appeals: the first appeal of the offended person, and the second appeal by one or two loving and wise witnesses.

   b. The offending brother's refusal to be reconciled is a serious threat and danger. If the breach continues unresolved, it will cause more division and harm both within and without the church. Other lives will be seriously affected, both among the saved and the lost. The testimony of the church and of those involved in the division will be weakened, and the interest of the almost saved will be soured and dampened, perhaps extinguished. The tongues of the carnal believers and of the lost will be set aflame. A brother who trespasses against another brother and causes division within the church (and who refuses to be reconciled) commits a serious offense that affects many lives. Because of this, the matter has to be dealt with step by step. It cannot be ignored and left unresolved.

      Taking a person's behavior before the church, whether the church as a whole or some official committee of the church, is a very serious matter. It is as serious a matter as can be imagined. But what Christ is after must be kept in mind: Christ wants to keep the sin, division, and devastation from spreading and destroying the lives and testimonies of others.

   c. Christ wants the two brothers to be reconciled with each other and with God, and He wants the offending brother to be restored into the care and fellowship of the church.

   d. Christ wants to keep the sin, division, and devastation from spreading and destroying the interest of the *nearly saved*, perhaps causing them to be lost forever.

   e. Christ wants to prevent giving the world a reason for setting their tongues on fire and spreading rumors that damage the image and work of His church.

   f. Christ wants the two brothers and their close friends and fellow church members to build a strong witness, not a divisive witness. He is not willing for a single person to perish. He wants the world saved, every person in the world (2 Pt.3:9), and two things are essential for a church to reach the maximum number of people which it should be reaching:
      - ⇒ Love—brother loving brother in the Lord (Jn.13:33-34).
      - ⇒ A strong witness and testimony by the brothers of the church.

   g. Christ wants differences and divisiveness settled among His people and not by the world's legal system of carnal or godless philosophies and arguments. The atmosphere of law settles nothing; it only produces more trouble and deeper feelings and rifts. Among God's people, disputed relationships and differences are to be settled between the two involved persons *alone*. If that fails, then one or two loving and wise persons are to be called in. Then and only then, if these fail to settle the matter, is the matter to be taken before a number of official representatives from the church. This procedure is clearly the wish of our Lord (Mt.18:15-17. See outline and notes—1 Cor.6:1-8.)

   h. Christ wants every member to work and build, not destroy the church. The church exists for worship, fellowship, ministry, and witness. Harmony, peace, love, and purpose build the church; sin and divisiveness destroy the church. For this reason alone, divisiveness must not be allowed to prevail within the church. It has to be dealt with if the church is to remain the church and be the Lord's.

What is said above bears repeating. Taking a person's behavior before the church is a very serious matter. It is as serious a matter as can be imagined. Several facts make it extremely serious.

   a. A person's life is involved. The person can be damaged, turned off and pushed away from the Lord and God's people forever.

   b. Public discussion of personal behavior is a very, very sensitive subject. It can easily arouse emotions and cause more division. It can even turn some of the spiritually minded away from the church.

   c. Personal behavior and *juicy news* are what the carnal nature of man enjoys discussing. It is the subject of which rumors are made. It sets aflame the tongues and imaginations of most people. Few are spiritually free of the urge to talk about the faults and rumors surrounding others. The very nature of man enjoys knowing and sharing the faults of others with close friends. Why? It is the downing of others that elevates self and gives some justification (excuse) to sinful behavior and flesh-feeding habits. And most follow and revel in sinful flesh, not in God's Spirit. This is true even among many professing believers.

d. Few can keep confidences. Few can keep quiet. Even the most trusted and loving and wise do not keep confidences. A person who will keep confidences is more rare than a precious gem that takes many lifetimes to discover. Therefore, when a matter is shared, it must always be remembered and understood that it will be spread around. What will the effects be as it spreads around? The effects must always be measured as one considers sharing personal behavior and differences with others, whether with just another individual, or with the church as a whole.

e. The world—both the public and the lost within and without the local community—will hear about personal behavior being carried before the church. Again, the effect upon the world's thoughts, talk, attitudes, and openness of heart to the gospel must be carefully considered before rushing before the church with matters that concern personal behavior.

Now, when should a personal matter and difference be taken before the church? (Perhaps a more appropriate question would be, when should a personal matter concerning a brother ever be discussed with another individual?)

a. When we are *absolutely sure* that God does not want us to continue bearing the hurt and injury any longer as a learning experience. When we are absolutely sure there is no more need for us to be...

- learning more trust
- learning more patience
- learning more endurance
- learning more humility
- learning more love
- learning more experience
- learning more hope
- learning more conformity to His image (or suffering)
- learning more glory

b. When we are *absolutely sure* that the Lord's Spirit is leading us to share the matter of personal behavior.

c. When we are *ready to acknowledge* our own failures and sinfulness and potential for failing (Ro.14:4; 1 Cor.10:12).

d. When we are gripped by a spirit of prayer, softness, tenderness, warmth, love, and humility.

e. When we are gripped by the spirit of "bearing one another's burdens" (Gal.6:1-3).

f. When we are *absolutely sure* that we have followed the steps spelled out by Christ (Mt.18:15-17).

2. The heavenly support of the discipline. Note that heaven's discipline of the divisive brother is the same as the earthly or church discipline. What does this mean? One thing is sure—it cannot mean that any man or any church has the power to forgive or not forgive sins. No man or church has the power to doom or save and set free a person.

What it probably means is this: when a brother chooses sin and refuses to be reconciled after the church reaches and reaches out after him, he is lost to the church. There is no relationship between him and the church. The church failed to reach him; therefore he is *bound to the earth* and to being treated as an outsider. Thus heaven—God Himself—will reckon him to be bound by sin as an outsider just as the church binds (reckons) him. Similarly, if he is ever reached by the church and "loosed" from the bondage of sin, heaven will reckon him loosed. God will receive him back as a redeemed brother, as an insider.

Thought 1. In the final analysis, divisiveness and those who cause divisiveness have to be confronted and handled. "A house divided against itself cannot stand" (Mt.12:25).

Christ insists that a divisive brother be disciplined and treated as an outsider. (But we must *always* remember: this action is to be taken only after reconciliation has been attempted at least three times.) Why must divisiveness and the brother who caused the divisiveness be handled?

1) Divisiveness threatens survival. A body, an organization, even the church itself can stand only if it is unified and functioning in peace and harmony.
2) Divisiveness threatens purity and character. The church is seen as corrupt and weak if such things as divisiveness and grumbling are allowed.
3) Divisiveness threatens order and mission and ministry. Divisiveness can threaten and cause failure of any purpose, mission, or ministry. Disorder assures defeat and failure.

Thought 2. This passage is a wonderful thing: Christ Himself, our wonderful Lord, has given us the very procedure (steps) to take in dealing with divisive brothers. How much we need to follow His instructions!

Thought 3. Discipline of a divisive brother is necessary in order to preserve the church and all that it stands for.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(18:17) **Discipline, Church**: the outlines and preceding notes of this Scripture should be read before reading this note in order to have a complete picture (Mt.18:15-20).

A brother who has a personal quarrel with another brother is to be disciplined if three things exist.

⇒ If he continues in open rebellion against the Lord.

⇒ If he continues to be gripped by the selfishness, covetousness, and worldliness of this earth.

⇒ If he refuses reconciliation with his brother after three attempts at reconciliation have been made as spelled out by Christ.

What is the discipline? The divisive brother is to be treated just as he is acting: as an outsider—just as a heathen and a publican. The heathen or sinners and publicans were the very people for whom Christ reached out. They were outside the fold, but they were reachable. The divisive brother is acting as an outsider: he will not listen and respond to the humble and loving appeals for reconciliation. Therefore, he is to be left alone and not bothered until he is ready to listen and be reconciled. He is refusing reconcilation and living as an outsider, just as the lost live. Accordingly, the church can do nothing but treat him as an outsider.

1. The offending brother himself made the choice not to be reconciled. He stood at the crossroads of reconciliation on three specific occasions. He is personally responsible for his decision.
2. The church reached and reached out for the dear brother. It made every attempt to lead the brother to stop the divisiveness and to be reconciled.
3. The life the brother has chosen to live is his discipline. It is his decision to be an outsider instead of being reconciled to his brother and his church. It is his decision to live in the world of "sinners and publicans" instead of living in the presence and reconciliation of God's people.
4. The discipline of the brother is a discipline which allows the church to continue to reach out for the backslidden brother. *Sinners and publicans* are the very people to whom Christ went and to whom the church is to go. The discipline of the brother is: "Let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican." Apparently Christ is saying this: the church is to continue seeking after him *as it deems wise*, just as they seek after all outsiders. Realistically, however, the attempts at future reconcilation would probably be much less often. The dear brother's heart will have fewer opportunities to be stirred by those who love and care for him so deeply.

"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (Mk.9:42).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).

"Giving no offence in any thing" (2 Cor.6:3).

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (1 Jn.2:10).

3 (18:19-20) **Prayer**: the third step in correcting an offending brother is the essential step—to bathe the matter in prayer. The words, "Again, I say unto you," stress the importance of this step. The matter must be *bathed in prayer*, but how we go about praying is critical.

1. We must seek agreement about the matter of correcting a brother (v.19). The matter of correction is an awesome responsibility. It is not to be left in the hands of a single person. There are always to be at least two persons involved.
2. We must seek God's will and approval, making sure correction is His will (v.19). No correction should ever be attempted that is not God's will and is not according to the explicit statement of His Word. Any correction of an offending brother must demonstrate God's love, compassion, and mercy.
3. We must seek unity "in Jesus' name," not just human agreement, not just following human thoughts and rules governing discipline. The unity must be "in His name," brought about by His Spirit and in accordance with the whole counsel of God's Word (not just a section taken out of context or interpreted without considering all of God's teaching about a matter) (v.19).

If these steps are truly pursued, the Lord promises His presence in the decision made and in the correction of an offending brother.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(18:19-20) **Prayer**: this passage shows us the power of united prayer—even if the number praying is only two persons.

1. Christ says, "Anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them" (v.19).
2. Christ also says, "There am I in the midst of them" (v.20). Note: Christ did not say, "I will be there." He is already there. This is a very special presence, the real, actual presence of Christ. It is equivalent to the Shekinah glory, the very special presence of God that dwelt in the tabernacle and temple. It is a deep sense, a consciousness, an intense awareness of God's Spirit communing with our spirit. God manifests His presence in a very special way to the believer (see note—Jn.14:21-22; 2 Cor.3:17-18).

However, two things are absolutely essential to experience the power of united prayer.

1. "If two of you *shall agree* [sumphonesosin]": the words *shall agree* mean to be in complete accord; to harmonize together like that of a symphony; to sound together; to act together in each other's nature. It is the very opposite of wandering thoughts, half-hearted commitment, disconnected purpose, disjointed and misplaced understanding, unsynchronized spirits, and imcomplete and piecemeal knowledge.
2. If "two or three are gathered together *in my name* [eis to emon unoma]": literally this says "into my name." The idea is close and intimate union with Christ. It is a "getting into" the Spirit of Christ; a longing to be in union with Him and to act only for His glory. It is a depth of *spiritual union* demonstrated by so few. Note: it comes not only from private prayer but from prayer with others.

This says something of critical importance. We should never attempt to correct a brother unless we first have a deep spiritual union with Christ—a union so deep that we can act only for His glory. We must be free of all fleshly urges to *get at a brother*. We must act only for God's glory.

E. The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant: The Spirit of Forgiveness, 18:21-35

1 The spirit & practice of forgiveness
- a. Peter asked about forgiving a brother: Is forgiveness limited?
- b. Jesus answered: Forgiveness is unlimited[DSI]
- c. Jesus illustrated: Is like the K. of Heaven

2 There is God's spirit of forgiveness: Like a King who "takes account" of His servants
- a. All must give account
- b. One is brought to Him
- c. The servant owes a huge debt
- d. The servant is bankrupt
  - 1) He is to be sold
  - 2) He is to lose all
- e. The servant faces Him
- f. The servant cries for mercy
  - 1) Worships the King
  - 2) Makes a commitment
- g. The servant experiences the compassion of a loving King: Is freed & forgiven

3 There is the servant's spirit of unforgiveness
- a. He faces a fellowservant who owes him: In comparison a very small sum
- b. He reacts severely
- c. He rejects the cry for mercy: Refuses to forgive
- d. He acts materialistically & selfishly—according to law & justice
- e. He grieves the other servants: They carry the matter to the Lord

4 There is the great day of accounting
- a. Two bases of judgment
  - 1) God's forgiveness: Offered in Christ
  - 2) The servant's wickedness: He lacks compassion & mercy
- b. The judgment
  - 1) The Lord's anger
  - 2) The Lord's justice: The man receives all "...due him"

5 There is the point: An unforgiving person will be judged

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

DIVISION XII

THE MESSIAH'S DISCIPLES AND THEIR BEHAVIOR TOWARD ONE ANOTHER, 18:1-35

E. The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant: The Spirit of Forgiveness, 18:21-35

(18:21-35) **Introduction**: How often are we to forgive a person? Does God expect us to forgive and forgive—no matter the abuse and number of times the wrong is done? Christ answered these and many other questions in this discussion.

1. The spirit and practice of forgiveness (v.21-22).
2. There is God's spirit of forgivensss: like a King who "takes account" of His servants (v.23-27).
3. There is the servant's spirit of unforgiveness (v.28-31).
4. There is *the great day* of accounting (v.32-34).
5. There is the point: an unforgiving person shall be judged (v.35).

1 (18:21-22) **Forgiveness**: there is the spirit and practice of forgiveness. Note exactly what happened between Peter and Jesus.

1. Peter asked about forgiving a brother. Is forgiveness limited? Peter's concern was forgiving another Christian brother, a fellow disciple (see notes—Mt.18:5-10; 18:5). Christ also placed the discussion in the context of "the kingdom of heaven," that is, the Christian community or church (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Peter was very generous in his concept of forgiveness. To forgive a person seven times for having wronged oneself is very generous, far more generous than what most do.
2. Jesus answered that forgiveness is unlimited (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.18:22).
3. Jesus illustrated the spirit of forgiveness by referring to the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven in its present form includes some people who are servants of God, but they are servants in profession only. The servant in this parable professes faith in God, but his profession is false. He is in the church walking among God's people. In a desperate moment of dire need, God has met him and offered mercy and forgiveness, but he has not personally learned anything about God's compassion and forgiveness (see note—Mt.18:35).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:22) **Forgiveness—Relationship—Brotherhood—Unity**: seventy times seven is four hundred and ninety, but this is not the point Jesus is making. The question is how often should we forgive a brother?

⇒ Peter: "Till seven times?"

⇒ Jesus: "No. Until seventy times seven."

What Jesus meant is seventy times seven, times seventy times seven—and on and on through eternity. Forgiveness is a matter of the heart, not of the mind. The mind will only keep a record of wrongs. A spirit of forgiveness does not measure and limit the number of times it will forgive. A spirit of forgiveness will tolerate being wronged and hurt time after time. Why?

There are several reasons why the spirit of forgiveness knows no limit, no measure, no number of times that it will forgive.

1. Forgiveness is a thing of the spirit, a quality of the spirit. All spiritual things, substances and realities—such as love, mercy, grace, joy, forgiveness—cannot be measured or limited. They are by their very nature spiritual and not physical. Therefore, they are without measure or limit, so they are to be known and practiced without limit or measure. We are to experience and practice love at every opportunity. We are to experience and practice forgiveness at every opportunity. Forgiveness is a reality of the spirit; therefore it is to be a spirit of life. The spirit of forgiveness is to forgive seventy times seven—*ad infinitum*.

2. Good human relationships are impossible without a forgiving spirit. Offending others is common to all. We are all sinful and we all offend—offend much too often. No one walks perfectly or anywhere close to what he should. If we kept score, there would be little time to do anything else. To keep relationships healthy, we need to know at least four things.

a. Coming short and sinning, failing and offending are common to us all. We all offend by failing...

- to smile
- to greet
- to love
- to be gentle
- be believe
- to recognize
- to speak
- to acknowledge
- to be joyful
- to be good
- to be humble
- to be controlled
- to word things properly
- to be unselfish
- to be non-irritable
- to be unprovoked
- to be long-suffering
- to be victorious

b. Offending others is usually unintentional and unknown. All of us offend others, but we are often unaware that we have offended them. The reasons we fail others are innumerable, but common causes are preoccupation of thought, heavy hearts and minds, and trials and problems that consume our thoughts. Keeping this in mind will help us to forgive others when they offend us.

c. We offend others as much as they offend us. We are as human as the next person, and we need forgiveness as much as the next person. Remembering this will do as much to maintain healthy relationships as any other single fact.

d. The common response to being offended is to react: react by withdrawing, taking vengeance, or wallowing around in self-pity and in a spirit of unforgiveness. Many revel in the attention secured by being the subject of abuse instead of handling the matter quietly in a true spirit of reconciliation.

3. An unforgiving spirit shows that a person is basically ill-natured, self-centered, and spiritually immature. Unforgiveness reveals that a person has not grown to be like Christ in his nature of understanding, compassion, and love. A forgiving spirit understands the nature of man (sinful and offending) and the nature of God (spiritual and forgiving, pt. 1 above).

4. Peace and health can be preserved only through a forgiving spirit. An unforgiving spirit causes as much disturbance and division as the offender. An unforgiving spirit has stooped to the level of the offender and has, in fact, become an offender. Think: as long as there is an unforgiving spirit, there can never be peace. Disturbance, conflict, and division prevail. An unforgiving spirit also affects a person's emotions and mind and body. It is the lack of peace, the lack of a good relationship with God and man, that disturbs the normal functioning of the body, mind, and emotions. Ulcers, high blood pressure, disturbed thoughts and emotions, and on and on—all can and often do come from an unforgiving spirit.

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pt.4:8).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

2 (18:23-27) **Forgiveness**: there is God's spirit of forgiveness. He is just like a king who takes account of his servants.

The parable is simple, yet very descriptive and full of meaning. God is the King, but He is a very unusual King. He is a King who rules justly as all kings should. But He is more. He is loving, compassionate, and forgiving; and He is even more than these. He is consumed with love and compassion—so much so that He forgives enormous debts, debts so enormous that they are inconceivable.

The King takes account of His servants. He takes account at varying times. An accounting is required at conversion and on those occasions when God leads us to evaluate our lives. Note how the seven steps related by Christ can be applied to either of these times.

1. All must give an account (v.24). The word "reckon" (sunairein) means to take account; to make a reckoning; to settle accounts. This is the same word that is translated "take account" in v.24. The king began to check the province and the ledgers of his province: receipts and expenditures and the capital improvements. The king had a critical interest in what his servant had received through gifts and what he had used in the ministry.

2. We are all brought to the King by the Spirit, the Word, or some Christian witness (v.24).

3. We are all led to see our huge debt of sin and service that we owe God (v.24. Cp. Ps.19:12; 40:12.) The debt of the servant was huge. It was millions of dollars. It was probably the gross revenues of a province or state in that day. The servant was the high official placed over the province who was held responsible for its administration. The point is that God has given us life and made us overseer of that life. To sin is to mismanage that life and to cause loss; therefore, sin puts us in debt to God. The debt is infinite, beyond anything we can ever pay.

4. We are all bankrupt (unable to pay) before God (v.25). Sin bankrupts man and puts him in debt to God. We are so bankrupt by sin that nothing can pay our debt.

⇒ Silver and gold, no amount of wealth, can pay our debt.

⇒ Neither a brother nor any other family member can pay our debt.

> **"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps.49:6-7).**

⇒ Good works cannot pay our debt.

> **"Not by works of righteousnesss which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Tit.3:5-6).**

⇒ Making sacrifice and giving offerings cannot pay our debt.

> **"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam.15:22).**

Note that the man's debts affected his family. His enslavement and loss would have meant their enslavement and loss. A man's sins always affect both him and his family (see note—Ro.1:24; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Eph.1:7. Cp. Ro.7:14-20.)

5. We face the justice of a just God (v.25).

6. We cry for mercy (v.26). Our only hope is that God loves us enough that He will simply forgive us in compassion and mercy.

> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**

7. We hear the love and forgiveness of a loving God (v.27).

> **Thought 1.** Some of the things that bring us to God and cause us to evaluate and take account of our lives are trials, trouble, sickness, disease, a sermon or witness, tragedy, parents, friends, or special days or occasions (for example, the New Year).
>
> **Thought 2.** Note that the false servant had not cried out for mercy until he was brought face to face with the king. We are often careless about sin until we are called to account. How fewer trials, sufferings, and temptations we would face if we turned from sin immediately.

3 (18:28-31) **Unforgiveness**: there was the servant's spirit of unforgiveness. The very steps taken by the servant are the steps involved in an unforgiving spirit.

1. He faced a person who owed him, that is, who *had offended* him in some way (v.28). In comparison, the debt or offense was very small. It was not a millionth of the debt owed by the unforgiving servant. The proportion was over 1 to 1,250,000—an enormous difference (A. Lukyn Williams. *St. Matthew*. "The Pulpit Commentary," Vol. 15, ed. by HDM Spense and Joseph S. Exell. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950, p.215). This shows the enormous difference between our sin against a brother and our brother's sin against us. When we really see this, an unforgiving spirit toward a brother is inexcusable. We can forgive anything.

2. He reacted severely (v.28). He attacked the debtor; that is, he exercised his authority over the debtor and attempted to squeeze the payment out of him. He got angry and showed malice. There was no need for this kind of behavior; it was inexcusable. Remember the king's mercy to him. The king had not pressed charges against him; the king had even forgiven his debt. How we need to remember the love and forgiveness of God! God's love and forgiveness need to become the controlling factors of all our relationships.

3. He rejected the cry for mercy and refused to forgive (v.29).

4. He acted selfishly and worldly, according to law and justice (v.30). The man really owed the servant. The debt was a just and legal debt. The servant had every right to demand and force payment. Such was justice, but again, remember the point Christ was making. The King, God, does not act toward us legally, executing justice. He has compassion and mercy upon us and forgives us, wiping out all our debts.

The question is, how often should we forgive our brother? "Seventy times seven," Christ said. "Have compassion and mercy; do not demand justice. Do not execute the law against a man. Do not trample him underfoot. Do not act cruelly, swallowing him up and destroying his spirit. Love him and forgive him 'even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you'" (Eph.4:32).

Thought 1. Note what it is that made this servant go to law and demand justice: money. He was materialistic and worldly minded. The debt was owed, so it was a true debt. It was money that made him selfish. How often money, materialism, and worldlinss destroy a person!

Thought 2. Note another point: he had just gone through a frightening experience himself—an experience that had carried him into the depths of insecurity. Such an experience was bound to affect him. He would thereafter want to make sure he had enough to care for himself and his family. Humanly speaking, he had every right to demand payment of those who owed him. No man would object to his demand in light of his experience. However, there was something objectionable, something missing in his heart and life. He was hard, not soft. He was exacting, not understanding. He was just, not compassionate. He was legal, not loving; He was the very opposite of God. God is loving, compassionate, merciful, and forgiving; and God expects His servants to be as He is.

5. He grieved others (v.31). Note the words "they were very sorry." God's true servants are always grieved to see people mistreated, abused, and trampled upon. Cruel and mean treatment always troubles God's people. Suffering, pain, hurt, and death cut the heart of God's people.

a. They feel for the afflicted: their suffering, pain, and hurt.

b. They feel for the just but sinful man: sinful in that he is unmerciful and uncompassionate. His strict justice causes more and more trouble and disturbance and oppression of people. God's people took the only recourse; they did the only thing they could. They took the matter to God. They could not remain silent and allow the license of oppression and legalism to destroy a human spirit.

4 (18:32-34) **Death—Judgment—Wickedness**: there was the great day of accounting. This is a day that lies out in the future for every man. It is both the summons of death and the summons to stand before God to be judged. It is the death and the day of judgment that every man must face (Heb.9:26).

Note the two bases for judgment.

1. The first basis of judgment is God's forgiveness. God's forgiveness is provided in Christ and is always available. Christ "is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).

> **"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life...He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16, 18).**

2. The second basis of judgment is man's wickedness. It is important to understand what wickedness and sin are. Wickedness and sin are primarily coming "short of God's glory," coming short of what God is. This is clearly illustrated by this wicked servant (church member). He was a just and lawful man. He was a high official in government and politics, serving directly under the king. He was well respected and honored, an outstanding citizen, but he was not like God. He was not compassionate and merciful, loving and forgiving in his dealings with others. There are two great commandments that a servant of the King must obey. This servant tried to obey the first one, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God...."; but he ignored the second one, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

Very simply put, a wicked man is a man who does not honestly believe God nor diligently seek to live as God lives (Heb.11:6). He is a man who does not believe that God is, does not believe to the point that it changes his life. His life is not compassionate, merciful, and forgiving. Because of this, he shall face the judgment of the King and be condemned.

> **"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Ro.2:4).**

Note the judgment and condemnation that man is to experience.

1. Man shall experience the Lord's anger. Two things are extremely detestable to God and arouse His anger: not believing Him and not being compassionate and merciful nor loving and forgiving toward others.

> **"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb.10:26-27).**
>
> **"But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation" (Jer.10:10).**

2. Man shall experience justice. Note two critical things about the justice executed.

a. The unmerciful servant received perfect justice. He received exactly what was due him. He had to *pay*; he was punished only for what he owed—no more, no less. He received the exact penalty, the exact punishment due him.

b. The King, God, was perfectly just. He merely executed perfect justice. He executed what the servant himself had chosen: due payment for due debt.

> **"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you" (2 Th.1:6).**
>
> **"For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great sal-**

vation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" (Heb.2:2-3).

"And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head" (Ezk.9:10).

"But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezk.11:21).

5 (18:35) **Judgment**: this is the point—an unforgiving person shall be judged. The point is clear and critical. It is critical because it determines our eternal destiny. We must not only forgive, we must live a life of forgiveness and mercy. We must develop a nature of forgiveness and compassion and mercy and love toward others. If we do not forgive *from our hearts*, neither will God forgive us. Note three things.

1. Forgiveness comes from the heart, from a new nature wrought in Christ.
2. Christ says "*My* Father," *not* "*your* Father." God was not the servant's Father. The servant was not a genuine follower of God. He only professed to be.
3. The person who does not forgive others does not know the forgiveness of God. Having a spirit of forgiveness is so important that Christ taught it time and again.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt.5:7).

"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you....Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt.5:44, 48; cp. Lk.6:35-36).

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors....For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt.6:12, 14-15).

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" (Jas.2:13).

	CHAPTER 19		b. Man is not to separate the body of marriage
	XIII. THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM 19:1-20:34		**5 There is the ideal of permanence in marriage** a. The question of legal divorce[DS3] b. Divorce was only a concession c. The cause: Hard hearts[DS4] d. Divorce was never intended by God
	A. The Sanctity of Marriage[DS1] 19:1-12 (cp. Mt.5:31-32; Mk.10:1-12; Lk.16:18; 1 Cor.7:10-16)		
1 A contrast between two attitudes toward Jesus a. Jesus left Galilee & entered Jordan	And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan;	9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.	**6 There is the allowance for divorce: Fornication[DS5]**
b. Attitude 1: Seeking help by the multitudes	2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.	10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.	**7 There is the supernatural power needed for marriage** a. Disciples questioned the hard & fast rule b. Christ replied: Only believers can receive this truth[DS6]
c. Attitude 2: Testing & questioning by the religionists—questioned Him about marriage	3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?	11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.	
2 There is the creation of male & female	4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,	12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.	**8 There is the highest ideal in marriage: Total devotion to God's Kingdom**
3 There is the creation of a new family	5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?		
4 There is the creation of one body[DS2]	6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath		
a. God joins the two bodies into one body			

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

A. The Sanctity of Marriage, 19:1-12

(19:1-12) **Introduction—Marriage—Divorce**: the questions regarding marriage and divorce are always burning questions, extremely controversial within societies heavily influenced by Christian teaching. Opinions vary and interpretations differ. There is always the closed view that says divorce is never allowed by God no matter the cruelty and meanness that may exist. And there is always the more open view that says divorce is allowed if the rift between a couple is not reconciled and causes more damage than good.

⇒ The former view says that Christ gave a complete exposition on marriage and divorce; the latter says He gave guidelines.

⇒ The former view sometimes treats divorce in such a spirit that it appears to be the unpardonable sin; the latter view sometimes treats it in such a spirit that it appears to be the escape route to do as a person likes (ranging from minor selfish ends to licentious pleasures).

In Christ's day, the two schools of thought were the Shammai School (conservative) and the Hillel School (liberal). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12.) As in every generation, there were those within each school that would have nothing to do with anyone who held another opinion. A person's view was made a matter of fellowship.

It was because of these strong feelings that the religionists (Pharisees) thought they could entrap and discredit Jesus. No matter what He said, a great number of people would differ, and they would stop supporting His ministry. He would be discredited and His ministry destroyed.

Note several things.

1. There is always a reluctance to express a different opinion when a great number hold a particular position. Compare for example, slavery, smoking, over-eating, mixed bathing, gambling, playing cards, movies, television, and divorce.
2. It is wrong not to face the issues of marriage and divorce, no matter the different opinions and practices of society. Why?

a. There are always a large number of divorced people. Many of these need help, desperately need help. Their faith, hope, security, children, and whole lives have been drastically affected. If believers, God's people, do not open their hearts to them, then a great opportunity to reach out and help them grow in Christ is missed.
b. There are always a large number of marriages (perhaps most) experiencing difficulty, some serious difficulty. Hardness and cruelty, ranging from mild withdrawal to physical abuse, just tear and tear away at the marriage commitment. Sometimes it is the fault of one; sometimes it is the fault of both. In either case, great need exists. Again, if God's people do not reach out and help, a great opportunity is lost for Christ.

Note what Christ did: He spoke up and taught about the issue, and the issue was as controversial in His day as it has been in succeeding generations. (Also see outlines and notes—Mt.5:31-32; 1 Cor.7:1-7; 7:8-16.)

1. A contrast between two attitudes toward Jesus (v.1-3).
2. There is the creation of male and female (v.4).
3. There is the creation of a new family (v.5).
4. There is the creation of one body (v.5-6).
5. There is the ideal of permanence in marriage (v.7-8).
6. There is the allowance for divorce: fornication (v.9).
7. There is the supernatural power needed for marriage (v.10-11).
8. There is the highest ideal in marriage: total devotion to God's Kingdom (v.12).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(19:1-12) **Marriage—Divorce—Shammai—Hillel**: the Pharisees came to Jesus tempting Him and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

There is a background to this question. The society of Jesus' day was very lax in its morals. Marriage was considered nothing more than a piece of paper: if it worked, fine; if it did not work, fine. One could always divorce (see note—Mt.5:31).

There were two positions or schools of thought on divorce. Moses had said that any man could divorce his wife if "she find no favor in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her" (Dt.24:1).

1. The school of Shammai said that the words *some uncleanness* meant adultery only. A wife could be as loose and mean as Jezebel, but she was not to be divorced unless she committed adultery.
2. The school of Hillel said that the words *some uncleanness* meant anything that was not pleasing to the man. One should remember that women were counted as nothing but *property* to be possessed by men. They had no rights whatsoever except as a man might wish to give. Of course, this was the position followed by society, for it was the position that allowed human nature to run loose. Women were abused: used and discarded, neglected and violated. They were nothing but chattel property of men and were often considered of less value than property, whether animals or things. Therefore, divorce ran rampant in Christ's day.

The Pharisees wished to embroil Jesus in the controversy between the conservative (Shammai) and liberal view (Hillel). They were simply asking Jesus if He agreed with the school of Hillel: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (v.3). No matter which position He took, He would offend and stir up a large number of people, becoming embroiled in a mean controversy.

1 (19:1-3) **Divorce**: there are two attitudes toward Jesus, and there is a sharp contrast between the two attitudes. Christ was making His final journey toward Jerusalem where He was to be killed. He would not return to Galilee until after His resurrection (Mt.28:7).

The same two attitudes toward Christ prevail in every generation: there are those who sincerely seek the help of Christ; and there are those who are always testing and questioning Him, stretching every inch they can out of the world and the flesh. They question and question; and, by their questioning, they are able to create uncertainty and doubt over right and wrong. They are able to live as they wish.

Note the question asked, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" The flesh says no matter how frivolous—if there is displeasure, disgust, dislike—then divorce is allowed. But is it? That is what Christ is answering.

2 (19:4) **Marriage—Divorce**: Christ said there is the creation of male and female: "God made them [Adam and Eve] male and female" (v.4). He did not make them males and females, as He did animals, but He made one male and one female. Each one was made for the other. They were not made for anyone else, for there was no one else.

> **Thought 1.** Creation is the root basis for marriage: one male for one female; one female for one male. There was no one else, just Adam and Eve. This was not so with the creation of other animals. They were created *en masse*; a large number were created simultaneously. There is also the added fact that male and female were created spiritual beings, created for much higher purposes. Since there were no others like them, they were sharing their purposes together in constant fellowship with God.

3 (19:5) **Marriage—Divorce**: Christ said there is the creation of a new family: "A man [shall] leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife" (v.5). One man shall cleave to his wife and create a new family distinct from the family of his parents. He says *a man*, not men, and *his wife*, not wives. Note that a man leaves his father and mother. The union between husband and wife is to gain primacy over the union between parent and child. The union of *cleaving* is wrought by God and appointed by God. Therefore marriage is a divine institution. Just as parents and children are not to divorce one another, neither are the husband and wife to divorce each other.

Thought 1. Father, mother, and child comprise a unit, a family. However, Christ said father and mother are there when the child leaves. And the child (man) leaves to "cleave to his wife." There is no thought, not even a hint of separation in this statement. It is unquestionably a statement of God's purpose for father, mother, and child. The structure of the family is the means by which man is to carry out the purposes of God on earth. Divorce, tearing down the structure of the family, is not the purpose of God. The structure of a family—father, mother, and child—is the purpose of God.

Thought 2. Note: Christ said the relation between father and mother is to be closer and more intimate, longer and more durable than that between parent and child. The day comes when the child (man) leaves the parent, and the parents are left with each other *all alone*. This says much to both husband and wife. They must not neglect their life together, for the day comes when they will be all alone and have the company *only of one another*.

4 (19:5-6) **Marriage—Divorce**: Christ said there is the creation of one body: "A man...shall cleave to his wife and they twain [two] shall be one flesh" (v.5). There is the moulding into one person. The man and the wife cleave to each other: "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." What is it that makes them one flesh? *Cleaving*. They are one body, one flesh, one person. They are not joined to two or three or four other persons, but they cleave only to one other person.

Christ also says that a marriage joined together by Him is not to be destroyed by any man. "A man...shall cleave to his wife...wherefore [cleaving] they are no more twain, but one flesh [joined together by God]. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (v.5-6).

The points are clear.

a. The cleaving husband and wife are joined together by God.
b. No one is to cut asunder what God joins together. Neither the husband nor wife nor anyone else is to step in between the two and cause separation.

> **"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen.2:23-24).**
>
> **"Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth" (Pr.5:18).**
>
> **"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labor which thou takest under the sun" (Eccl.9:9).**
>
> **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:25).**
>
> **"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Pt.3:7).**

Thought 1. Note something of critical importance. By *cleaving* Christ does not mean what is often thought or pictured: cleaving does not mean taking hold of a wife by civil contract, embracing, or sexual union.

Note the words...

- "cleaving"
- "one flesh"
- "what God hath joined together"

Spouses who are *obedient* to Christ by *cleaving* to each other—in all of their being and life, not only physically, but also spiritually—are the ones who become one flesh. They are the ones whom God joins together. A civil contract does not bind people together, neither does embracing and neither does sex. Only God can bind a couple together *spiritually*, and He does so because a couple is obedient to Him. He rewards and blesses obedience, not disobedience.

Thought 2. Note how the power of God is infused into a couple who obeys Him. He causes their cleaving to bind them so closely together they are as one person.

Thought 3. Note a significant point: "They are no more twain, but one flesh." "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it"—he does not cut it off (Eph.5:29).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(19:5) **Cleave** (kollao; proskollao): to join fast together; to glue together; to cement together; to be joined in the closest union possible; to be bound together; to be so totally united together that two become one. Therefore, to cleave means a spiritual union. It is a union higher and stronger than the union of parent and child. It is a union that means more than living together, more than having sex and bearing offspring. Animals do this. It is a union that can be wrought by God alone (v.11). It is a spiritual union that places man above the physical plane of animals. It is a spiritual fulness, a spiritual sharing of life together: a dedication, a consecration, a completeness, a satisfaction that makes a person the exclusive possession of God and of the spouse. As said, such a cleaving or spiritual union is wrought by God alone. Both husband and wife

must be willing and submissive for God to bring about such a cleaving in their lives. "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear [trust] of God" (Eph.5:21; see outlines and notes—Eph.5:22-33).

There are three unions within a true marriage, that is, a marriage that *really cleaves* and is really *joined together* by God (Mt.19:6).

1. There is the physical union: the sharing of each other's body (1 Cor.7:2-5). But note: physical sharing cannot reach its ultimate fulness unless it is experienced while conscious of God's warm and tender mercies (Eph.5:25-33).
2. There is the mental union: the sharing of each other's life and dreams and hopes and the working together to realize those dreams and hopes. It is important to note that this union still deals only with the physical and material world.
3. There is the spiritual union: the sharing and melting and moulding of each other's spirit (see Eph.5:25-33). This can be wrought only by God. Therefore, there has to be a sharing together with God for there to be a *nourishing* and *nurturing* of the spirit.

Now here is the point: the greatest thing in the world is to know God personally and to be perfectly assured that we shall live now and eternally—to have life abundant with all the love, significance, meaning, and purpose humanly possible. But a man and a woman cannot experience abundant life of and by themselves. They can only nurture the mind and mesh themselves together mentally and physically. To be meshed together spiritually, the couple must share God and His saving grace together. When a couple shares God together day by day, God works supernaturally within their spirits, *melting* their beings and *moulding* them into what He calls *one flesh*. They actually become as *one person*. This is what is meant by "God hath joined together." The Greek word for "joined together" (sunzeugen) actually means to *yoke together*. It is God's yoking, God's joining, God's binding the couple together into a spiritual union that causes them to become one person.

A couple who is spiritually united does two very practical things.

1. The couple "submits themselves one to the other in the fear of God" (Eph.5:21). They submit, yield, surrender, sacrifice, give themselves up to the other as they live day by day in the fear (trust) of God. Day by day, they deliberately set out to nourish and cherish the other, even as the Lord nourishes and cherishes the church (Eph.5:29). They work to become part of each other—so deliberately that they seek to become part of each other's body, each other's flesh, each other's bones (Eph.5:30). They seek to be joined "as one flesh," no matter the surrender and sacrifice required. The meshing together is done by God. God takes such deliberate purpose and behavior, such a melting of one's being, and molds it into the flesh of the other—so much so the two actually become as one, not only physically and mentally but spiritually as well.
2. The couple shares the presence of God and His saving grace together. As a result, God gives them a spiritual assurance and strength which they share together throughout life. They share the knowledge and confidence...
   - that God shall care for and look after them now and forever.
   - that God shall carry them through the devastating trials of life that confront every human being every so often.
   - that God shall bless them with all that is necessary as they walk through life together.
   - that God shall give them an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ—forever and ever.

Again, the point is this: God takes such deliberate sharing of spiritual things and melts and molds the man and woman into *one flesh* spiritually—so much so that they actually become one. A man and a woman being spiritually united by God as one person is what cleaving means. Cleaving to one another in God's Spirit is true marriage—the glorious gift of God.

5 (19:7-8) **Marriage—Divorce**: there is the ideal of permanence in marriage. The Pharisees had entrapped Jesus, or so they thought. Jesus had given four reasons why there was to be no divorce. He was standing against Moses. In their view, Moses had given a commandment that allowed divorce (v.7). Jesus says three things about the ideal of marriage.

> **"Moses, because of the hardness [sinfulness] of your heart suffered you [allowed, made a concession for you] to put away your wives: but from the beginning [Adam and Eve] it was not so [not intended, not willed by God]" (v.8).**

1. Moses made a concession.
2. The reason: man's hard, sinful hearts.
3. Divorce was never willed and was not the purpose of God.

Thought 1. Note three important facts.

1) God's will for marriage was permanence. Divorce was permitted under Moses, but it was not God's will. It was sin, short of God's will and purpose.
2) The cause for divorce is said to be *hardness of heart*—a very serious indictment.
3) The union of marriage is not brought about by a natural law but by God. Marriage is not a law of nature, inherent within man. It is not something that operates by nature, that just happens because two people agree to live together and sign a civil contract. A true union or marriage that is joined together by God is a blessing, a gift of God. It is brought about because a couple is obedient to God. They live in and for each other *under God* (acknowledging God in all things), just as He says to live ("cleaving"). Therefore, God blesses them by joining them together in the most binding of spiritual unions.

It bears repeating: marriage is not a natural law; it is not a law of nature; it is a spiritual law that operates only if each spouse walks in the Spirit.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(19:7) **Old Testament Reference**: cp. Dt.24:1-4.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(19:8) **Hardness, of Heart—Marriage**: many are living together, both within and without marriage, who are not joined together by God. As Jesus said, "All cannot receive this saying" (see DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mt.19:11). The world is corrupted; all are frail, selfish, and sinful. Many become hard of heart; and many, because of the hardness of heart, *wish* silently or vocally to divorce. Some do.

What is it that causes hardness of heart?

1. Many have not received God into their lives and marriages (Jn.1:12; Rev.3:20); therefore, God and His power are foreign, unknown to them (Eph.3:20).
2. Some are not *cleaving* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.19:5). One or both hearts are hard toward the other. Pride and hurt and barrier after barrier have grown between them. Therefore, one or both withdraw and have little to do with the other, avoiding daily contact and relationships as much as possible.
3. Some think sex is all cleaving means. Many come short in thinking that the physical union is the unique feature that glues a marriage together. Sex is important, of course, as any well-adjusted couple knows. But when the newness of the experience passes and life settles into responsibility, there has to be more than the physical cleaving to prevent barriers and hardness of heart. The unique feature is God, not sex (Mt.19:11; see outlines and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.19:5; notes—Eph.5:22-24; 5:25-33).
4. Many are living only humanistic lives. They have no more than animals have: living together, being physically united, bearing offspring, and protecting and providing for each other. But that is all. They are not spiritually alive; they have not received God into their lives and marriage. They have *hard hearts* or *no heart* toward God. Therefore, some live on no higher plane than some animals live, and others do not even have the order and respect for one another that some animals have within their packs.

How do we prevent hardness of heart and divorce? There are four very basic essentials.

1. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing" (Eph.5:22-24).
2. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it....So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph.5:25, 28-29).
3. "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Eph.5:33).
4. "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:32).

6 (19:9) **Marriage—Divorce**: there is the allowance for divorce—fornication. Christ says, "Whosoever puts away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery...." (v.9).

- There is one clear reason for divorce: adultery.
- Remarriage commits adultery.

Before Christ came into the world, adultery was punishable by death. Since Christ has come, the penalty has been changed. Divorce itself is to be the punishment, not death. (What an impact this change of law has made on societies in the past! How much it is needed in some parts of the world even today! Compassion is the answer to sin, not anger and wrath.)

Note the importance and high esteem that Christ places upon sex within marriage. It is so intimate and meaningful and important an experience that if it is violated, divorce is allowed. Note however: Christ did not say that divorce must take place. It is only *allowed*. If the couple has been living in Him and blessed by Him and the violated spouse cannot emotionally accept the unfaithfulness, divorce can take place. But if the offended spouse can forgive—if he or she can be emotionally controlled and forgiving enough to forgive—then the spouse should forgive.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen.2:24).

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:27-28).

"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Mt.5:32).

"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk.10:9).

"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man" (Ro.7:2-3).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" (1 Cor.6:9).

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband" (1 Cor.7:10).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13-14).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(19:9) **Fornication—Adultery**: a person, especially a Christian believer, needs to think of the meaning of adultery here. Adultery is the turning away from a spouse to another person. Many a person would never think of turning away from their spouse to a third person, yet they readily and willingly turn toward self and toward other things. As God said of the nation Israel, "I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce" (Jer.3:8). Many a person has done just as Israel did. They refused to surrender to God. They lived in a backslidden state, and day by day they turned more and more away from their spouse and, in many cases, from their children.

Day by day a person can take a spouse and children and...

- be mean and ugly.
- be nagging and mentally cruel.
- be neglectful and unthoughtful.
- be physically abusive and life-threatening.
- be deliberately withdrawn and separated.

And the truth of the matter is that many live selfishly that way.

⇒ Some are cruel; others sadistic.

⇒ Some are critical; others sarcastic; still others *demonic and hellish*.

⇒ Some are mentally abusive; others physically abusive, *even* to the point of murdering spouse and children—the unthinkable.

The truth of a marriage is known only to God. A husband or a wife can use his or her personality to present a front to the world. Yet within the heart, there can be such a hardness toward a spouse, such an unwillingness to truly cleave, that God just cannot join them together as one flesh. Hardness, very simply, wrecks a marriage. It wrecks a marriage by causing a person to turn away and separate from his or her spouse. If a spouse is not with the other spouse, then the two are separate, not cleaving. There can be no cleaving if there are not *two* persons together; and as pointed out earlier, cleaving is the blessing and gift of God. Cleaving is only possible as each allows God to "join them together."

7 (19:10-11) **Marriage**: there is the supernatural power needed for marriage. The disciples were shocked, for Jesus was saying that divorce is not God's will: "From the beginning [from Adam and Eve] it was not so," that is, not intended by God (v.8). Thus the disciples exclaimed: "It is not good to marry"—one can be caught in a bad situation.

"But [Jesus] said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given" (v.11); that is, only a God-given power can make a marriage what it should be so that a person will not want out. It is necessary for God to be in the center of a marriage. God has to join the two together. (See outline and notes—Eph.5:22-24; 5:25-33.)

Thought 1. Men rebel at the strictness of Christ in marriage. The disciples rebelled to such an extent that they were ready to say that it is better not to marry. But note: they, as so many, had not yet grasped what Christ was saying. Marriage is to be a spiritual union joined together by God. It is to be a union ever so precious, tender, warm, supportive, meaningful, and significant—a union seldom heard of and known in experience, even among believers.

Thought 2. How many can truly *cleave*, submitting wholly (100 percent, not 50-50). How many can truly love the other completely as oneself? Not everyone can receive this saying. Only they who will surrender to one another *under God* can receive a true marriage, a true joining together from God. It is not a matter of not marrying. It is a matter of obeying God and living as He wills.

Thought 3. There is *death to self* required in marriage in order to *cleave* and to be as *one flesh*. But there are also the blessings of *a new life*, the glory and excitement of two persons' living as *one flesh* and being joined together in all of life.

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(19:11) **Marriage, Essentials**: "All cannot receive this saying." What saying?

1. The saying that a man and wife are "to cleave to one another." They are to be (1) totally united together as *one flesh*: "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh" (v.5-6).
2. The saying that it is God and God alone who can *join together* a man and a wife (v.6; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.19:5).

These two things, cleaving and God Himself, are the two essentials for a true marriage. Many are living together who refuse *to cleave* and refuse to let God join them together. They are not willing to cleave, nor are they willing to let God make them as *one flesh*. They are not willing to let God join them together.

(Note: man and woman can only cleave and join themselves together physically. God is not needed for a purely physical union. If a married couple wishes more than a physical union, they must turn to God. He alone can "join together" a couple spiritually.)

8 (19:12) **Marriage—Eunuchs**: there is the highest ideal in marriage—total devotion to God's Kingdom. The very highest ideal for a man is total concentration upon God and His Kingdom (cp. 1 Cor.7:1f). This is so whether a person is married or not married. Christ was not downgrading marriage nor was He saying that being unmarried is preferable to being married. He was simply answering the disciples' question, "Yes, some men have chosen not to marry and chosen to be eunuchs. Some are born eunuchs; others are enslaved and made eunuchs; and still others choose to devote themselves only to the Kingdom of Heaven." Then He said the very same thing He said in v.11, "He that is able to receive it [be a eunuch] receive it." Christ spoke first to the married; then in answer to the disciples He spoke to the unmarried:

⇒ To the married, He said that it takes God in a person's life for the person to receive a true marriage, to cleave and be joined together with a spouse (see DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mt.19:11).

⇒ To the unmarried, He said that it takes God to be a eunuch, to dedicate one's life to the Kingdom of Heaven (v.12).

Thought 1. Some can live more for God if they remain single. They should, therefore, commit themselves to remain single (see note—1 Cor.7:1).

Thought 2. Some choose to remain single in order to have the freedom to live lustful, sensual lives. Christ deals with sexual sins in other passages. He is not condoning such here by approving the single life. The single state is to be chosen for the purpose of serving God more diligently, and it is to be chosen for that purpose only.

	B. The Acceptance of Children 19:13-15 (Mk.10:13-16;Lk.18:15-17)
1 Children were brought for Jesus to touch & to pray for **2 Parents cared & believed: Brought their children** **3 The disciples rebuked the parents: Jesus too busy** **4 Jesus rebuked those who disregarded the children** a. He received the children b. He said the Kingdom of Heaven belonged to children c. He touched the children	13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. 15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

B. The Acceptance of Children, 19:13-15

(19:13-15) **Introduction**: children are very dear to God. People in Jesus' day considered children to be insignificant and unimportant. It was this that Jesus was combating in this experience. Children are as important as any other persons to God, and they are not to be disregarded or discouraged from coming to God. They are to be welcomed and accepted with open arms.

1. Children were brought for Jesus to touch and to pray for (v.13).
2. Parents cared and believed: they brought their children to Jesus (v.13).
3. The disciples rebuked the parents: they felt that Jesus was too busy and that the children were too unimportant (v.13).
4. Jesus rebuked those who disregarded the children (v.14-15).

1 (19:13) **Children—Parents**: children were brought to Jesus for Him to touch and to pray for. Note four facts about the little children.

1. The children were so little that they had to be brought to Jesus for. Luke called them *infants* (Lk.18:15).

2 The children were brought for Jesus to touch and to pray for. This was the purpose for their being brought to Him. The laying on of hands was a symbol of special blessing and dedication (Gen.48:14; Num.27:23). It demonstrated a belief in God, in His love and power to bless. Therefore, the laying on of hands during special moments has always been very meaningful to God's people.

3. The children were brought despite threatening opposition. At this particular time, Jesus was being greatly opposed by the religious and political leaders. They were seeking to kill Jesus (Mt.12:14; see note—Mt.12:7; note and DEEPER STUDY #1—12:10). The parents knew this, but they still wanted Jesus to bless their children. His blessing was so important to the parents that they brought their children to Him despite the danger.

> **"And that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it" (Dt.31:13).**

4. The children were too young to understand what was happening. They knew nothing about the importance of being blessed by Christ, but their age made no difference. They were brought to Him anyway.

> **"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph.6:4).**
>
> **"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).**
>
> **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr.22:6).**

Thought 1. Think of the children who are not brought to Christ. The result is tragic: they never come to know Christ and the life and security He brings to the human heart.

Thought 2. The benefits of bringing children to Christ are innumerable. Just a few major ones are as follows.

1) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning love: that he is loved by God and by all who trust God. He matures year by year knowing that no matter how evil some people may act, he is to love even those who do wrong. He learns that he is to help sow the seed of love upon earth.
2) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning power and triumph: that God will help His followers through all; that there is a supernatural power available to help, a power to help when mother and dad and loved ones have done all they can.
3) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning hope and faith: that no matter what happens, no matter how great a trial, he can still trust God and hope in Him. God has provided a very special strength to carry him through the trials of this life (no matter how painful). God has provided a very special place called heaven where He will carry him and his loved ones when he faces death.
4) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning the truth of life and endurance (service): that God has given him the privilege of life and of living in a beautiful earth and universe; that the evil and bad which exist in the world are caused by evil and bad people; that despite such evil, he is to serve in appreciation for life and for the beautiful earth upon which God has placed him. He is to work and work diligently, making the greatest contribution he can.
5) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning trust and endurance: that life is full of temptations and pitfalls which can easily rob him of joy and destroy his life and the fulfillment of his purposes; that the way to escape the temptations and pitfalls is to follow Christ and endure in his work and purpose.
6) A child who is brought to Christ grows up learning peace: that there is an inner peace despite the turbulent waters of this world; that peace is knowing and trusting Christ.

2 (19:13) **Parents—Children**: the parents cared for their children, and they believed Jesus could help them. Therefore, they brought their children to Jesus. Note three facts about the parents.

1. The parents cared for their children, cared enough that they wanted the very best for them. Jesus Christ was claiming to be the Messiah, the very Son of God; so they wanted their children to be blessed by Him instead of an ordinary religious leader.
2. The parents believed in Jesus, in His love and power to bless. They believed that Jesus' blessing was meaningful to their children—very, very meaningful. They also believed that He cared and loved enough that He would bless them.
3. The parents' concern for their children was strong and persistent. They brought their children to Jesus despite strong religious opposition and despite the disciples' public rebuke (see note—Mt.12:7; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10). They did not turn around and leave. They were determined to have their children blessed by Jesus.

Thought 1. Life is given by God, so children belong to God. In a very special sense, children are *bundles of trust* that God puts into the care of parents for a short time. Parents are *the trustees* of God's property, of the little lives that God has given. Parents are responsible for caring enough to trust God's power and blessing for their children.

Thought 2. Children should be presented to God as "living sacrifices" for His care and purposes.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**

Thought 3. Most parents have *the true love of a parent* for their children. The greatest gift of love they can show is to bring their children to Christ. They should also seek to bring other children to Christ.

Thought 4. There are several reasons why parents do not bring their children to Christ.
1) Some parents (in civilized as well as uncivilized parts of the world) are not aware of the only living and true God. Therefore, they are blind; they just do not know. Christians have failed to take the gospel to the whole world.
2) Some parents have heard the truth, but they have rejected Christ. They are agnostics or atheists, or else they love the world and the things of the world more than they love the news of the living God who gives eternal life. They do not care about anything beyond comfort of self and the benefits of this world.
3) Some parents believe, at least mentally, but they are complacent and lethargic. They are not concerned enough to make the effort to come to Christ nor to bring their children to Christ.
4) Some parents are believers; but, unfortunately, they are immature and inconsistent in their religious lives. Their own Christian lives and worship are weak and neglected, sometimes up and sometimes down. Their children are thereby taught that Christ is not really all that important.
5) Some parents are liberal-minded. They are not willing to influence and mold their children's thinking spiritually. They want their children to make their own choices. They are willing to teach them what foods to eat and books to read, anything that will teach them how to care for themselves physically, but they leave the care of the spiritual up to them after they become adults.

Thought 5. There are two great errors committed by parents who do not bring their children to Christ.
1) Any parent who does not bring his child to Christ is following a false philosophy of life and reality.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

2) A child's mind is molded by those with whom he associates. His mind is either molded by the loose and immoral or the disciplined and moral. If the child's mind is not molded by *godly parents*, it will be molded by the world and its selfish and corrupt ways.

3 (19:13) **Parents—Disciples**: the disciples rebuked the parents. Note several facts about the disciples.

1. The disciples thought they knew the mind of Christ. They were good men, and they were leaders among the followers of Christ. But they did not know the mind of Christ, not in this instance. They did not fully understand the ways of God, but they were acting as though they did. They were determining who could and who could not approach to be blessed by Christ.
2. The disciples rebuked the parents for bringing the children to Jesus. There are several possible reasons for their action.
   a. The parents' frivolous pride over their children. The disciples may have thought the parents just wanted to show off their children and have Jesus make over them.
   b. A misunderstanding about the importance of children. The disciples may have thought the children were just not important or significant enough to merit the attention of so important a person as Jesus. He was just too busy, and His work was too important to be interrupted by those who really did not need Him.
   c. An immature concept of the blessing and power of God. By rebuking the parents, the disciples definitely showed they were guilty of this. To them blessing and praying for little children were not important enough to merit the attention of Jesus. They could not understand how small infants, who were not yet old enough to believe, could receive any good from being blessed by Christ.

Thought 1. There are two attitudes toward children that are critical mistakes, both of which are sometimes adopted by parents and society.

1) There is the attitude that children are not as important as adults. They are, therefore, often neglected, ignored, by-passed, and pushed aside without much attention or training. Such, of course, leads to a *squashed*, weak personality, making the child shy, and instilling a sense of inferiority. To say that children are as important as adults does not mean that they are to be given the rights of an adult. Such would only indulge and pamper the child. But it does mean that they are to be treated as *real persons* with needs and rights—the needs and rights of a child, not of an adult.
2) There is the attitude that children are to be unrestrained and allowed to develop their own desires, urges, wills and personalities. The feeling is that few, if any, restrictions should be placed upon children. They are to have what they desire and go without nothing. Such an attitude, of course, leads to an indulged, pampered, and selfish personality.(See note—Eph.6:4.)

Thought 2. Children's questions about Jesus are often ignored or quickly and unthoughtfully answered. They are considered too young and too unimportant to merit much of our time. No one should ever be stopped from coming to Christ, no matter who they may be.

Thought 3. Too many *important persons* are unavailable to the small and less important persons of the world. The time of the *important* person is thought to be too valuable. There is some truth to this. Many of the less important could dominate the time of the more important to such an extent that the more important would not have time to function. But the demand of the important to be left alone is often a selfish and sinful demand.

4 (19:14-15) **Children**: Jesus rebuked those who stopped and disregarded the children. Note several things about Jesus.

1. Jesus rebuked those who stopped and disregarded the children. He said that such action was wrong. We are not to stop little children from coming to Him. Contrariwise, we are to bring them to Him. He is God; and as God, He is providential, doing as He wills. Therefore, He is the One who determines whom He will bless. No man determines for Him. No matter the tender age and lack of reason, children are not to be kept from coming to Him. No obstacle is to be put in their way.
2. Jesus called for and received the children. Children were welcomed even if they were so little they had to be brought. Children may be too little to understand, but Christ is big enough to bless them and to see that the blessing sticks all through eternity. He is, after all, God; and as God, He is omnipotent, all-powerful, and able to exercise His power as He wills. Children will in no way be rejected by Him.
3. Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to children. He was saying two things.
   a. Children are citizens of His kingdom, at least until their minds mature enough to personally choose or reject Him. Such a time is usually referred to as the *age of accountability*.
   b. Children demonstrate the traits needed to enter heaven (see outline and notes—Mt.18:3. This passage will help greatly in understanding just what Christ was saying.)
4. Jesus touched the children. He was not influenced by the objections. He went ahead and blessed the children. There is a great truth here that we often overlook. It is not so much that we come and touch God as it is that He comes and touches us. It is not so much that we apprehend God as it is that we are apprehended by Him (Ph.3:12-13).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).

God's blessing is not so much due to how rational and capable we are as to His purpose and will. God can choose to touch and bless whom He wills, and He demonstrates beyond all question that He chooses to touch and bless the children brought to Him.

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:14).

"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" (Ps.127:4-5).

"Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Ps.128:3).

"Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers" (Pr.17:6).

Thought 1. Jesus never refused to receive a person. We are...

- not to be too important to receive people
- not to be too busy or tired to receive people
- not to regard a person as too young or too old to receive
- not to be unavailable to people

	C. The Rich Young Ruler: How A Rich Man Enters the Kingdom of Heaven[DS1] **19:16-22** (Mk.10:17-22; Lk.18:18-23; cp. Lk.10:25-37)		a. The commandments dealing with our neighbor: Especially needed by the rulers & the rich of the world
1 Step 1: Seek eternal life[DS2] a. Approach Christ b. Confess your need	16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?	19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?	b. The wrong concept of God's law: A tragic sense of self-righteousness
2 Step 2: Know that God alone is good a. The wrong concept of man's nature: Man is *good* b. The right concept: God alone is good	17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.	21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.	**4 Step 4: Give all you are & have to Christ** a. Results: We receive heaven & treasures in heaven
3 Step 3: Keep the commandments	18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,	22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.	b. Rejection 1) Unbelief, v.17 2) Self-rgt. pride, v.20 3) Love of world, v.21

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

C. The Rich Young Ruler: How a Rich Man Enters the Kingdom of Heaven, 19:16-22

(19:16-22) **Introduction**: the Lord's approach to this young man has often seemed perplexing. There are three reasons for the perplexity.

1. The young man called Christ "Good Master," but Christ denied that He was good. How can Christ, who claims to be God, deny that He is good?
2. The young man asked how he might receive eternal life. Christ said nothing about believing but told the young man to keep certain laws.
3. The third perplexity is shocking. Christ told the young man that he had to sell all that he had and give it to the poor in order to receive eternal life. The question immediately arises, does Christ really demand that a person give all he is and has in order to be saved?

These three facts are puzzling. However, when we study the passage and understand what was happening, the puzzle fades. Christ led the young man through the steps that are needed to receive eternal life.

1. Step 1: seek eternal life (v.16).
2. Step 2: know that God alone is good (v.17).
3. Step 3: keep the commandments (v.18-20).
4. Step 4: give all you are and have to Christ (v.21-22).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(19:16-22) **Young People**: this man is known as "the rich young ruler." He is so called because of the composite picture gleaned from all three gospels.

⇒ He was rich (Mt.19:22; Mk.10:22; Lk.18:23).
⇒ He was young (Mt.19:20).
⇒ He was a ruler (Lk.18:18).

He was a rare young man among the young people of his day. He was conscientious, responsible, dependable—so much so that he had already been placed in a responsible position and made a ruler.

1 (19:16) **Eternal Life**: the first step to entering God's kingdom is to seek eternal life. The rich young ruler demonstrated how we should seek eternal life. He did exactly what we must do when we wish anything: seek it. We are to seek eternal life just as the rich young ruler did. But in seeking, there is a critical step to be taken: we must go to the right source. This is exactly what the rich young ruler did: (a) he approached Christ, the Source of eternal life; and (b) he asked, that is, confessed his need.

Note two things about the rich young ruler's seeking eternal life.

1. He believed that eternal life existed, that there was a thing such as eternal life. He believed there was life in another world, and he was sincere and eager (perhaps desperate) to receive it. He "came running and kneeled" before Jesus (Mk.10:17).
2. He did a rare thing. He openly confessed his eager concern for eternal life. Few of the rich would ever confess an open concern as he did, and few of the young would ever consider it important enough at their stage of life. He lacked and

had need, and he knew it and confessed it openly. He was seeking for inner peace and a sense of completeness, for a satisfaction which his wealth and position had not given him.

Thought 1. Note: a person does not secure eternal life; he receives it. And...

1) A man does not receive eternal life until he seeks it.

> **"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be overpast" (Ps.57:1).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps.145:18).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**

2) A man does not receive eternal life until he approaches Christ, the Source of life.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though you sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

3) A man does not receive eternal life until he confesses his need.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
>
> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).**
>
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(19:16) **Eternal Life**: note the different words that are used interchangeably throughout this passage. (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10.)

⇒ Eternal life: "That I may have *eternal life*" (v.16).

⇒ Life: "If thou wilt *enter into life*" (v.17).

⇒ Heaven: "Thou shalt have treasure in *heaven*" (v.21).

The way Christ dealt with the subjects of eternal life, life, and heaven is meaningful. In essence, what He was saying is threefold.

1. He was making a distinction between life and existence. To receive eternal life is to enter life; to really live as one should live; to live just as God intended life to be lived; to live full of love, joy, and peace (Gal.5:22-23). He was saying what Scripture proclaims time and again—that man without Christ does not have life. He is not living; he is only existing. He is in a state of death (always dying) and is separated from God, the Source of real life (Eph.2:1; 1 Jn.5:12).

2. He was teaching eternal existence. Man does not cease to be; he continues on and on. The only question is, does he continue on in a state of life, living eternally, or of death, being separated from God eternally? To receive eternal life means that a man "*enters* life," a continuation of life. To remain as he is means that a person continues on just existing, existing in a state of death, that is, being without God in this world and existing without eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).

3. He was teaching that heaven is another world—a real world in another dimension of being, an eternal dimension. It is wholly different from the physical and temporal dimension of this world. Note: there is to be "treasure *in heaven*" for following Christ, eternal treasure.

2 (19:17) **Man, Misconceptions of**: the second step to entering God's kingdom is to know that God alone is good. The rich young ruler failed at one critical point: he lived a self-righteous life. He did not know that the only good person was God and God alone. This is what Christ was saying to him. The rich young ruler had a wrong concept about the nature of man and saw Christ only as a man. To him man could be good.

1. He called Jesus "Good Master." By "Master" he meant "Good teacher, good Rabbi," acknowledging that Jesus was an honorable person to be highly regarded. But he saw Jesus only as a highly regarded teacher. He did not consider Jesus to be the Son of God. He perceived Jesus to be only a mere man, not God. He thought Jesus was a man who had achieved unusual moral goodness and by such had become a "Good Master," one capable of teaching the truths of God and life.
2. He asked, "What *good thing* shall I do?" He had a religion of works not of faith. He thought he could secure eternal life by being good. If he could just keep some great rule and live a clean life, then God would accept him. He believed that his acts of morality and good works piled up a balance sheet, making him acceptable to God.

Christ had to correct these two errors. He attempted to do so by asking a pointed question, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good, but one, that is, God." He was saying to the young man, "God alone is good. No man is good, not in comparison to God, not even good enough to stand before God in righteousness. If I am but a mere man, a good teacher, then I am not good and do not have the words to eternal life. But if I am God, then you can address me as good, and I do have the words to eternal life."

Note two things.

1. Christ told the young man how to enter life, that is, how to receive eternal life. Therefore, Christ was claiming to be God.
2. Christ was correcting the young man. He was speaking these words forcefully: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." Christ would not have the young man's thinking of Him only as a man, no matter how preeminent a teacher the young man thought Him to be. He was God, God's very own Son, and He was to be called the Son of God. Therefore, Christ tried to lead the young man to acknowledge Him as God. It was the only way the young man could ever receive eternal life.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him" (Jn.14:6-7).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).**

Thought 1. The great misconception of man is that man is good—that the basic core and the raw nature of man is good—that man...

- can be good enough to secure God's approval.
- can do enough good works to make himself acceptable to God.

There are at least two basic faults with the position of self-righteousness.

1) Self-righteousness lowers God, makes God less than perfect. It says that God will accept less than perfection. It almost makes man as high as God. In fact, theoretically and mathematically, if we can become better, gain more goodness, then we can work ourselves up to perfection. It says we can become as high as God, become as gods unto ourselves. Of course, such a theory and position are foolish. It fails to face up to the reality of the world, to the presence of evil and death and to the need to be transformed into a new creature capable of living eternally and perfectly.
2) Self-righteousness pollutes the area surrounding God with evil and imperfection. No matter how much good we do, we cannot make ourselves perfect. Bad and evil always lie in our background and roots. If God accepts us as bad and evil and wrong, then we would stand on the ground before Him imperfect, contaminating that ground and the atmosphere surrounding Him. Heaven would be contaminated and imperfect. Heaven would no longer be heaven, no longer perfect and free of sin.

There has to be a change, a complete and thorough change, of our being—a transformation, a new birth—before we can enter God's presence. Realistically, no man nor anything else can transform man so that his body becomes perfect and his acts become only good. No man has or ever will have the power to perfect his body and behavior to live perfectly, permanently and eternally. In our present bodies, we come short of God's glory and we die (Ro.3:23; 5:12; 6:23).

If we are going to be transformed, then God Himself will have to do it, and He will have to do it out of pure and perfect love. He will simply have to love us so much that he will transform us. And the glorious news is that He does love us that much. He loves us so much...

- that He gave His only Son to pay the penalty for our sins, which is death (1 Pt.2:24. This means, of course, that if the penalty has been paid, then we do not have to die.)
- that He gave His only Son to show us His great love and to lead us to believe in His love (Jn.5:24. This means, of course, that if we believe, then God will accept us and transform us.)

Thought 2. God alone is perfectly good. He is the Fountain, the Pattern, the Ideal of all goodness. All goodness is to be measured by Him.

The problem with the rich young ruler was that he had not thought deeply enough. His thinking was shallow. How could he ever measure up enough to become acceptable to God? Is God so low? If so, if God is less than perfect, then how could He be God?

Thought 3. Self-righteousness (a person who thinks that he can be good enough and do enough good to make God accept him) commits a terrible fault. It makes God's love less than perfect. How?

The person who walks in self-righteousness waters down God's love; he makes God's love less than perfect and disallows God the right to express His love perfectly.

⇒ A perfect love must express itself perfectly: it must, from its height of perfection, reach down to the lowest depth of imperfection and give itself for that imperfection. A perfect love reaches from the highest height to the lowest depth. And the lowest depth of imperfection is man, a being who (of all things) rebels against God Himself and lives a self-willed life instead of a God-centered life. (Just picture the terrible scene: a being, a man rebelling against the God of the universe, the Creator and Lord of all things.)

This is exactly what God did for man. He reached down from the highest height and gave His only Son, the highest and most perfect Being, for man who had reached the lowest depth in rebelling against God (Jn.3:16; 2 Cor.5:21; 1 Pt.2:24).

Thought 4. The rich young ruler failed in two areas.

1) He failed to face the reality of man's nature and the way of an imperfect world (Ro.3:10-20).
2) He failed to understand that Christ was more than a great and good man (see note—Mt.19:17).

3 (19:18-20) **Law—Commandments—Brotherhood**: the third step to entering God's kingdom is to keep the commandments. Once Christ had led the young man to trust Him as God, then Christ had to lead him to love his neighbor. This, too, was a critical weakness in the man. Because of his low concept of God and his inaccurate concept of man's nature, he would claim that he had loved his neighbor; that he had kept the commandments dealing with his neighbor. But Christ would prove that he had not loved his neighbor, not as he should. He had kept the commandments only in a superficial sense. He had not kept them within, not in his spirit. He had not loved his neighbor from the heart. If he had, he would have helped his neighbor more, much more (cp. v.21-22).

Christ told the young man very simply, "Keep the commandments." The young man asked, "Which?" By asking, the man revealed an inadequate concept of God's law. He thought some were more important than others. He wanted to know which ones would give him life.

Christ struck at the man's real problem. The man was failing to love his neighbor as himself, so Christ quoted five of the ten commandments, five that have to do with his duty toward his neighbor (Ex.20:12-16).

1. Murder: concerns our neighbor's life.
2. Adultery: concerns our neighbor's chastity and purity. To commit adultery does two things.
   ⇒ Adultery takes the body of our neighbor to ourselves and gives our body to another.
   ⇒ Adultery takes the body of our neighbor's spouse away from our neighbor and takes our own body away from our spouse.
3. Stealing: concerns our neighbor's property.
4. False witness: concerns our neighbor's name, reputation, and understanding of the truth.
5. Honoring parents: concerns our duty to the closest neighbors we have, our own family.

Note: Christ summed up all five commandments by saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev.19:18). This is what James called the "royal law" (Jas.2:8). The person who loves his neighbor will have excellent relations with all and will experience love, joy, and peace—the abundance of life. He will experience exactly what Christ says: he will "enter into life."

The man made the phenomenal claim that he had kept all five of the commandments that Christ quoted. Of course, as is true with all men, he had not kept them—not perfectly, not in God's eyes, not in the spirit in which God intended them to be kept. He was not generous enough with others, not giving and helping like he should. Christ was ready to show him this.

In essence, Christ had said to the rich young ruler: keep the commandments.

1. Keep the commandments dealing with your neighbor: the ones especially needed by the rulers and the rich of the world—the commandments which are so often misunderstood and neglected by rulers and the rich.
2. However, the rich young ruler misunderstood God's law: he had a tragic sense of self-righteousness.
   a. He thought that some commandments were more important than others.
   b. He thought that man could keep the commandments and build up a balance sheet against God, securing God's acceptance.

> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments" (1 Jn.5:1-2).**

Thought 1. Note two extremely important facts.

1) The first thing Jesus told the young man was the very commandment of God.

> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**

2) Christ summed up the law in two commandments. The first has to do with our love for God which sums up the first five commandments, and the second is the one He used to sum up the second group of commandments which He quoted to this young man.

> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**

Thought 2. Note that the very commandments quoted by Christ are the commandments needed by the rich, the powerful, the famous, and the wise. They are the commandments so often ignored, neglected, and denied by the achiever. In fact, the achiever sometimes uses and steps upon his neighbor to secure what he seeks.

4 (19:21-22) **Self-Denial**: the fourth step to enter God's kingdom is to give all you are and have to Christ. Christ knew exactly what the young man needed. His rejection of Christ showed this. He was hoarding wealth instead of distributing it. God had given to him that he might have to give to others (Eph.4:28), but he was failing to love and help his neighbor anywhere close to what he should.

What the young man needed was just what Christ said: "If thou wilt be perfect [that is, really keep the commandments and receive heaven], then demonstrate to all publicly and without question that you love your neighbor: go and sell *all* you have, and give to the poor...and come *follow* me."

In our struggle to protect the glorious truth that man is saved by grace and grace alone, we often forget and neglect another great truth: to follow Christ is to serve and minister to our neighbor. To follow Christ is to deny self completely, all that we are as well as all that we have (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). When we love our neighbor as ourselves, then we show that we truly love God. If we do not love and minister to our neighbor (above self), then we do not love God.

When we deny self by giving all we are and have (1 Jn.4:20), then and only then do we receive heaven and the treasures of heaven. To deny self, to give all we are and have, is a hard saying; but Christ demands it. Our attempts to soften it do not annul His demand (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.3:3).

The young man rejected Christ for three reasons.

1. Unbelief: he was not willing to entrust his life to Christ. There was some lack of belief that Jesus Christ was really God's very own Son standing before him.
2. Self-righteousness and pride: his concept of religion was keeping laws and doing good in order to secure God's acceptance. He felt that he had the power and goodness to make God approve and accept him.
3. Love of the world: he was rich and was unwilling to give up the comfort and possessions he had obtained. He made the fatal mistake that so many make with wealth, power, and fame.
   a. He loved the things of the world more than he loved people. He preferred hoarding and extravagance, preferred living sumptuously and comfortably to helping those who were so desperately in need: the hungry, thirsty, poor, diseased, suffering, orphans, widows, widowers, empty, lonely, and the lost.
   b. He loved the things of the world more than he loved the hope of eternal life.
   c. He loved the position and recognition and esteem and power of the earth more than he loved Christ.

> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**

	D. The Danger of Riches, 19:23-26 (Mk.10:23-27; Lk.18: 24-27)		
1 The fact: Wealth pulls a person from the Kingdom of heaven[DSI,2,3] a. Creates big "I," v.16,20 b. Makes one hoard, v.21 c. Attaches to world, v.22 **2 The great difficulty illustrated: It is easier**	23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel	to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. 25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.	**for a camel to go thru the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God** **3 The shock: Who is saved if wealth is not God's blessing & a blessing of righteousness?** **4 The only hope for the rich** a. To turn away from men b. To turn to God & His power[DS4]

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

D. The Danger of Riches, 19:23-26

(19:23-26) **Introduction**: the words "then said Jesus" connect this passage to the experience of the rich young ruler. Jesus took the rich young ruler's rejection and *warned* all men about the dangers of wealth. Wealth is fraught with dangers and pitfalls...

- for the man who is seeking to be rich
- for the man who is already rich

The dangers are many, and they are entangling and enslaving—so much so that Christ made the shocking statement that it was extremely difficult for a rich man to be saved.

The words are strong; the idea is shocking. However, Christ loves and cares for all men including the rich, so He had to be truthful. It is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter heaven. The dangers that face the rich are real and terrible, so the warning must be real and truthful.

1. The fact: wealth pulls a person from the Kingdom of Heaven (v.23).
2. The great difficulty illustrated: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God (v.24).
3. The shock: who is saved if wealth is not God's blessing and a blessing of righteousness (v.25)?
4. The only hope for the rich (v.26).

1 (19:23) **Wealth—Materialism—Pride—Worldliness**: wealth pulls a person away from the Kingdom of Heaven. It is difficult for a rich person to enter heaven. Christ made this statement because of the things that *pulled* the rich young ruler away. Wealth does pull a person away from heaven. There is a lure, an attraction, a force, a power, a pull that reaches out to draw us when we look at or possess wealth. There are pulls so forceful that they will enslave and doom any rich man who fails to turn and embrace God.

1. *Wealth creates the big "I"* (cp. v.16, 20). The wealthy are usually esteemed, honored, and envied. Wealth brings comfort, possessions, position, power, and recognition. It boosts *ego* and makes a person self-sufficient and independent in this world. As a result, there is a tendency for the rich to feel independent and self-sufficient, to live as though they need nothing; and in such an atmosphere and world of thought, God is forgotten. A person forgets that there are things that money cannot buy and events from which money cannot save. Peace, love, joy—all that really matters within the spirit of man—can never be bought. Neither can money save a person from trouble, disaster, disease, accident, or death—the trials that are sure to come upon all.

2. *Wealth tends to make a person hoard* (cp. v.21). The Bible lays down the principle for handling money for all men, even for the poor:

> **"Let him labor...that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**
> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.19:19; 22:39).**

The world reels in desperate need. People are starving, sick, unhoused, unclothed, and suffering by the millions; and teeming millions are spiritually lost and without God in this world and doomed to die without ever knowing Him. When any of us sit still and objectively look at the world in its desperate plight, we ask: "How in this world can any man hoard and not help—even to the last available penny? Why would any man keep more than what he needs for himself and his family?"

As God looks at the rich, He is bound to ask the same questions. In fact, His questions are bound to be more pointed and forceful. This is exactly what Christ said to the rich young ruler:

> **"Go and sell that thou hast; and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**

3. *Riches tend to make a man selfish*. For some unexplainable reason, the more we get, the more we want. When we taste the things of this world and become comfortable, we tend to fear losing our possessions. We struggle to keep what we have and to get more. True, many are willing to make contributions—but only a certain amount, an amount that will

not lower their overall estate, or standing, or level of comfort and possessions. There are few who give all they are and have to Christ in order to meet the needs of the world.

As Christ said, "It is difficult, very difficult for the rich [meaning those who have anything in comparison with most of the world] to enter heaven." If we do not have compassion and take care of our brothers (fellow-man) when they are in desperate need, how can we expect God to have compassion and take care of us when we face the desperate need for heaven? It is foolish for us to think that a loving and just God will meet our need for life when we would not meet the need of our fellow man for life. The rich (all of us who have anything in comparison with the rest of the world) have the means to help and to reach the world with the gospel if they just would.

4. *Wealth attaches a person to the world* (cp. v.22). Wealth enables a person to buy things that...
   - make him comfortable
   - please his taste
   - stir his ego
   - expand his experience
   - challenge his mental pursuit
   - stimulate his flesh
   - stretch his self-image

If a man centers his life upon the things of the world, his attention is on the world and not on God. He tends to become wrapped up in securing more and in protecting what he has. Too often, he gives little if any time and thought to heavenly matters. Wealth and the things it can buy can and usually do consume the rich.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(19:23) **Hardly** (duskolos): the word means barely or with great difficulty. It is difficult, very difficult for a rich man to enter heaven. Why? In one simple sentence, it is difficult for a rich man to give all that he has to help the needy—to give all that has been so pleasing, so comfortable, so ego boosting, and so rewarding in possessions and position and self-esteem.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(19:23) **Rich**: Who are the rich? This question seriously needs to be asked of every individual in light of the great and desperate needs of the world. Every one of us needs to compare what we have with what the vast majority of the world has. The rich are persons who have anything to put back beyond meeting the needs of their own family (and by needs is meant *real* needs). This is exactly what Christ and the Bible say time and again (cp. also Mk.12:41-44; Lk.21:1-4; Acts 4:34-35).

In a summary statement, who are the rich? The rich are any of us who have anything beyond what we need. What Christ demands is that we give all that we *are and have* to meet the needs of those in such desperate need, holding back nothing. This is often the great complaint against Christians, that we just do not believe, not to the point that we are willing to follow the sacrificial example of Christ. The evidence of our unbelief is seen in Christ's insistence that we give all we have to feed the starving and to meet the desperate needs of the world, and yet we do not do it. Gandhi, the great leader of India's independence, is said to have never embraced Christianity for this very reason. How many others have rejected Christ because of our hypocrisy?

"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"Seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Lk.12:31-34).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:35).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:33).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).

"Let your conversation [life, behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(19:23-24) **Kingdom of Heaven**: the Kingdom of Heaven evidently means the same thing as the Kingdom of God, eternal life, and salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are interchanged when Jesus says, "a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Mt.19:23) or "Kingdom of God" (Mt.19:24). Eternal life (Mt.19:26) and salvation (Mt.19:25) belong to the very same concept. Eternity and salvation, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, is the very subject being discussed in Mt.19:16-30. Having eternal life, being saved, or entering into the Kingdom of God or of Heaven is more difficult for a rich man than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

The Kingdom of Heaven and of God is revealed in four different stages throughout history.

1. There is the spiritual kingdom that is at hand; it is present right now (Mt.4:17; 12:28).
   a. The present kingdom refers to *God's rule and reign and authority in the lives of believers*.

> **"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph.1:18-23).**
>
> **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:5-11).**
>
> **"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).**

   b. The present kingdom is offered to the world and to men in the person of Jesus Christ.
   c. The present kingdom must be received as a little child.

> **"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mk.10:14-15).**

   d. The present kingdom is experienced only by the new birth.

> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**

   e. The present kingdom is entered now and must be received now.

> **"Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Mt.21:31).**
>
> **"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mk.10:15).**

   f. The present kingdom is a spiritual, life-changing blessing.

> **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).**

   g. The present kingdom is to be the first thing sought by believers.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**

2. There is the professing kingdom that is also in this present age. It refers to modern-day Christianity in every generation. It pictures what the Kingdom of Heaven or professing Christianity is like and what professing Christianity will be like between Christ's first coming and His return. This imperfect state is what is called "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.13:1-52, esp.11).

> **"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed [good men] in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares [evil men] among the wheat, and went his way" (Mt.13:24-25).**

3. There is the millennial kingdom that is future. It is the actual rule of Christ or the government of Christ that is to come to this earth for a thousand years.

a. The millenial kingdom is the kingdom predicted by Daniel.

> **"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan.2:44).**
>
> **"But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever....Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom....And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan.7:18, 22, 27).**

b. The millenial kingdom is the kingdom promised to David.

> **"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom....And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever" (2 Sam.7:12, 16).**
>
> **"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Ps.89:3-4).**
>
> **"In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them" (Zech.12:8).**

c. The millenial kingdom is the kingdom pictured by John.

> **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev.20:4-6).**

4. There is the perfect kingdom of the new heaven and earth that is future.

a. The eternal kingdom is the rule and reign of God in a perfect universe for all eternity.

> **"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:1-3).**
>
> **"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor.15:24).**
>
> **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:10-13).**
>
> **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev.21:1).**

b. The eternal kingdom is the perfect state of being for the believer in the future.

> **"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).**
>
> **"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev.21:4-5).**

c. The eternal kingdom is an actual place into which believers are to enter sometime in the future.

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.8:11).

d. The eternal kingdom is a gift of God that will be given in the future.

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk.12:32).

2 (19:24) **Riches—Camel—Needle**: it is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is so difficult that Jesus says, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

There have been various interpretations of *camel* and *needle* in an attempt to soften the words of Jesus. For example, some have said that the "needle" was a small gate in the wall surrounding Jerusalem, a small gate which sat right beside the large gate. It is thought that the large gate was closed at night to protect the city from marauders and enemies, and the small gate was used by the travelling public. The small gate is said to have been called "the Needle's Eye" because it was so small that it was difficult for even a single person to pass through.

Others have said that the Greek word Christ used was *kamilos* (a ship's rope or cable) not *kamelos* (camel). Note: the only difference between the two words is that the letter *i* is an *e* in the word for camel (kamelos).

Three things need to be noted about these interpretations.

1. There is no doubt that Jesus means a literal *needle*. He as much as says so in v.26, "With men this is impossible." What He does is use a proverbial saying *for an impossibility*. Most countries have proverbs that express the impossibility of some things. The camel was the largest animal among the Jews, so Christ either used a well known proverb among the Jews or else created one. There is also this point, when Christ chose to speak in parables, He chose the most common and ordinary thing to express His meaning.

2. Attempts to soften the Lord's point are just that: attempts to soften. But nothing can be softened with v.26, "With men this is impossible." No man, not even the rich man himself, can save a rich man. The danger of riches is very real and terrible. Wealth entangles and enslaves a man so much that it is extremely difficult for a rich man to let go and give his wealth to help the desperate needs of the world. He just cannot accept the fact that he is to "labor so that he may have to give to others" (Eph.4:28). If a man is rich, it is difficult not to live in personal luxury and to build large estates. Heavy and fancy meals, full and fashionable wardrobes, a fine and large house, recognition and attention, position and power—so much is so difficult to let go. It is the ego that refuses to let go.

3. It is just as difficult for the softening interpretations to be performed as it is for the literal interpretation. How does a camel's trying to get through a gate made only for a man soften anything? It would be impossible. And how does threading a needle with a ship's cable soften anything? Again, it is impossible.

Thought 1. In the illustration given by Christ, there are some comparisons between a camel and a rich man.

1) A camel is *too big* to go through the eye of a needle; a rich man is too big to go through the gate of heaven.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

2) A camel *never thinks* about going through the eye of a needle; a rich man seldom, if ever, thinks about going into heaven.

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit" (Pr.18:11).

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Dt.8:13-14).

3) A camel was *not made* to go through the eye of a needle; a man was not made for wealth, not made to be possessed and enslaved by the *things* and *possessions* of this world.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

4) A camel *works* for its master; a man is to work for his Master (God).

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col.3:22-24).

3 (19:25) **Wealth—Salvation**: the disciples were shocked, thoroughly dismayed. Christ was saying something diametrically opposed to what they and everyone else had always thought. They had been taught (as have succeeding generations, even the church)...

- that prosperity (wealth, comfort, and things) is God's blessing.
- that a person receives and has because God is blessing him.
- that prosperity is the reward of righteousness and obedience.
- that God blesses a person with the things of this earth if they are righteous and obedient.

However, Christ was saying the very opposite: that a prosperous person would most likely never enter heaven; that prosperity posed such a dangerous threat to a person that his eternal doom was almost assured. The disciples knew that God would never put a person in such a precarious and dangerous position. They knew that Christ was attacking the world's most cherished and ardent belief: be good (righteous) and you will be blessed by God (and the thought of blessing is always of material blessing. See note—Eph.1:3 for more discussion.)

They were shocked, thoroughly dismayed: Who then could be saved? The vast majority of people were threatening their own eternal destiny. They were dooming themselves. Since prosperity is not the reward (sign) for righteousness, and the rich are barred from heaven, that means that the poor, too, are barred; for they are spending most of their time dreaming and seeking prosperity!

The idea that prosperity is the reward for righteousness, that God blesses a person with the things of this earth if they are righteous and obedient, is so prevalent a view that a comment is needed at this point.

1. God's concern is spiritual blessings, not material blessings. God promises a man the necessities of life (food, clothing, shelter) if he seeks God first (Mt.6:33; cp. Mt.6:25-34). God can, if He chooses, bless any of us with whatever and however much He wishes for special purposes, for the purposes of having in order "to give to him that needeth." But just because a man is prosperous does not mean the man is righteous, and just because a person is righteous does not mean that he is going to be blessed materially. Righteousness and prosperity have nothing to do with each other. In fact, "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."
2. Wealth is seldom a good thing. As Christ taught in this passage, wealth is fraught with dangers that make it extremely difficult for the rich to enter heaven. Nevertheless the whole world, rich and poor alike, puts its primary attention upon securing more and more.
3. Wealth is secured by man himself, by his own energy and effort. Man secures wealth by dreaming how to make it (a vision, perspective) and having the initiative to make it (acting and timing). A man may trust God to help him secure wealth, but a man may have nothing to do with God and secure wealth on his own. There is a sense in which a man's strength and mind are from God, but that has nothing to do with a personal or active relationship with God. Most rich men control their own lives and go about securing their treasure on this earth *without God* (Mt.6:21).

On the other hand, a man may trust God to bless him so that he may help others, and God may choose to bless him. But God's choosing to bless him is for the purpose of helping others, not to hoard and live above what is needed (extravagantly and sumptuously). In fact what Christ teaches is that the rich are *to live just as sacrificially* as the poor. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.19:23; Mk.12:42. See outline—Lk.21:1-4.)

Thought 1. Something is usually forgotten: man was not made for things (money, wealth, possessions), but things were made for man. Yet man allows himself to become enslaved to things, ever lusting after more and more.

Wealth (money, possessions, things) is only a commodity—a means, a tool—to help man carry out his purpose and service upon earth. At least, that is what wealth is supposed to be. But most men become the tool and the commodity of money. Few men know why God put them on earth.

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes" (Ps.118:9).

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Is.2:22).

"Thus saith the LORD; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).

4 (19:26) **Wealth—Salvation—Repentance**: there is one hope for the rich man—God.

1. A rich man must turn away from men. No man can save a rich man nor any other man for that matter.
   a. No man has the strength or know-how to break the power of *seeking things* that hold sway over a rich man. The natural urge within man is to seek more and more comfort and ease and possessions. No man has the power to break that *natural urge*. The entanglements are too pleasing and enslaving
   b. No man can recreate the soul of a man, change it so that he seeks "those things which are above" and sets his "affection on things above, *not on things on the earth*" (Col.3:1-2). No philosophy, no psychology, no medicine, no education, no politics, no social movement can change the soul of a man.

"A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven...Who then can be saved [for even the poor dream and seek]?...With men this [salvation] is impossible" (v.23, 26).

2. A rich man must turn to God and His power. God is the only hope for a rich man. Only God can break a rich man's enslavement to this earth—only God can convert and change, turn and save the rich man from the danger and doom of wealth.

How? Very simply. The words of Christ to the rich young ruler tell the rich what to do: "...go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

This is a hard saying, a difficult thing for any of us to do—so difficult that we try to escape from its stringent demand, softening it and explaining it away. *But it is what Christ said. The disciples understood it perfectly* (v.25-27).

In very practical terms, to receive eternal life, we must *give all we are and have*. Naturally, this is more difficult for the rich, for "he has great possessions" (v.22).

There are four practical steps that will help a rich man be saved.

1. He must listen and heed immediately the inner voice, the pricking of conscience to give his life and possessions to God. He must turn immediately to God and never turn away.
2. He must study God's Word daily for direction, and talk to and trust God to keep his heart free from the lure and deceptions of possessions.
3. He must use his wealth to help the desperate needs of others. He must *realize, know, and acknowledge* that the vast majority of the world is hungry, hurting, and needing help—desperately so—and that God expects him to use all he has to meet those needs. He must not hoard and live extravagantly in the midst of so much need.
4. He must develop a strong desire for heaven, knowing that his sojourn on earth is ever so short, as brief as the lily of the field.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb.11:24-26).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(19:26) **Rich, The**: some rich persons did turn to Christ. They serve as excellent examples for the rich to follow in turning to God (also see outline—Lk.8:2-3).

⇒ James and John (Mk.1:20; cp. note—Mk.10:36-37).
⇒ Matthew (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.9:9-13).
⇒ Zacchaeus (Lk.19:1-10).
⇒ Joseph of Arimathaea (Mt.27:57).
⇒ Nicodemus (Jn.20:39 cp. 3:1f. He may or may not have been saved.)
⇒ Lydia (Acts 16:14-15).
⇒ Manaen, a foster brother of Herod, who was probably wealthy (Acts 13:1).
⇒ Some women who supported Jesus (see outline and notes—Lk.8:2-3).

	E. The Reward for Believers, 19:27-30 (Mk.10:28-31; Lk.18:28-30)	of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.	rule, govern, direct c. Judge, govern whom: Twelve tribes of Israel[DS1]
1 The two essentials for reward a. Must forsake all b. Must follow Christ	27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?	29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.	**3 The believer's reward: Shall receive great reward** a. Reason: Left all—supreme allegiance b. The present reward: An hundredfold c. The future reward: Everlasting life
2 The apostles' reward: Shall reign & rule with Christ a. When: In the new age b. Purpose: To judge—	28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne	30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.	**4 The shocking surprise: The severe judgment of bel.—perfect justice**

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

E. The Reward for Believers, 19:27-30

(19:27-30) **Introduction**: Peter's question is often misunderstood. Peter was not being mercenary; he needed assurance. He wanted to make sure that he and the other disciples were *really saved*. Anyone would need assurance after what Jesus had just said: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

Few sell everything and give it all away (v.21), and few, whether rich or poor, control their dreams and urges to have more (see note—Mk.10:25). The disciples, as all honest men, knew this. They also knew the extreme demands Christ was making to be a true follower of Christ. They, unlike so many of us in our attempts to soften His words, understood exactly what He was saying. The extremity of His words was shocking. They could not see how anyone could be saved, and the answer Christ gave to their question about salvation said nothing to give them *personal* assurance: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (v.26).

The disciples sensed a deep need for assurance. Had they done enough and given up enough? They thought so and were almost sure they had, but had they? Somewhat meekly Peter said, "Lord, behold [look] we have forsaken all, and followed thee. We have surrendered all to you. What shall we have therefore? Shall we receive eternal life...?" Christ used Peter's question to teach a wonderful truth. They and all who followed Him could rest assured—they would be enormously rewarded.

Note the Lord's assuring words: "I say *unto you*, that *ye*...shall sit in the throne of [My] glory....And everyone that hath forsaken [all]...shall inherit everlasting life" (v.28-29).

1. The two essentials for reward (v.27).
2. The apostle's reward: shall reign and rule with Christ (v.28).
3. The believer's reward: shall receive great reward (v.29).
4. The shocking surprise: the severe judgment of believers—perfect justice (v.30).

1 (19:27) **Rewards—Believers—Self-Denial**: there are two essentials for reward.

1. A person must forsake all. What is meant by this? Peter and some of the other disciples had families, and they readily met the needs of their families (Mt.8:14). Therefore, *forsaking all* does not mean deserting and shirking our day-to-day responsibilities to our families. What *forsaking all* means is to renounce and to relinquish all—to give up all unreservedly. It means that a person takes care of his family, yes; but beyond that, he uses what he has to meet the needs of a desperate world. It means that a person serves and puts Christ before all, including family and friends. It means that a person *forsakes all sinful behavior* such as dirty habits, evil associations, crooked ways, off colored jokes and curse words. It means that we allow nothing to interfere with serving Christ. It means to put *following Christ* first. When we put Him first, we discover a wonderful truth: life becomes balanced. All other things, including family, fall into their proper place; and life becomes a most enriching experience (even if a person's family rejects him).
2. A person must follow Christ (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). A person who really follows Christ has no sense of regret and no desire to complain. He is truly a new creature: "old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17). He is satisfied and complete (Col.2:10).

> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me" (Lk.5:27).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me, For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake. Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).**

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

Thought 1. We face two great dangers that can lower our reward.

1) Not forsaking all for Christ: hanging on to some things whether behavior, habit, relationship, or possession.
2) Super-spirituality: after forsaking all for Christ, there is always the danger of thinking that we have given up and sacrificed more than others. Several areas in particular lend themselves to spiritual pride...
   - suffering
   - service and works
   - financial and benevolent gifts
   - talents and spitirual gifts
   - ministry and ministerial position
   - being saved from the depth of sin

Thought 2. Some attempt to bargain with God. This is not to be. We are to go ahead and forsake all, trusting and following Christ (2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16).

2 (19:28) **Reward—Apostles—Regeneration**: the apostles were to be wonderfully rewarded. They were to receive a great honor—the honor of ruling and reigning with Christ Himself. Note that Christ told them three things. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28 for a discussion of these three points.)

⇒ When they would reign with Him.
⇒ Why they would reign with Him.
⇒ Whom they would govern and direct in their reign.

The word "regeneration" (paliggenesia) means recreation, restoration, renovation, renewal, new birth. The word is used one other time in the New Testament referring to the new birth of an individual (Tit.3:5). Here Christ uses the word to refer to the "restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21), a period of time in the future when He will set up the new order of things under His personal rule and reign (cp. Ro.8:19-23; Is.11:6-9). That day is often called the day of redemption or referred to as the Kingdom of God. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Eph.1:7; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.)

Note several things.

1. The "restoration of all things" is in the future. Christ did not say "ye which have followed me in the regeneration" but "ye which have followed me, in the regeneration *when* the Son of Man shall...." The comma is to be placed after "followed me." The period of time is "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory"—a time out in the future.

2. Christ said that the apostles would be rewarded with twelve thrones, each one governing one of the twelve tribes of Israel. When were they to govern? "In the regeneration," when the new order of things shall be set up under the rule and reign of Christ. But when is the new order of things to be? There are two possible answers: either during the millenial reign of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Rev.20:4-6) or during the new heavens and earth (Rev.21:1f; cp. 1 Cor.15:23-28).

There are three passages in which Christ deals with the regeneration as predicted here.

"Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mt.19:28).

The request of James and John's mother: "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom...And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Mt.20:21, 23).

"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Lk.22:28-30).

The fulfillment of this promise seems to be the Messianic kingdom or millenial reign of Christ on earth. This seems to be the way Christ's promise to Israel will be fulfilled.

"And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, the city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Is.1:26).

3. It should be noted, however, that some find great difficulty in saying there is *ever again to be a distinction between Jew and Gentile*. They say that Christ came to bring peace to all men and between all men, breaking down the wall of partition between all. They say that the great weight of Scripture is opposed to there ever again being a distinction between Jew and Gentile. This interpretation simply says that when Christ returns, that is it; the end of time will be at hand. When He returns, He sets up His *eternal* reign and rules forever. Therefore, the apostles' rule and reign refers to the church, that is, to spiritual Israel or to the true Israel of God (Gal.6:15-16; cp. Ro.2:28-29).

4. Christ said He would reward the apostles with *a particualar honor*. Why? The apostles believed and followed Christ in the embryonic or beginning stage of Christianity. They clung to their belief and endured in the face of unbelievable odds. Just imagine!

⇒ Imagine standing before a man who looks just like all other men, merely a man, and believing that man to really be the *Son of God*.
⇒ Imagine clinging to and continuing to follow Christ when everyone else had turned away from Him (cp. Jn.6:67).
⇒ Imagine following immediately upon the heels of the risen Lord and being instantly responsible for reaching the world. (No wonder God had to plan for His Spirit to infill the disciples as He did on Pentecost and to live within our bodies as He does. See notes—1 Cor.3:16; 6:19-20.)

⇒ Imagine continuing on and on, trying to be obedient and to reach more and more despite unbelievable odds and having to constantly face the harassment of their fellow citizens, the Judaizers or religionists.

⇒ Imagine confronting and enduring through unbelievable threats and persecution launched from both an immoral government and a man-corrupted religion that reacted fiercely against those who differed with it.

The apostles not only were responsible for more and faced more than most of us will ever know but they also were responsible for and faced more than we can ever imagine (cp. 1 Cor.4:9-13; 2 Cor.11:24-28).

Thought 1. There are two regenerations.

1) The regeneration of a person's life: a rebirth, a recreation of a person's nature and life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:1-15).
2) The regeneration of the universe: a remaking of heaven and earth (Ro.8:21-23; 2 Pt.3:10-13; 21:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(19:28) **Judging (Krino)—Eternal Life**: to judge, govern, direct; to administer affairs, supervise, and oversee. The assignment of responsibilitiy, of duties, of work to be done is being taught here. There is to be *judging*, that is, governing, giving direction and supervision and oversight throughout eternity. Christ told the apostles that they would govern and oversee Israel. Paul said that believers would direct and oversee the world and angels (1 Cor.6:2-3). All this activity and responsibility, of course, is under the direction of Christ.

For some unknown reason we so often picture *eternal life* as some dreamy sleep or semi-conscious type of existence. We think of it as some future existence that puts us on a fluffy cloud upon which we float in an eternal state of inactivity. Why man cannot accept the simple statement of Christ that life is to be eternal is difficult to understand. Eternal life is life that goes on and on. There is, however, one basic difference: life shall be perfected—perfected in body, mind, and spirit. It is life lived in the midst of a new heavens and earth (perfected)—life lived before Christ and responsible to Christ in all that it is assigned (Jn.3:16; 5:24; Ro.8:19-23; 2 Pt.3:9-18; 1 Jn.5:11-13; Rev.21:1).

3 (19:29) **Reward**: the apostles are not the only ones to be rewarded. Every true follower of *Christ* shall be greatly rewarded. Christ said three things about the reward of the believer in this verse.

1. The reason for the reward: the believer is to be rewarded because he has left all; he has given his supreme allegiance to Jesus Christ (see note—Mt.19:27, the two essentials for reward).

Note that the two closest things to a man are named by Christ: his immediate family and his possessions (honor and lands). These are by far the most difficult things to surrender to Christ. Hobbies, habits, pleasures, friends—all can be given up (subjected to Christ) quicker than family or possessions. Note also that Christ began and ended the list with material possessions. How enslaving they are, even more so than family for some persons!

2. The present reward: an hundredfold. The Gospel of Mark makes it clear that Christ was speaking of present reward (Mk.10:21). No true follower of Christ has ever forsaken anyone or anything and been left alone and destitute by Christ. Christ rewards His true follower manyfold. Note: the reward is both human and material.

a. The human reward is a real and true fellowship among genuine believers. Christ knows when a follower of His has been turned against by those whom Christ loves ever so deeply. Christ knows when to send someone into the life of His own, when to meet the aching need of His follower for true friendship. He more than abundantly meets the need.

> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).**
>
> **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).**
>
> **"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Ro.12:5).**
>
> **"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:63).**
>
> **"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Mal.3:16).**

b. The material reward is the meeting of necessities and whatever else God wants us to have left over so that we can help meet the needs of others.

The idea Christ was conveying is that of perfect material care and security. The very reason we seek and seek is because we are basically insecure and have a basic urge to crave more and more. Craving, greediness, fear, and insecurity are most unhealthy and destabilizing. When we forsake all, genuinely following Christ, He gives us the greatest peace and security possible: Himself and His power to provide for our necessities. We never have to worry or be anxious again (see notes—Mt.6:25-34; Lk.16:10-12. Cp. Mk.10:29-30; Lk.18:28-30; Eph.4:28.) There is much more happiness, joy, peace, security, assurance, confidence, satisfaction, completeness, and fulfillment in Christ than in any amount of possessions or worldly companionship and friendship.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33; cp. Mt.6:25-34).**

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over" (Ps.23:5; cp. Ps.36:8).

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Ps.68:19).

"Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures" (Is.30:23).

"And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed" (Joel 2:26).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

3. The future reward is everlasting life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28. Cp. Ro.8:16-18.)

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk.10:21).

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:36).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:3).

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).

Thought 1. Christ promises to reward His followers presently, reward them with an unbelievable Christian community, fellowship, and security. He founded the church to fulfill this promise. The church has a high calling. Imagine, the local church and its genuine believers are to be as close to one another as families are. The church is to provide a precious fellowship for the alienated, lonely, shy, friendless, and stranger. It is to meet the needs where families fail.

A pointed question: how many churches provide a true fellowship (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 2:42)? How often does God have to turn away from local congregations to others in order to meet the needs of a disciple of His?

4 (19:30) **Reward—Judgment**: the Lord's words are clear. There is to be a severe judgment of believers—the execution of perfect justice. Our judgment, human judgment, is often inaccurate. *Many persons* shall be switched around: many whom we esteemed and rewarded the highest shall be placed last, and many whom we thought weakest and lowest shall be placed first. Only God knows the true heart of His servants. We judge and reward...

- by visible works
- by visible morality
- by age and seniority
- by friendliness
- by years as a Christian
- by recognition
- by esteem or influence
- by ability and skill
- by position

However, God sees into the heart of His dear followers, into the heart of every single one; and He shall straighten out the misjudgments of all our dear brothers and sisters in Christ. Christ leaves no doubt: the most humble on earth shall be elevated to be the greatest in heaven. It may be a shocking surprise, but there is to be judgment, a just realignment and positioning of believers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.5:10; note—1 Jn.3:1-2).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:13-15).

"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Lk.1:52).

"Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Lk.6:25).

"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Lk.16:25).

	CHAPTER 20 **F. The Parable of Laborers in the Vineyard: God's Glorious Grace, 20:1-16**		
1 God's grace provides work for man—a field to tend[DS1] **2 God's grace seeks & calls men to labor**[DS2,3,4,5] a. The early call: To the willing & eager 1) Shown grace: Promised a full wage 2) Sent into the field b. The late-comer call: To the idle—slothful—self seeking—complacent 1) Shown grace: A forceful challenge & the promise of a just wage 2) Some responded c. The constant call: To all—shows constant grace d. The final call: The eleventh hour call—to the idle 1) He strongly rebuked 2) They excuse themselves 3) He showed grace: A forceful challenge & the promise of a just wage	For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. 2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. 5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. 6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? 7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.	8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. 11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, 12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. 13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? 14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? 16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.	**3 God's grace pays the promised wages: At the appointed time, at the end of the day** a. Paid through His steward b. Paid out of a heart of care & grace 1) Cared & showed grace to the late comers: A full wage 2) Cared & showed grace to the eager workers: A full wage c. Pay is not based on works & energy: Illustrated by the eager workers who murmured over the same pay 1) Pay is gracious & just: A full wage as promised 2) Pay is based on God's care for all: For the last as well as for the first d. Pay is not as man sees (evil, selfish eyes): Pay is as God wills—He is good **4 God's justice will reign in paying what He promised**[DS6]

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

F. The Parable of Laborers in the Vineyard: God's Glorious Grace, 20:1-16

(20:1-16) **Introduction**: this is one of the most meaningful parables in Scripture, yet the meaning is sometimes missed. Christ was continuing His discussion of salvation (Mt.19:25) and everlasting life (Mt.19:29). (See note—Mt.19:27-30.) What He now wished to do was show *the marvelous grace of God* in salvation, in giving eternal life. This He did by sharing a parable—a parable which demonstrates God's marvelous grace as few other lessons do.

1. God's grace provides work for man—a field to tend (v.1).
2. God's grace seeks and calls men to labor (v.1-7).
3. God's grace pays the promised wages: at the appointed time, at the end of the day (v.8-15).
4. God's justice will reign in paying what He has promised (v.16).

1 (20:1) **Work—Labor—Grace—Purpose**: God's grace provides work for man, a field to tend. Two significant facts are being stressed.

1. It is God who provides work for man, who gives a field to be tended. The great Householder is God. The vineyard or field can be either the world or the church. The world, the church, and man himself are all due to God's grace. It is God's grace that has created man. It is God's grace that has provided the field (the world and church) for man to work in. Without God there would be nothing (Ro.11:36; Col.1:16f).
2. It is God who goes out to seek and call men to labor. It is not the workers who come to Him. God's going out after man is grace, marvelous grace (Lk.19:10; Jn.3:16; 15:16). Every step involved in the call of God is of grace: the call itself, the challange to go and labor, the promise of wages (reward), the acceptance of the responses, and the sending forth into the field. God did not have to issue a call or take any of the steps taken. Each step is a marvelous demonstraton of God's care and grace.

Note another matter: the soul of man serves something. It either serves self and sin or God and righteousness. Man either works for the world and its end or for heaven and its end (Ro.6:16-22). It is for this reason that God issues call after call (see outline above and notes for each of the calls).

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Mt.9:37-38).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-36).

"And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (Lk.12:42-43).

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:12-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(20:1) **Kingdom of Heaven**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.

2 (20:2) **Call—Purpose—Reward**: the early call is God's very first call to a person. It is directed at a person when there is a special willingness and eagerness to serve God. The first call is God's beginning to speak to the heart of a person. There is a tug, a pull, a voice, a thought, a movement in one's heart to listen and turn to God.

Note two things.

1. The householder promised the laborers a full wage. If the willing laborers believed his promise, they would go into the fields and work. If they did not believe his promise, they would not go. Their belief preceded their work. He promised, and they believed and served.

God's call is by grace, not by works. The fact that Christ speaks of work and wages does not in any sense mean that salvation is earned, that it is of works. We are saved by God's grace through faith (Ro.4:3-5; Eph.2:8-10).

2. The time of service was a day, which symbolizes a lifetime. When the day (life) ended, the willing workers would receive the promise of the householder. They would be rewarded with exactly what he had promised, and the reward would be theirs forever. The day was but a brief period of time in comparison with having their needs met. They could withstand any trial (burden or heat, v.12) for just a day, for it would soon end.

They had two things to encourage them to remain with the work: they had only a short period of time to labor, only one day, and they had the presence of the householder himself. He was constantly encouraging them, fellowshipping with them and reminding them of his promise.

"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid" (Mt.22:9).
"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).
"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Dt.30:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(20:3-4) **Call—Purpose**: the late-comer's call is a later call to a person. Every city has its labor market hangout. Any of us who have dealt with the labor market know that an employer often finds that he needs more workers as the day progresses. So he returns to call for more workers. Each time he returns it is, so to speak, an act of grace—he meets the need of more men.

An employer who asks laborers to join his working force meets all kinds of responses.

1. There are the *willing and eager* laborers. These are always out early, needing and looking for work. They realize and know their need, and they are extremely responsible in doing all they can to provide for their needs. Often they are men who want purpose, meaning, and significance as much as they want physical provision.
2. There are what Christ calls *the idle*. They have little if any interest in work at all. They are there simply because it is a gathering place where they can find company and pass time away.
3. There are the *self-seeking* or *pleasure laborers*. These move around questioning each employer about what kind of work is to be done. If the work sounds too difficult or not enjoyable and pleasing, they refuse, choosing to wait for something more pleasing and enjoyable. However, later on in the day, after nothing else more satisfying has come along, they are willing to heed the call of the earlier employer.
4. There are the *slothful laborers*. These are just lazy, not interested in a full-day's work. They prefer lying around, being loose and unobligated rather than exerting the energy and effort required by work. They choose to live with less rather than to work a full day. Thus, they show up at the marketplace only when they need a little work.
5. There are the *complacent laborers*, the slow-movers. They sleep late, move slow, and are always late in getting to the marketplace. They could care less if they miss the better opportunities, just so they are able to get enough to meet their immediate needs.
6. There are the laborers who are *weak failures*. These go to work at jobs that appeal to them, but they discover the jobs are hard and difficult. So they walk away from their commitment and return to the marketplace for something easier.

The parallel with God's late-comer call is easily seen. Note two things about the late-comer call that is different from the early call.

1. The call to work is more forceful: "Go ye." It has to be more forceful. All of these have already rejected the early call or else were not present to hear the call. Some of the day (of their life) has already passed and can never be recovered. It takes more force and more convincing to stir most of the late-comers.

2. The promise of a wage (reward) is promised but not an amount. The Lord merely said, "Whatsoever is right, I will give you." A late-comer, the person who does not respond to God until later in life, must simply trust God to be fair and just. The promise is that He will give *a just reward.*

"For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies" (2 Th.3:11).

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:12).

"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Pr.18:9).

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down" (Pr.24:30-31).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(20:5) **Call—Purpose**: the constant call is the occasional movement of God in the heart of man. There is nothing so tragic as a person who is unemployed, that is, not serving God in this world and in the church. God cares and God has plenty of work for every man to do. Therefore, He tries and tries to reach the heart of man, calling at every hour He can. Note three things about the constant call of God.

1. It is God's great compassion for all of us that keeps His calling to us.
2. The calls of God are limited; they are only periodic. In the parable, only four calls have been issued up to this point. There is only one more call to go, only five calls in a day and in a life. God's movement, His Spirit does not always strive with us (Gen.6:3). We know this by experience. When *the striving* begins in our heart or mind (whether through reading, hearing a message, or whatever) and we ignore it and do not make a decision immediately, it diminishes and finally quits. It leaves us, and we continue on just as we always have.
3. The calls of God become dimmer and dimmer and less forceful with the rejection of each call.
   - ⇒ Our conscience becomes harder; our minds less impressionable.
   - ⇒ Our hearts become less sensitive; our ego more self-centered.
   - ⇒ Our thoughts become more worldly; our lives more encumbered.
   - ⇒ Our wills become more sluggish (Pr.29:1).

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Josh.24:15).

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Ki.18:21).

"I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me" (Jer.35:15).

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the LORD God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezk.33:11).

"Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hos.6:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(20:5) **Time, Jewish**: a Jewish day began at 6 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m. The early call was issued before 6 a.m., the hour that work would begin. The late-comer call would have been issued at 9 a.m. when a fourth of the day (a life) had already passed. The sixth hour was 12 noon; the ninth hour was 3 p.m., and the eleventh hour was 5 p.m.

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(20:6-7) **Call—Purpose—Decision**: the final call is the last call of God to a man—it is the eleventh-hour call. Note what happens with the persons who wait until the eleventh hour.

1. God strongly rebukes them, much more forcibly than any of the others: Why stand ye here *all day* idle? There is no excuse for such behavior.
2. They excuse themselves: no man has hired us. Such is not the case; they lie, deceiving their own hearts.
3. God shows grace despite their deceptive excuse: He issues a forceful call and a promise of a just wage.

But note something: nothing is said about how many responded. Just think. How many actually would respond to go out for just one hour's work? How many would be willing to trust after rejecting four other offers during a single day? Realistically, not many would respond.

Three very practical things militate against a person who waits until the eleventh hour to accept God's call.

1. A man does not often know when the eleventh hour is. Few know when they are to die, much less when God shall call for the last time.

2. A man in the eleventh hour has little time to serve. A man who has failed to capture an opportunity that has passed tends to accuse and condemn himself. He senses unworthiness. There is little likelihood that he will sense God's call to the point of responding.

3. A man in the eleventh hour who has rejected call after call is hard, very hard. There is little softness and sensitivity left to respond to God's call—no matter how forceful.

> **"And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come" (Mt.22:3).**
>
> **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn.5:40).**
>
> **"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Ro.10:21).**
>
> **"And now, because ye have done all these works [evil], saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not" (Jer.7:13).**
>
> **"My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hos.9:17).**

3 (20:8-15) **Reward—Grace—Death**: God's grace pays the promised wages to those who have worked for Him. He will pay at the appointed time. When is the appointed time? In the evening, at death, when all labor ends. This is the meaning of *the evening*, of *the appointed time*. There are two *evenings*, two appointed times for the servant of God.

First, there is the evening or the time of death when the servant passes from this life into God's presence. He receives his reward of eternal life. God transports him into the Lord's presence, and the believer is transformed into the image of Christ (see note—1 Jn.3:2). This is the reward of wages referred to in this parable.

Second, there is the evening or the appointed time of judgment when the servants' works are to be judged (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.5:10). This evening of judgment *is not* what this parable is about.

1. The steward is Christ, God's Son, to whom God has committed all judgment (Jn.5:22; 2 Cor.5:10).

2. God pays everyone out of a heart of grace and care. This is so cricital to understand: God is love and He cares. He cares for all servants, no matter how old or how long they have been serving Him. He cares, wanting the laborers to have enough to meet their needs. A day's wage (the reward of eternal life) was necessary to meet their need. He would have no servant go away without at least that much. Therefore, He pays *even the late-comers* a full wage (eternal life).

Note another point: when we speak of eternal life and perfection, that is, of being conformed to the nature and image of Christ, God shows no preference. We shall all be made just like Christ, perfected in nature.

- ⇒ We shall have different responsibilities and, apparently, varying degrees of glory; but we shall all be perfected in nature.
- ⇒ We shall all face the Judgment Seat of Christ. We shall all receive different duties in heaven because of good and bad service here on earth, but we shall all be perfectly happy and joyful in what we do.
- ⇒ We shall all be judged for our faithfulness on this earth. Some shall be set up as large vessels and others as smaller vessels, but we shall all be perfectly complete and filled to the brim (2 Tim.2:20-21).
- ⇒ We shall all give an account for the trust and gifts put into our keeping. We shall all be rewarded accordingly, but we shall all be perfectly fulfilled.
- ⇒ We shall all stand before Christ for what fruit we have borne on earth, but we shall all be perfectly satisfied and fruitful.

> **"...Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Lk.14:23).**
>
> **"...many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.8:11).**

3. God's pay (reward) is not based on works and energy. It is based on God's grace and justice, and it is based on God's concern and care for all.

   a. Note that God is gracious and just and caring. God's grace and care do not annul or erase His justice. God is not unjust (cp. Ro.4:5-6).

      - ⇒ When God gives work to a man who is desperate for work, it is a caring and gracious act. Such was the case with the early call to the eager laborer. Not to take advantage of the man's desperation is an act of grace. To offer and pay a full wage and not take advantage of the man is not unjust but the very opposite. It is a just and gracious act, a very caring act.
      - ⇒ Similarly, when God pays a man more than what he earned because God cares that the man has enough to live, it is a gracious and caring act. It is not an unjust act against the first or earlier laborer. It is simply a gracious act that reveals God to be an enormously caring Person.
      - ⇒ If God gives us what He promised us, He is not unjust if He gives something to someone else. He is not even unjust to us if He gives an enormous gift to another person. He is just, and He is enormously caring and gracious by keeping His Word and giving to us *and to the other person*.

   b. Note that the complaining by the earlier workers causes some to apply the parable to the relationship between God and the Jews and the Gentiles. The earlier workers, representing the Jews, complain because God gives an equal pay (reward and position in His kingdom) to the Gentiles. Almost any commentary will give insight into this interpretation if the reader wishes to pursue it.

4. God's pay (reward) is not as man sees but as God knows and wills. Our eyes are evil because we are of an evil world. Therefore, we judge and understand from an imperfect and selfish stance. God is good; He cares and is full of

mercy and grace. Therefore, He gives eternal life to all who come, no matter when they come, at the early call or the eleventh-hour call.

"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11).

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Ro.3:24).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Tit.2:11).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).

4 (20:16) **Justice—Reward**: this is the very statement that caused Christ to share the parable—"So the last shall be first, and the first last" (cp. Mt.19:30; 20:16). Remember that the disciples needed assurance of their salvation. Christ gave them assurance and promised the reward of ruling and reigning with Him and living forever (cp. Mt.19:27-30. See note—Mt.19:27-30.) But Christ wanted them to know that they could not judge others, for they could not tell what was within a man, not for sure. They did not know who was to be highly rewarded and who was not.

For example, who would have ever thought that the willing and eager laborers who immediately responded to the Lord would expose a grumbling, jealous spirit? To prevent His servants from judging and showing preference among themselves, Christ closes His discussion of eternal life and salvation with two warnings.

1. The last shall be first; that is, many of the last (late-comers) will outstrip us unless we are fervent and zealous in serving God. We may have professed and served Christ for years before others did; yet we may...
   - fail to worship Christ day by day as consistently as the later workers.
   - fail to grow in the knowledge of Christ as eagerly as the later workers.
   - fail to study the Scriptures and pray as much as the later workers.
   - fail to use our gifts as faithfully as the later workers.
   - fail to witness as boldly as the later workers.
   - fail to give all that we are and have as willingly and sacrificially as the later workers.
   - fail to love as meekly as the later workers.
   - fail to respond as kindly as the later workers.
   - fail to live as unselfishly as the later workers.
   - fail to relate as lovingly as the later workers.
   - fail to endure as patiently as the later workers.
   - fail to look for the return of Christ as hopefully as the later workers.

Note: Christ seems to switch from discussing the gift of eternal life to warning His servant that there will be a judgment of works—a judgment that will determine degrees of glory and position and responsibility (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Judgment Seat of Christ*—2 Cor.5:10).

"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Lk.1:52).

"Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Lk.6:25).

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Lk.16:25).

"But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Ps.75:7).

"The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground" (Ps.147:6).

2. Many are called, but few are chosen. The servant must not be judging others (as the willing and eager servant did), for he has enough to do in making sure of his own calling and election (2 Pt.1:10). God's servant needs to be *working out his own salvation*. Outwardly it may appear that a man is a true servant, but inwardly he may be unchanged. Note that Christ says "many are called, but few are chosen." Many are counterfeit, *not willing to give all* they are and have. They are as the rich young ruler, just unwilling. The price of discipleship is too great. In all reality, how many are honestly following Christ as He demands throughout this discussion? (Mt.19:21, 29-30, 16. See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23.)

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me" (Lk.5:27).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(20:16) **Justice**: this footnote is placed last because it deals with a different subject than the outline above. *Is God unjust in His treatment of men*? This is the charge levelled against God by the willing and eager servant (v.10-15). Men often question and charge God with being unjust. Such an unholy charge is caused by religious and theological discussions and by wrong belief and unbelief. The charge is also levelled against God when a crisis arises and we question, "How could God do that or let that happen?"

The New Testament discusses the question of God's being unjust in three passages (see note, pts. 3 and 4—Mt.20:8-15; also see notes—Ro.3:5-8; Ro.9:14-33).

	G. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Resurrection (3rd Time), 20:17-19 (Mk.10:32-34; Lk.18:31-34)
1 Jesus took the disciples aside a. While on the way b. To prepare for death	17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,
2 He was to be betrayed & delivered for prosecution[DS1] a. The betrayer or deliverer was not named b. The prosecutors: The Jews or religionists	18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,
3 He was to be delivered for execution a. To the Gentiles b. By crucifixion	19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.
4 He was to be raised from the dead	

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

G. The Messiah Foretells His Death and Resurrection (3rd Time), 20:17-19

(20:17-19) **Introduction**: this is the third time that Matthew stresses the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ had warned His disciples time and again that He was to die and be raised on the third day (see outline and notes—Mt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; Mk.8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34. These passages should be studied with this passage. Matthew 17:22-23 includes most, if not all, of the New Testament passages on the death and resurrection of Christ. There is an abundance of material in these references.)

Jesus Christ had to get three facts across to His disciples.

1. Jesus took His disciples aside (v.17)
2. He was to be betrayed and delivered for *prosecution* (v.18).
3. He was to be delivered for *execution* (v.19).
4. He was to be raised from the dead (v.19).

1 (20:17) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus took the disciples aside to get all alone. The word "took" (parelaben) means that He took His disciples "apart to Himself." There is great meaning in these words.

1. There is tenderness and warmth and intimacy. He needed and wanted them close to Him, right by His side. He needed to feel and know their presence, in particular that they were with Him as He *went up to Jerusalem* to face death. They also needed His presence, to have Him right beside them and to feel what He felt. Such memories would help them as they faced the trials that lay ahead of them.

2. There is tremendous pressure and tension (also see note—20:19). The very aire surrounding them was tight. There seemed to be a heavy weight hanging over the Lord's head. He seemed to be consumed in deep thought—the kind of thought that quickens a person's pace, tightens the muscles of the body, and strains the expressions of the face. The pressure and tension cannot be overstated. Mark expressed it well: "They were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before [walked ahead of] them. And they were amazed [bewildered, perplexed]; and as they followed, they were afraid [seized with alarm]" (Mk.10:32).

Two events show just how much the pressure must have been building at this time:

⇒ the experience in the garden of Gethsemane where the pressure was so great that Christ sweated great drops of blood (Lk.22:44)

⇒ the experience of the cross where Christ was to suffer for the sins of the world, bearing to the ultimate degree all the pain possible for a heart, mind, and body to bear (1 Pt.2:24; cp. Mt.27:46; 2 Cor.5:21)

3. There is purpose and encouragement. This is seen in two facts.
   a. Jesus was deliberately "going up to Jerusalem." He did not have to go. He was fully Man, and as Man, He could choose what to do (Heb.2:16-18; 4:15). He knew what lay ahead, yet He would not shirk God's purpose.
   b. Jesus deliberately took the disciples apart to prepare them for His coming death. They were to face the most shocking event of their lives—an event so shocking that it could potentially devastate their lives and hinder God's plan for the ages. Christ had to prepare them to withstand the shock of His death (see note—Mt. 16:21-28).

There are at least two reasons why Jesus could not reveal His death by crucifixion to the public.

1. Many would have become discouraged from following Him. They would have feared the Romans who were to be the executioners of Christ. The fervor of the crowds would have cooled, and they would have forsaken Him. Seeing multitudes desert Christ could have discouraged the disciples tremendously, and this was not what they needed at this time. They needed encouragement and preparation for facing the cross.
2. Some of the people would be tempted to defend Christ, perhaps striking first. Some of the disciples, perhaps all, could be caught up in the fervor of such an ill-advised reaction.

Thought 1. Christ wants to draw all of us "apart to Himself."

1) He wants moments of tenderness and warmth with us, many such moments (Rev.3:20; cp. Ps.145:18; Lk.18:1; 1 Jn.1:3).
2) He wants us to draw near to Him in times of pressure and tension (Ph.4:6-7; Heb.4:15-16; Ps.34:18).
3) He wants us to draw near to Him for purpose and encouragement (Is.43:10; Mt.11:28-30; Jas.4:8-10). He wants us to guard against *shirking* God's purpose and to be more and more prepared to proclaim His death. He wants us fortified against the shock of being rejected, ridiculed, abused, and even persecuted as we go about fulfilling the purpose of God.

Thought 2. There are times to minister to the multitudes and times not to minister to them. The multitude was not yet ready to hear about the death of Christ. People have to be fed progressively. All have not reached the same level of spiritual growth and spiritual maturity.

1) Some are new in Christ. They are not yet grounded in the basics. They are not ready for the *meat* of the Word (1 Pt.2:2-3).
2) Some live carnal lives. They are not spiritually minded. They would not have the interest nor would they understand (1 Cor.3:1-2; Heb.5:11-14).
3) Some are unregenerate. They are in the church but are not followers of Christ. They have no interest in Christ and would be offended by the cross of Christ.

2 (20:18) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Christ was to be betrayed and delivered for prosecution.

1. The betrayer is not named. However, note the words "shall be betrayed" (paradothesetai). The phrase means *shall be delivered*. It is the same Greek word translated *delivered* in the next verse. Who delivered Jesus up to be prosecuted and executed? Jesus did not name the person. Scripture teaches that three persons delivered Jesus to be crucified (see note—Mt.17:22 for discussion).
2. The prosecutors of Jesus are named. They were the Jews, in particular the leaders among the Jews, the chief priests and Scribes and elders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.16:21; note—1 Th.2:15-16). But note: they were to be only the prosecutors not the executioners. They were forbidden by law to execute anyone (Jn.18:31). They had to deliver Him over to the Gentiles for execution. There is symbolism seen in this fact:
   a. Both Jew and Gentile (the world) are guilty of the death of God's Son.
   b. Christ was to bear the sin of both Jew and Gentile in His death. He was to reconcile both, that is, reconcile the whole world to God. (See outline and notes—Eph.2:14-18.)

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **" And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:16).**
>
> **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).**
>
> **"And he is the propitiation [sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).**

Thought 1. There is a truth that is seldom thought about: we are to *think often about death* even as Christ was obsessed with His death. There are three reasons we are not to shun and deny the thought.

1) Death is an eternal matter even as life is an eternal matter (2 Cor.10:5).
2) Death is no longer to be feared (Heb.2:14-15; 2 Tim.1:7).
3) We are to live—dying daily, constantly denying self (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; cp. Ro.8:36; Tit.3:12-15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(20:18) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the pain of suffering reached its summit in the sufferings of Jesus Christ. He suffered pain to the ultimate degree, in an absolute sense. Yet in the midst of such terrible suffering, there is something that is very precious—a thought, a truth that should be very, very precious to us. It is this: *Jesus' death was dear to His own heart*—dear despite the terrible suffering He was to endure. In a way unknown to man and which can never be understood by man, Jesus set His heart and face toward the cross. He was consumed and obsessed with the cross. Why? Because the cross was the focus of God's purpose throughout all eternity.

1. The cross was dear to His heart because it was His Father's will. In dying, He could please His Father, and pleasing His Father was the supreme objective of His life (see note—Eph.5:2).

2. The cross was dear to His heart because it was the means by which He was to gain many brothers (see note—Ro.8:29).
3. The cross was dear to His heart because through death He was to be made *the captain* of man's salvation (Heb.2:9-10).
4. The cross was dear to His heart because by death He was to destroy the power of the devil over man, that is, death (Heb.2:14-15).
5. The cross was dear to His heart because by the cross He was to reconcile all men, reconcile them both to God and to one another (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18).
6. The cross was dear to His heart because through death He was to return to His former glory which He had possessed with the Father before the foundation of the world (Jn.17:1-5).

3 (20:19) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Christ was to be delivered to the Gentiles for torture and execution. Note the three forms of torture mentioned.

⇒ Mock: to ridicule, scorn, insult, humiliate, defy, jeer.
⇒ Scourge: to beat with a rod or a whip weighted with either jagged metal or bone chips. Thirty nine or forty
⇒ lashes were inflicted. The whole purpose of scourging was to inflict severe pain.
⇒ Crucify (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44 for the terrible suffering of the cross).

Jesus bore the sins of man, suffering the ultimate degree of pain. He suffered pain in an absolute sense.

1. Mentally: while He was being tortured, His mind was bound to be upon why He was suffering. He was thinking about the sin of man and the problem sin had caused God. Imagine the world's sin, all of it, the enormity and awfulness of it consuming His mind. He was suffering mentally to the ultimate degree.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).

2. Spiritually: His heart was being broken. Those whom He loved so much were committing a sin so horrendous it defied imagination. They were rebelling against God so much that they were killing God's own Son.

In addition and even more terrible, His own Father, God Himself, was to turn His back upon Him. God was to separate Himself from His very own Son (see notes—Mt.27:46-49; Mk.15:34). He was beginning to bear, and was going to bear, the judgment, condemnation, and punishment due man—He was going to bear spiritual pain in an absolute sense. The wrath of God's holiness against sin was to be cast against Him.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).

"And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk.15:34).

"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lk.22:44).

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:10).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb.13:12).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

3. Physically: His pain was to be more severe because of the mental and spiritual pressure He was having to bear at the same time. There is also truth to the fact that the more ridicule within a persecutor's heart, the more he tortures his victim (cp. the crown of thorns, royal robe, and excessive mockery of the soldiers). The fact that Christ claimed to be the Son of God aroused the persecutors to inflict more scorn and torture. (Cp. Mt.27:1f.)

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Is.50:6).

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech.13:6).

"And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!" (Mt.27:29).

"And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (Mt.27:35).

"And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads" (Mt.27:39).

"And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days" (Mk.15:29).

Thought 1. Jesus suffered the ultimate degree of pain, and He did it *for us*. This fact should break our hearts, yet it seldom does. Why? Because so few of us spend time meditating upon His death—and, among us who do, an even smaller percentage spend anywhere close to the time that should be spent.

4 (20:19) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Christ was to be raised from the dead. Covering the resurrection in the same discussion with His death does three major things.

1. The prediction of the resurrection drove the point of the resurrection into the mind of the disciples again. They must forever remember the resurrection. The death of Christ was not the final word.

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2 Tim.2:8).

2. The prediction of the resurrection foreshadowed the power of God. After the Lord's resurrection, the disciples would remember, and the glorious truth of God's power would be reinforced in their minds and hearts forever.

a. The power of God is victorious.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?...But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:55, 57).

b. The power of God does triumph.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).

c. The power of God does conquer.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:37-39).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14-15).

3. The prediction of the resurrection foreshadowed the stirring that God's power was going to work in their lives.

a. The power to encourage and motivate.

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:18-19).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

b. The power to assure and build confidence.

"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (Jn.20:26-29).

c. The power to give courage and boldness.

"And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is" (Acts 4:23-24).

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:8-9).

	H. The Price & Meaning of Greatness, 20:20-28 (Mk.10:35-45; cp. Lk.22:24-27)		
1 The sin of false ambition—seeking personal greatness[DS1] a. Is self-seeking b. Is deceptive & uses people c. Misuses influence, position, & power d. Arises from pride & contempt e. Misunderstands true greatness	20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.	24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.	nation: "We are able" e. The price of unshakeable loyalty: To Christ[DS3,4] **3 What greatness is** a. Eternal greatness is of God b. Greatness is not dominion over people 1) The disciples' misconception 2) The world's characteristics
2 What greatness requires: Is a person willing to pay the price? a. The price of contemplation: Understanding greatness b. The price of suffering: The cup[DS2] c. The price of death: Baptism d. The price of determi-	21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the	25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.	c. Greatness is serving others 1) The great: Are ministers 2) The greatest: Are bond-slaves d. True greatness is demonstrated by Christ[DS5]

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

H. The Price and Meaning of Greatness, 20:20-28

(20:20-28) **Introduction**: Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. This was to be a momentous visit to the capital. This was the visit when the crisis was to take place, the crisis of His death and resurrection. He had just shared the fact of the crisis again (v.17-19). For months His death and resurrection had consumed His attention and private messages to the disciples (Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27; 20:17). There was no question in the disciples' minds: this visit to Jerusalem was the momentous event for which they had long looked. Jesus was about to free Israel and set up His kingdom on earth.

We who live today know what Christ meant by His death and resurrection. He was to die for our sins, and He was to be raised again to impart new life to us, but the disciples did not know this. Christ had not yet died nor been raised from the dead. To them, He was speaking of an earthly and material kingdom. If He were about to set up His kingdom, now was the time to seize the promise of position and power in His kingdom. Now was the time to secure the positions of rule and authority. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23.)

This is what James and John were doing. They were assuring themselves of key positions in Christ's government. (See outlines and notes—Mt.18:1-4; Lk.22:24-30.)

1. The sins of false ambition—seeking personal greatness (v.20-21).
2. What greatness requires: Is a person willing to pay the price (v.22-23)?
3. What greatness is (v.23-28).

1 (20:20-21) **Ambition, False—Greatness**: note the sins of false ambition and of seeking personal greatness. They are fivefold.

1. False ambition is self-seeking. James and John were interested in position for honor only, not for the purpose of serving. Pomp and ceremony, position and recognition, power and authority were on their minds, not ministering to and serving people.

2. False ambition is deceptive and uses people. Note how deceptively James and John and their mother came to Jesus. The sons persuaded their mother to use her influence with Jesus. She was a tool for their ambition. By her having taken the lead, they hoped Christ would think the request originated with her and not with them. He had already rebuked them for self-ambition (see outline and notes—Mt.18:1-4). Ambition often causes us to use people. Too often we put desire for things, position, power, and influence before and over people. Some even deceive and use others to achieve their ends.

3. False ambition misuses influence, position, and power. James and John along with Peter formed the inner circle around Christ. Christ gave them opportunities to witness several events the others were not permitted to see. They felt more favored and felt that their position was superior to the other disciples (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.9:2). This became especially true when James and John used their family's position to influence Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.20:20-21).

4. False ambition arises from pride. They felt more honored, more special, more preferred; and they were showing their conceit. They fully expected their request to be granted. Their kneeling with their mother (probably behind their mother) showed this. There is always contempt for others in pride. Feeling more honored and more preferred elevates one over others and treats them as inferior.

5. False ambition misunderstands the facts. James and John did not understand Jesus' death and resurrection. They misinterpreted it. They made the same mistake that man so often makes: they spiritualized God's Word.

When Christ said that He was to die, they probably thought He was referring to the conflict that was going to take place as He overthrew Roman domination. When Christ said that He was to arise, they probably thought it referred to the rising of God's kingdom to power. They thought only in terms of an earthly or temporal power. They missed the point entirely—missed the literal death and resurrection of God's Son which was to save man spiritually and eternally. The point is this: false ambition centers attention on securing things now, not eternally. It interprets life and the values of life only in terms of earthly power, position, recognition, and wealth. It fails to see that such is ever so brief and does not last. It misunderstands the facts entirely.

Thought 1. There is good, healthy ambition; and there is bad, unhealthy ambition. Good ambition gives purpose, meaning, and significance to life; it builds drive, initiative, self-esteem and much, much more. All such qualities are healthy and needed by every human being. We must all feel worthwhile, yet true inner health comes only from serving others, not from position and power. This is what James and John were missing.

Bad ambition is false ambition. It is deceptive in every conceivable way. It may lead to exaltation and power, but it corrupts and destroys. It eats away at a person's body as well as a person's spirit and consumes and misuses people. Sin corrupts and destroys, so false ambition is sin.

Thought 2. There is nothing wrong with high positions of responsibility and authority. Leadership and organization, government and law, teachers and learners, parent and child—all are essential. However, all positions should exist not to *lord it over people* but to serve people. We are to seek to serve people, not seek to rule people. Our ambition should not be to *lead* but to serve. This was James' and John's error. It is often ours. There is a tremendous difference between leading and serving.

Thought 3. There is something very commendable about James and John in this experience: their strong faith in Jesus and His kingdom. They were wrong in their ambition, but they were right about Jesus Himself. He was the true Messiah who had come to rule over the works and lives of men. They were just wrong about His method. He was going to do it spiritually not militarily.

Thought 4. James and John had left all for Christ (Mt.19:27-29). They had travelled about the country and suffered with Him for three years. Now they thought their trials were about over. Christ was going to change things and raise them up above the sufferings, and He was to reward their trust. They were so wrong. Like so many of us, they misunderstood what following Christ really meant. Christ does not remove our trials; He carries us through them. He does not take suffering away; He delivers us through suffering. Our rest from labor and trials and our crown come in the next world, not this world.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(20:20-21) **Salome**: the mother of James and John was named Salome (Mt.27:56; cp. Mk.15:40; 16:1). An interesting fact is that Salome was probably the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, which means that James and John were first cousins of Jesus. We see this in Mark's and John's accounts of the crucifixion. Mark says that Salome was at the cross with Mary, Jesus' mother (Mk.15:40). John simply says, "Jesus' mother, His mother's sister...." (John 19:25).

2 (20:22-23) **Greatness**: What does greatness require, and, is a person willing to pay the price? Christ told James and John how to become great; greatness in His kingdom requires five things.

1. The price of contemplating suffering and death. A person must understand that greatness involves the suffering of discipline and obedience and the death of self and comfort, of indulgence and extravagance. The person must think about, contemplate, and understand what he is seeking. Thinking takes time; it takes concentration, energy, and effort. It means many long and tiring hours and days of concentration in study and learning. It means knowing and understanding what one asks. It means knowing where one is, has been, and should be going in life.

2. The price of bearing the cup of suffering. It means a willingness to die to self daily and to give one's life in bearing whatever has to be borne in order to serve Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Cup*—Mt.20:22-23; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

3. The price of being baptized into death. It means paying any price to achieve one's God-given purpose—even if it means death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Baptism*—Mt.20:22-23).

4. The price of determination. James and John answered Christ: "We are able." Greatness is accepting the challenge because one loves the Lord and is willing to share in His sufferings and death no matter the cost.

5. The price of unshakable loyalty to Christ. Greatness is enduring and persevering no matter the suffering or denial demanded. James and John both drank the cup and were baptized with the baptism of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 3,4—Mt.20:23).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

Thought 1. Christ pulls no punches. If we desire greatness, there is a price to pay, a tremendous price. If we wish to have the crown He gives, there is a bitter cup to be drunk and a baptism in which to be immersed (see note—Mt.20:22).

Thought 2. When we say "yes" to Christ, we have to mean it. There has to be an iron determination to follow Him. We must be able to say with James and John, "We are able"—no matter the cup and the baptism. However, we must always remember that *we are able* only through the strength of His resurrected power.

Thought 3. Note that Christ did not write James and John off because they were wrong and had committed a terrible sin. He did not give up on them, cast them aside as useless. He simply corrected them, taught them the truth, and continued to use them. Note something else: Christ trusted them. He knew their hearts deep within, knew they would come through and, in the final analysis, pay any price for Him.

There is a tremendous lesson here. Christ believes in us and counts us trustworthy (1 Tim.1:12; cp. Ro.8:28f). Even when we fail and begin to dislike and hate ourselves, He loves and cares for us, wanting to correct us, teach us, and set us back on our feet on the path of usefulness.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(20:22-23) **Cup—Baptism**: there is a difference between drinking the cup of suffering and being baptized with suffering. The cup refers more to what a person takes into himself and bears within himself. It is more internal suffering and agony. The baptism refers more to what is put upon a person from the outside. It is more external sufferings.

The cup means drinking the bitterness and agony of trials, pain, hurt, sorrow, heartbreak, suffering, disappointment, and tears (cp. Christ's experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mt.26:36-46; His sufferings, Mt.20:19; 27:46-49; and John's experience on Patmos, Rev.1:9; cp. Introduction—Date). The cup is associated with suffering and with God's wrath (cp. Ps.11:6; Is.51:17; Ezk.23:33).

The baptism of suffering means being immersed in the rapids of affliction, rejection, abuse, ridicule, opposition, persecution, and martyrdom.

The Christian believer who truly lives and witnesses for Christ will drink His cup and be baptized with His baptism. Just think for a moment. Christ demands all we *are* and *have* in order to help people and to carry the message of salvation to a lost world. If we should be serious and give all we *are* and *have*, just imagine the cost to us. Imagine how different we would be from the world. Imagine the world's reaction to us. That is the reason Christ and the apostles met with so much opposition so often. They gave all they *were* and *had* to live so differently. They lived for God instead of living for self and the world; therefore, the world could not understand them. Some ignored and others ridiculed, abused, persecuted, and even killed them. They had the Lord's cup and baptism of suffering and sacrifice to bear, and so do all who truly follow Him. (See outlines and notes—Mt.10:16-23; 10:24-33; 10:34-42; 19:23-26; 19:27-30. Cp. Mt.10:22; Ph.1:29; 2 Tim.3:12; 1 Pt.2:21; 4:1-5; 5:10; Mt.19:29; Ro.8:16-17.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3

20:23) **James**: was killed by Herod. He was the first apostle to drink the cup of martyrdom.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(20:23) **John**: lived to be around one hundred years old and died in bed as far as we know. However, he drank the cup and was baptized with suffering in a most distressful way:

⇒ He witnessed the sufferings of Christ's death.

⇒ He lived through the murder and deaths of all the other apostles.

⇒ He lived a long life of banishment and exile on the island of Patmos (see Introduction, Revelation—Date).

3 (20:23-28) **Greatness**: What is true greatness? It is four things.

1. Greatness that is eternal is of God. There is no greatness other than that of God, not a greatness that brings eternal position and honor. The greatness conceived by men is superficial; it fades away. Note two things Christ seemed to be saying.

a. Christ said that some will sit on His right hand and some on His left hand. God is preparing to bestow such honor upon some. This seems to point toward degrees of glory in heaven (cp. v.26-27).
b. Christ was saying that the right to reign with Him was to be determined by God alone (that is, His absolute justice). He also made a distinction between *the great* who only commit themselves to minister, and the *chief* (greatest) who commit themselves to be *bond-slaves* (v.26; cp. v.27).

> **"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Mt.10:27).**
>
> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).**
>
> **"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:16).**
>
> **"For ye are bought with a price [Christ's blood]: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).**
>
> **"For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor.7:22).**
>
> **"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col.3:24).**

2. Greatness is not dominion over people. The disciples still thought the Messiah's kingdom would be the restoration of Israel as an earthly nation and power. The ten other disciples were indignant because they desired the highest positions themselves. They would have been worried, not angered, by such evil and selfish behavior if they had not had the same feelings. The world's view of greatness is twofold.
a. The external view is measured by power, fame, recognition, influence, authority, dominion, and position.
b. The internal view is measured by wealth, buildings, vehicles, and machines, and the ability to work and achieve goals. The world seeks after these things; individuals as well as nations seek after them. In fact, most men are caught up to some degree in *worldly greatness*, seeking some recognition, position, influence, fame, and wealth. Few are void of *worldly greatness*.

> **"He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction" (Pr.17:19).**
>
> **"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory" (Pr.25:27).**
>
> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**

3. Greatness is serving others. The great are they who minister. The greatest, the chief among all, are they who are bond-slaves (see note—Ro.1:1). Note the two words *chief* (protos) and *servant* (doulos, bond slave). Christ made a significant distinction between what He said in v.26 and v.27. The difference is striking and challenging. There is...
- the *great* (v.26) vs. the *chief* (v.27).
- the *minister*(v.26) vs. the *bond-slave* (v.27).

Another way to see the difference is...
- the *great* are they who *minister*.
- the *chief* are they who are *bond-slaves*.

What Christ was saying is this: among His disciples, the person who ministers is great, but the person who is a bond-slave is the chief. The idea of the person who ministers is that of occasional service; whereas the bond-slave is a person who is bound to the Lord every moment of life, always serving, regardless of the hour or call or difficulty.

The idea that there are degrees of service is unquestionably in mind. Not every believer serves with the same fervor or commitment. The idea of *degrees of reward* for work is conveyed by our Lord time and again (see note, *Reward*—Lk.16:10-12 for a complete list).

> **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).**
>
> **"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Mt.18:14).**
>
> **"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).**
>
> **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).**
>
> **"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).**
>
> **"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb.12:28).**
>
> **"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life" (Pr.22:4).**

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

4. True greatness was demonstrated by Christ in three supreme acts.
   a. The act of coming to earth: "The Son of Man *came*." The incarnation is the Son of God becoming man. Most men look upon mankind as the summit of creation on this earth. But within the span and scope of the universe and the dimension of the spiritual world, and in particular before God, man is nothing—not to an honest and thinking man. He is only as a speck of sand on the beach or a drop of water in the ocean. At most, he lasts only about seventy years *if he can*.

      In all reality, for God to become a member of so low a race of beings is unimaginable. It is the most humiliating act possible.
   b. The act of ministering: "[He] came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Furthermore, He was treated as the lowest of creatures by the men to whom He came. Impossible, yet true! They gave Him no place to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58) and, only three years after publicly announcing that He had come to save them, they killed Him. Now note: Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, yet He secured His kingdom by becoming a minister and a servant to all. He did not *lord it* over men. He ministered to and served men, and because He became the servant to all, God has now highly exalted Him (Ph.2:8).
   c. The act of giving His life "a ransom for many" (see note—Mt.20:28).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(20:28) **Ransom for many** (lutron anti pollon): a ransom in exchange (anti) for many; a ransom for many; a ransom instead of many.

Ransom is a means of setting loose in the Old Testament. It is the setting loose of a life or the ransom for a life (Ex.21:30). It is the setting loose, the ransom price, the redemptive price for something, for example...

- it is the price paid for the setting loose or freeing of a slave (Lev.19:20).
- it is the redemptive price paid for land (Lev.25:24).
- it is the ransom price paid for a captive (Is.45:13).

The Greek word for ransom (anti) is significant. There is no question that the idea of *exchange* is present. Christ gave His life in *exchange*, that is, in the place of or as a substitute for many. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; note—5:1.)

The word is used two other times in the New Testament (Mk. 10:45; 1 Tim.2:6). In 1 Tim.2:6, the words are "a substitutionary ransom for all" (antilutron huper panton). *Huper* is the preposition for the idea of substitution. It is a substitution in behalf of all. However, note two things.

1. All do not receive the offer. Paul said, "[Christ] gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim.2:5). John said, "He is the propitiation...for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2). And He is—potentially. Christ has met the need and provided the ransom price for every man and woman, but everyone has to accept the offer of the ransom in their own behalf. Christ has made provision, but anyone can reject the offer of ransom. And some do. Therefore, Scripture speaks of Christ's dying "for all" and also "for many." He died for *all* in that He has made *provision* for all to be saved, but He died for *many* in that only some receive the offer of the ransom.
2. There is the idea of sacrifice in the word ransom. In fact, that is just what *ransom* is. It is the exchange, the sacrifice, the giving up of something for something else. Something is substituted and sacrificed for something else. This is exactly what Christ did for us. He sacrificed and gave Himself up as a ransom for us (Eph.1:7; 1 Jn.2:1-2). (Cp. the Old Testament sacrifices; they were a picture of what Christ was to do for us.)

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed [loosed] us from our sins in His blood" (Rev.1:5).

"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal.3:13).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for [huper] them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

"For he hath made him to be sin for [huper] us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for [huper] the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb.7:27).

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:13-14).

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb.9:25-26).

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God....For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb.10:12, 14).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Pt.2:24; cp. 1 Cor.5:7; Eph.5:2).

	I. The Two Blind Men Healed: How the Desperate Can Be Saved, 20:29-34 (Mk.10:46-52; cp. Lk.18:35-43)	31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.	a. In the face of opposition
1 Jesus left Jericho a. The crowd followed Him b. Two blind men sat nearby	29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.	32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?	b. Until Jesus responds
2 Step 1: Seizing the chance when Jesus passes by	30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying,	33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.	**5 Step 4: Asking great things of Christ**
3 Step 2: Crying for mercyDS1		34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.	**6 Step 5: Receiving the compassion & touch of Jesus**
4 Step 3: Persisting in crying for mercy	Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.		**7 Step 6: Following Jesus**

DIVISION XIII

THE MESSIAH'S TEACHINGS ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM, 19:1-20:34

I. The Two Blind Men Healed: How the Desperate Can Be Saved, 20:29-34

(20:29-34) **Introduction**: we live in a desperate world full of desperate people. Many hurt because of emptiness, loneliness, disease, death, accidents, problems, conflicts, difficulties, poverty, hunger, no purpose, no meaning, no significance, hopelessness, and helplessness. The two blind men show how the desperate can be saved and helped.

1. Jesus left Jericho (v.29-30).
2. Step 1: seizing the chance when Jesus passes by (v.30).
3. Step 2: crying for mercy (v.30).
4. Step 3: persisting in crying for mercy (v.31-32).
5. Step 4: asking great things of Christ (v.33).
6. Step 5: receiving the compassion and touch of Jesus(v.34).
7. Step 6: following Jesus (v.34).

1 (20:29-30) **Multitudes—Jesus Christ**: as Jesus left Jericho there was also a host of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate the passover feast. The famous Jewish historian Josephus estimated that two to three million attended this feast every year. An enormous crowd would have been following Christ at this time.

There were several reasons why the crowds followed Christ in such numbers throughout His ministry.

1. Some followed Christ because they had great need. They truly believed He could help them.
2. Some followed Christ for what they could get out of Him. Following Him met, to some degree, their material and physical desires (Jn.6:26).
3. Some followed Christ out of curiosity.
4. Some followed Christ because they thought He was the answer to utopia, to personal and national fulfillment. They thought He might possibly be the Messiah who was to free Israel and meet the needs of its people forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).
5. Some few followed Christ because they honestly believed He was the true Messiah and had the words of eternal life. They desired to be a true disciple of His (Jn.6:67-68; cp. Jn.1:29, 34, 40-41, 45, 49; Mt.16:16).

As Jesus was walking out of the city, two blind men were sitting on the side of the road. There are three things said about these two men.

⇒ They were desperate. They were both blind and suffering the same physical infirmity.

⇒ They were together. They were companions who found some fellowship together. They sat and talked together, and as this event shows, acted together.

⇒ They were sitting where Christ passed by. Some may call it fate or chance, others destiny, and still others purpose; but the fact is, they were exactly where Christ passed by.

Thought 1. The two men suffered together and acted together. There is great benefit in our sharing together with someone who has a common experience, not to moan over our common plight but to encourage one another.

Note another fact: Christ encourages praying together. Every friendship among Christians should include praying together. These two men approached Christ together, and they could not even see. Christ should be made a significant part of our fellowship (Mt.18:20).

Thought 2. Note two things.

1) The needy and desperate need to put themselves where Christ is. They need to go and sit where they know they can hear Christ.
2) The needy and desperate can have great hope, but there is a condition. They must be where they can hear Christ. If these two had been elsewhere, they would have missed Christ. It is critical to find out where Christ can be heard.

2 (20:30) **Salvation—Need**: first, the desperate can be saved by seizing the chance when Christ passes by, but alertness and sensitivity are essential. These two men were both alert and sensitive. They heard the feet and the conversation of the crowd as they passed by. Hearing the feet of the crowd alerted them, and hearing the conversation told them exactly what was going on.

Thought 1. The desperate can find where Jesus is by being alert to where God's people go and by listening to where God's people say He is. The feet and voice of the followers of Christ will direct the desperate to Christ.

Thought 2. One thing is critical for the desperate: to seize the opportunity. They must not let it pass. When we see or hear where Jesus is we must go to Him. If we do not put ourselves where He is, we increase the chance that we will miss Him forever. There are three reasons why our chances diminish.

1) We become more dull, hardened, insensitive, unconcerned, and inactive; and we begin to accept conditions as they are.
2) A more convenient time will never present itself. Intentions are good, but an immediate decision is needed. Paul preached and many listened. A few said, "We will hear thee again of this matter" (Acts 17:32). But they never did.
3) Christ may never come our way again. If He does, He may not return with such force.

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

3 (20:30) **Salvation—Mercy**: second, the desperate can be saved by crying for mercy. Three things need to be noted about the two blind men's crying out for mercy.

1. They had an imperfect knowledge of Christ. They were blind; therefore, they could not travel about and learn of Him. Their knowledge of Him was based upon what they had heard *about* Him.
2. They believed what they had heard: that He was the Messiah, the promised Son of David. They believed in His power to help and deliver them.
3. They stirred themselves up and cried out for mercy. Imagine the obstacles: the crowd was large, the noise was loud. They were blind, and their chance of getting to Christ and being heard by Him was slim. But two things made the difference. They were desperate and they believed. So they stirred themselves up and cried out. *They acted on what knowledge and faith* they had.

There are two important facts about their cry for mercy.

⇒ They cried out for mercy themselves. They did not ask someone else to approach Christ for them.
⇒ They asked for mercy and only mercy. They did not ask for anything else. They were poor and they were beggars, but they did not ask for housing or clothing or even for food. They asked for their most basic need to be met—for mercy.

"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation" (Lk.1:50).

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified" (Lk.18:13-14).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

"Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed: my soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?" (Ps.6:2-3).

"Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me" (Ps.27:7).

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions" (Ps.51:1).

"Show us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation" (Ps.85:7).

"Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight" (Ps.119:77).

"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me" (Mic.7:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(20:30) **Son of David**: see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23.

4 (20:31-32) **Salvation—Persistence**: third, the desperate can be saved by persisting in their cry for mercy.

1. The desperate must persist even in the face of opposition. A person who really wants Christ is to persevere; he is to fight against all obstacles until Christ responds.

These two men teach us perseverance. The crowd rebuked and tried to stop them from reaching Christ, but they would not be stopped. Note the Scripture: "They cried the more." A stream of fervency and sensation vibrated through their bodies. They were in dead earnest; nothing was going to keep them back. They were desperate—this opportunity might never come again—so they struggled, wrestled, and fought against the crowd, crying at the top of their voices, "Have mercy on us, thou son of David."

Thought 1. Note two things.

1) There are many hindrances to our seeking after Christ—hindrances within and without. Sometimes we stand in the way, sometimes another person, sometimes circumstances. The hindrances are always there.
2) Hindrances are to be struggled against and overcome. We are not to give in to hindrances, but we are to use them to learn endurance and experience (victorious living) and hope. Trials are to be used to sharpen, to increase, and to grow our faith. It is for this reason that we not only "rejoice in hope for the glory of God....but we glory in tribulations also" (Ro.5:2-4).

2. The desperate are to persist until Jesus responds. Persistence always grabs the Lord's attention (see outline and notes—Mt.7:7-11. Cp. Lk.18:1.) Note the question Jesus asked. He already knew what the blind men wanted. He had probably heard their crying out as well, but He wanted them to experience persistence. Why? Why does Christ teach persistence and perseverance instead of just meeting our needs immediately? There are at least five reasons.

⇒ Having to persevere sharpens and grows our faith. It teaches endurance, experience (victorious living), and hope (Ro.5:2-4).

⇒ Having to persevere sharpens and makes us more aware of our minds. It gives us more time for thought, meditation, and searching for the truth of ourselves and our needs. It zeros in on real needs.

⇒ Having to persevere teaches us to pray and to seek God more and more. It creates more awareness of our helplessness and our need for His presence and help. It necessitates more fellowship and deep communion with Him.

⇒ Having to persevere gives us more part in His work and worship. It creates a sense within us of having a greater part. This is not a need on God's part, but a need on our part. Serving Him is a great privilege which He allows us.

⇒ Having to persevere allows more time for a greater number of people to be reached with God's power. Perseverance is a greater witness for God. When God answers and moves, more people are aroused to observe God's working.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).

Thought 1. This is an important lesson for the church. Often the poor and most needful are pushed back, ignored, neglected, rebuked, and not wanted by the church. They are thought to be lazy or lacking in initiative or unable to contribute much. The church rationalizes that the poor and needy would feel uncomfortable and not want to be a part of the fellowship anyway.

Our Lord never rejected a person. He never planned for the church to meet the needs only of a certain class. What is *class* anyway? Is it a certain amount of money? Is is a certain *number* of dresses? Of suits? Of shoes? Of watches? Is it a certain *size* of house? Of car? Of office? Of desk? Of chair? Is it stature? Hairstyle? Is it a certain location in town? In a suburb? Beside a golf course? A lake? How foolish can we be? How long will we play the fool while the world around us cries out in desperation? Is there anyone anywhere who will think and see and feel as God thinks and sees and feels? Where is the person who will stand in the gap for God and reach out to help the lost and poor of this world?

5 (20:33) **Prayer**: fourth, the desperate can be saved by asking great things of Christ. Note what a great request they asked of Christ.

1. They were beggars, ever so poor. There was nothing appealing about them at all.
2. Society rejected them. Even the crowd surrounding Jesus pushed them away and tried to silence their search for God.
3. They had never followed Christ. They had never heard Him preach even once. They knew very little about Him.
4. They had an unbelievable request to make: for Christ to heal their blindness.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn.14:13).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

Thought 1. Many come to Christ only when they are in physical trouble (blindness). However, their real problem is spiritual blindness. They are spiritually blind and do not know it (Jn.9:41).

Thought 2. There is a lesson here on being specific in our requests. At first, the blind men asked for mercy without identifying just where they needed mercy. Christ asked for them to be specific: "What will ye that I shall do unto you?"

6 (20:34) **Decision**: fifth, the desperate can be saved by receiving the compassion and touch of Jesus. Note what happens.

1. Jesus had compassion. They no sooner asked than Jesus' compassion was immediately aroused. He cared and felt for them.
2. Jesus touched their eyes. He did more than express compassion and feelings; He reached out to them and touched them. He let them feel His touch and care. He reached out and gave Himself to them. What a lesson for ministry!
3. Jesus healed them. They *immediately* experienced the love and power of God. They were healed.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

Thought 1. The men had their prayer and cry answered; they had their need met for two reasons.

1) They believed in Christ, the Messiah, and His power to meet their need.
2) They persisted in that belief. They were not quitters. They did not allow other people and circumstances to prevent them from seeking Jesus.

7 (20:34) **Discipleship**: sixth, the desperate can be saved by following Jesus. Note the simple words: "And they followed Him." He had shown mercy, and they became His disciples. Being a disciple meant two things.

1. They followed Him to learn of Him.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children" (Eph.5:1).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

2. They followed Him to be witnesses to Him and His power.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.15:6).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:12).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps.9:11).

"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps.67:3).

Thought 1. There is a lesson here on gratitude. The men expressed their appreciation in the greatest way possible. They became witnesses to His benevolence, love, mercy, and power. Many never express gratitude at all. Too many get what they want then soon forget that it came from God.

	CHAPTER 21		
	XIV. THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39		
	A. The Triumphal Entry: Jesus Deliberately Claimed to Be the Messiah[DS1] 21:1-11 (Mk.11:1-11; Lk.19:28-40; Jn.12:12-19)		
1 Jesus' last week began in Jerusalem a. In suburb: Bethphage[DS2] b. Sent two disciples on a special mission	And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,	spoken by the prophet, saying,	a picture of Zech.9:9
2 He deliberately fulfilled prophecy a. The disciples' special mission: To secure a donkey & her colt	2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.	5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.	1) He warns Jerusalem 2) The King comes 3) He comes meekly 4) He comes upon a colt[DS3]
b. The point: a deliberate fulfillment of prophecy—	3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.	6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,	**3 He deliberately received the homage of the disciples** a. They did as He requested b. They used their own clothes for a saddle
	4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was	7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.	
		8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.	**4 He deliberately received the homage of the people** a. Many received Him as King: Spread cloaks & branches before Him b. Many received Him as Messiah: Hosanna 1) As the Son of David
		9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.	2) As the Lord 3) As the Highest
		10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?	**5 Conclusion: The question of the people in Jerusalem** a. Question: Who is this?
		11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.	b. Answer: Jesus the prophet of Nazareth[DS4]

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

A. The Triumphal Entry: Jesus Deliberately Claimed to Be the Messiah, 21:1-11

(21:1-11) *Jesus Christ, Last Week*: Jesus began the last week of His life. He had spent the night before (the Sabbath evening) in Bethany with Lazarus, Mary, and Martha (Jn.12:1f). He was now going to deliberately demonstrate that He was the Messiah, the One prophesied to be the Savior of the world. He pictured without question that He was the fulfillment of prophecy, the One for whom all righteous men had longed and looked.

1. Jesus' last week began in Jerusalem (v.1).
2. He deliberately fulfilled prophecy (v.2-5).
3. He deliberately received the homage of the disciples (v.6-7).
4. He deliberately received the homage of the people (v.8-9).
5. Conclusion: the question of the people in Jerusalem (v.10-11).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(21:1-11) **Holy Week—Palm Sunday**: the last week of our Lord's life has been known as Holy Week since the earliest of times. The Triumphal Entry was the first event of the week, taking place on the first day. It was and still is called Palm Sunday.

1 (21:1) **Jesus Christ, Poverty**: Jesus' last week began in Jerusalem. Note the lowliness of Jesus. He had to depend upon friends for lodging. Up to the very end, "the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58).

He also "drew nigh unto Jerusalem" by foot. He had no stallion, no donkey, no camel—no means of transportation. He had only what God had given Him as He entered the world, His feet, to get Him where He wished to go. How God's heart must be cut to the core by our concern for material comfort and ease. Jesus' face was always set toward saving and helping the world. Up to the very end, He went about His purpose untainted and unswerved by the world. What a lesson for us!

1. Christ began His last week in Bethphage (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.21:1).
2. Christ sent two disciples on a special mission.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(21:1) **Bethphage**: the name of the city means "House of figs." It was a suburb of Jerusalem, lying toward the Mount of Olives. Note that Jesus arrived in Bethphage by foot, indicating that He had no means of travel except walking.

2 (21:2-5) **Prophecy**: the Lord deliberately fulfilled prophecy.

1. Christ sent two disciples into the city to secure a donkey and her young colt. He borrowed the two animals from another man, probably another disciple. One of three things happened that led the man to loan the animals.
   a. The man was a disciple who would allow *the Lord* to borrow his animals. The emphasis, "The *Lord* hath need of them," points rather strongly to this fact's being at least part of what happened. The Lord (o kurios) would be a strong expression to use with an unbeliever. It was equivalent to Jehovah.
   b. The Lord had made previous arrangements with the owner to borrow the animals. This was, or course, possible; but the possibility that the disciples would be questioned about borrowing the animals makes this unlikely.
   c. The Lord demonstrated His Divine omniscience to further validate His claim of Messiahship. As God, He knew exactly where the animals would be, the questioning about loaning them, and the fact that the owner would loan them. This could easily be part of what happened.

The important thing to note is the strength and authority of Christ throughout this whole event. He assumed the position of Messiah, the Lord God (Jehovah) of all men, of their will and their property, even of their animals.

Thought 1. Every mission of the Lord—every task, no matter how small—is important. Going to fetch the animals was a small task, yet it was critically important in the proclamation of Christ as King. No task should ever be thought too small in the service of our Lord.

Thought 2. Note two things.
1) Jesus encourages and comforts us with the presence of others. He seldom sends us out alone.
2) How often has Christ had a mission to be done and there was no one present to do it, especially the small and insignificant missions such as this one?

Thought 3. The colt was borrowed. Again, Jesus had nothing of this world's goods. In order to fulfill the Scripture that the Messiah was to enter the city riding a colt, Jesus had to borrow the colt. How materialistic we become, thinking we must have things in order to live! We even think we *cannot minister* effectively without the latest *material things* of the world (machines, equipment, methods). How unlike Christ!

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

Thought 4. Note a significant fact: when the proclamation of His Messiahship was at stake, Christ let nothing stand in the way. It was essential that the people know that He was the Messiah. He did not own a donkey to fulfill the prophecy, so He went out to find one. Such determination and unswerving purpose should grip us in proclaiming that He is the Messiah.

2. Christ had a reason for making such detailed preparations to enter Jerusalem. He was deliberately fulfilling the prophecy of Zech. 9:9. The prophecy said four things.
   a. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion [that is, Jerusalem]": Jerusalem was to be told, given a threefold warning. Why must she be warned? Because what she expected was not going to happen, not like she anticipated.
   b. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee": this was the first warning. Jerusalem's King was coming, coming just as Jerusalem had expected. The people were correct in this part of their expectation. But there is danger in expectation, the danger of being so fervent in our own ideas that we miss what really happens. Fervent expectation can miss the event when the event occurs a little differently than what was expected. "Thy King cometh," but He comes somewhat differently than expected.
   c. "Thy King cometh...*meek*": this was the second warning. The Messiah was coming in meekness not as a reigning monarch. He was coming to win men's hearts and lives spiritually and eternally, not physically and materially (see notes—Mk.11:1-11; Eph.1:3; cp. Mt.11:29).
   d. "Thy King cometh...sitting upon an ass [donkey], and a colt": this was the third warning. The Messiah was coming not as a conqueror riding a white stallion but as a King of peace riding a donkey. He was coming to save the world through peace, to reconcile the world to the God of love, not to the God of hate and retaliation and war. He was not going to kill men and overthrow their governments (the Romans and Gentiles). He was coming to win men's hearts and lives through the glorious news (gospel) that God loves and reconciles (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18).

Note the prophecy and the careful preparation Christ made to fulfill the prophecy. This is significant, for it means that Christ was dramatizing His Messiahship—dramatizing it so clearly that men could not fail to see that He was God's Messiah. This was God's will prophesied generations before Christ came. God wanted His Son to proclaim His Messiahship so clearly that the people could not mistake what He was doing.

Thought 1. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, God's very own Son. The great pains He took to fulfill this prophecy clearly showed what He was claiming. He was deliberately working out God's will. He was doing exactly what God said He wanted His Son to do centuries before (Zech.9:9). He was making the claim to be God's Messiah in a dramatic way. He was painting a picture so clearly that man could not fail to see what He was claiming. A deliberate decision is now required of us. We either accept His claim or not. As He *deliberately* fulfilled the prophecy, so we now *deliberately accept or deliberately reject* His claim.

"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk.1:78-79).

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk.2:13-14).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all)" (Acts 10:36).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:14).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

"The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace" (Ps.29:11).

Thought 2. Note two very significant things.

1) Christ did not come to execute justice but to save men spiritually through the forgiveness of sin. Christ came not as a judge to judge men for ignoring, neglecting, rejecting, and misinterpreting God; but He came as the Messenger of Peace to reconcile men to God by the cross (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18; Col.1:20).
2) Christ is coming again, coming as Judge to execute justice among all men, both the saved and unsaved (DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27; cp. Mt.25:31-46; 2 Cor.5:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(21:5) **Ass - Colt**: see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mk.11:7.

3 (21:6-7) **Homage—Obedience**: Christ deliberately received the homage of the disciples. The disciples paid Him homage (reverence, recognition). They did exactly what He asked despite the uncertainty of the matter. They had no money to buy or rent the animals, and they were to be questioned about why they wanted the animals. Yet they obeyed—not questioning, not doubting.

Note the other act of homage: there was no saddle for their Lord. They cared about Him and His comfort, so they took their own outer garments and threw them across the animals. Again, this was an act of homage (reverence and recognition). In following Christ, the two men had lived a life of poverty, so they had little clothing. It cost them to use their clothing for such a humble act. The clothing would be soiled and smelly, but they cared and they worshipped through this act.

The point is that Christ was now unmistakably claiming the dignity and rights of a King. He was not washing feet now; He was deliberately accepting their homage and reverence.

But note something of critical importance. In claiming the dignity and rights of a King, He was doing it in the most humble practice of His day: entering the city as a King of Peace. This was symbolized by riding a young colt, instead of riding the conqueror's stallion. He was disclaiming all ideas of an earthly and material kingdom. He had come to save Jerusalem and the world through peace, not war.

Thought 1. There are three clear lessons in this event.

1) We are to give homage to the Lord by obeying His commands. They may sometimes be difficult to understand and somewhat embarrassing, yet we are to trust and obey just as the two disciples did—not doubting or questioning.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacririce, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam.15:22).

2) We are to give homage to the Lord by giving Him the best we have. He is worthy of all and due all, so we are to do as the disciples did, give Him all—even the very best of our clothing if needed.

> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**
>
> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:27-28).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

3) We worship and pay homage to Christ when we give the clothes off our back. Such is a most noble ministry and assures great reward.

> **"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you...For I was...naked, and ye clothed me...." (Mt.25:34-36. Cp. 25:31-46).**

But note: there is a difference in giving old unusable clothes and in buying new clothes, or else giving the clothes off our backs. In order to minister, the disciples gave what they had to minister. They gave the clothes they were wearing (cp. the widow's mite, Lk.21:1-4).

4 (21:8-9) **Homage—Messiah**: Christ deliberately received the homage of the people. And note: it was a "very great multitude" (v.8). Apparently what happened was this. The multitude had begun to gather since early morning, excitedly looking for Him who had raised Lazarus from the dead. John told us this. In fact, he said there were so many people that the Pharisees said, "the world is gone after Him" (Jn.12:17-19). There was the crowd of disciples already accompanying Him and the pilgrims on their way to the Passover Feast who had joined His caravan. There were also the residents of Bethany and Bethphage who had heard of His presence and the miracles, and those who were already in Jerusalem, citizens and pilgrims who were rushing out to search for Him.

We are led to imagine an enormous crowd of teeming thousands lining the roadway as Christ was helped atop the donkey to begin His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. There are several facts that point toward this conclusion.

1. Two or more million pilgrims gathered in Jerusalem every year for the Passover Feast (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2). Thousands upon thousands were strict religionists, believing in the Jewish Messiah.

2. The news being spread throughout the city and surrounding area concerned the miracles Christ had performed, a concentration of miracles for some days now which included the raising of Lazarus from the dead (Jn.11:1f; 11:55-56). The very atmosphere was electric with the exciting news that Jesus was God's promised Messiah. Multitudes had heard that He was in Bethany and Bethphage (Mk.14:1-9). As said above, there was the multitude who had turned around from Jerusalem to meet Him (Jn.12:17-19); there was the multitude already travelling with Him (Mt.21:29); and there was the multitude of citizens in Bethany and Bethphage who had begun gathering around Him (Mk.14:1-9; Jn.12:1f). The whole thrust of the picture points to teeming thousands searching for Him and rushing out to welcome Him when they heard He was coming. (Note the words of Matthew, "the multitudes that went before, and that followed" v.9.)

The multitudes did two things.

1. They received Him as King. This is shown by two acts which were always done for Kings' entering a city. They stripped off their cloaks and cut down tree branches, and they spread both out on the roadway before Him. They wished to honor and pay Him the homage of a King. They wished to show Him that they received Him as the promised King of Israel.

2. They received Him as Messiah. This is seen in what they shouted about Christ.
   - ⇒ They shouted out, "Hosanna," which means save now, or save, we pray.
   - ⇒ They called Him "the Son of David," which was the title of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23).
   - ⇒ They shouted out, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." This means blessed is He who is sent by God to save His people; blessed is He who is sent with the authority of God.
   - ⇒ They shouted out, "Hosanna in the Highest" which means "God save, we pray. Thou who art in the Highest, save now through Him whom You have sent."

Thought 1. There are several critical lessons in this point.

1) We must proclaim Christ as our King. He is to be the King of our hearts and lives, to rule and reign over us. But note the critical question: What do we mean by King? The people of Christ's day were willing to accept him as an earthly King; that is, they were willing to accept what authority and power He would use in their behalf. The farthest thought from their minds was the spiritual rule and reign of their lives. They wanted earthly and material benefits. How much like so many of us! We want His kingly power when in need (physically or materially), but we want nothing to do with His kingly authority over our lives.

2) We must welcome Christ as God's true Messiah, the One who has come to truly save us. But again, what we mean by *save* is critical. We should not presume upon His earthly care and deliverance unless we are first willing to receive His spiritual care and deliverance (salvation and rebirth, the surrendering of all we are and have).
3) Every man should cry out, "Hosanna, save now, I pray O Lord."

> **"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**

4) We must make two confessions.
   ⇒ Christ is *the Blessed* (who) comes in the name of the Lord.
   ⇒ "Hosanna in the highest": salvation is "in the highest"; it is in Christ whom God has sent.

> **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**
>
> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
>
> **"Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim.6:15).**
>
> **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:11-12).**

5) We must lay all that we are and have before Christ, not only our clothes.

5 (21:10-11) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: there was the question of the people in Jerusalem. All the city was moved (eseisthe), that is, shaken. John reported that "the world is gone after him" (Jn.12:19).
   ⇒ The Romans sensed that a popular uprising might be in the making.
   ⇒ The Herodians, who were the Jewish ruling party, feared they would be overthrown, losing their power.
   ⇒ The Pharisees were stirred to new depths of envy and malice.
   ⇒ The common people were convinced that their day of liberation had finally arrived in Jesus of Nazareth.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(21:11) **Prophet**: this was definitely a reference to the Messiah, the One who was sent from God (cp. Jn.1:21; 6:14; 9:17).

	B. The Temple Cleansed: Authority over God's House,[DS1] **21:12-16** (Mk.11:15-19; Lk.19: 45-46; cp. Jn.2:13-16)	thieves. 14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. 15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the	**3 The temple (church) is to be a place for ministry** **4 The temple (church) is to be a place where wonderful things are done**
1 The temple (church) is not to be a place where people are exploited **2 The temple (church) is to be a house of prayer**	12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of	children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, 16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?	**5 The temple (church) is to be a place where Christ is praised** a. Children praised Him b. Some objected c. Christ insisted[DS2]

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

B. The Temple Cleansed: Authority over God's House, 21:12-16

(21:12-16) **Introduction**: the cleansing of the temple took place on Monday, the day after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Mark told us this.

> **"And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve" (Mk.11:11).**

The scene was this: teeming thousands had lined the roadway for Jesus' triumphal entry. As He rode along to the shouts of welcome from the multitudes, He was led right up to the steps of the temple. He entered the temple, as Mark said, "looked round about upon all things," and observed all that was going on. He stood off to the side observing all the corruption. After some time, heartbroken and weary, He left and returned to Bethany to spend Sunday night. When He arose on Monday morning, He returned to the temple to cleanse it of those who profaned its sacredness.

Four things should be noted about the temple during the last week of our Lord's life.

1. Jesus was ending His ministry in the temple, His Father's house of prayer, the place where God's presence dwelt in a very, very special way. He is about to complete His life upon earth, a glorious ministry fulfilling the will of God perfectly. The night before, as He stood off by Himself in the temple observing all that was taking place, His thoughts are very contemplative: thoughts that were meditating upon His Father; upon His life now about completed; upon the great sacrifice He was to pay for man's sins; upon the corruption of the temple taking place all around Him; upon the worshipping that should be taking place; and upon so much more. His heart was drawn ever so close to God, yet it was broken and weeping within. Right before Him was a picture of the terrible sin for which He was to die. The temple itself, the place where men should be able to draw close to God, was corrupted by men. It had become anything but a house of prayer. It was a place for commercialism, for man's greed.
2. Jesus was revealing who He was by cleansing the temple. He was proclaiming to all generations that He had the right to determine how the temple was to be used and to purge it of corruptions. As God's Son, the temple was His dwelling place, the place where the worship of God was to be especially known.
3. Jesus was revealing how men were to treat and use the temple of God.
4. Jesus began and ended His ministry by cleansing the temple. The two cleansings were separate events which marked the opening and closing of His ministry. The importance of the temple as God's house of prayer and worship was thereby demonstrated.

When our Lord entered Jerusalem, He did not go up to the palace of the King nor to the courts of the rulers, but He went up to the temple, the House of God. His kingdom was not of this world, not physical, but of heaven and spiritual. His authority and rule were in the temple of God and in the hearts of men. Therefore, He went up to the temple of God to cleanse it and to teach men how the temple was and is to be used.

1. The temple is not to be a place where people are exploited (v.12).
2. The temple is to be a house of prayer (v.13).
3. The temple is to be a place for ministry (v.14).
4. The temple is to be a place where wonderful things are done (v.15).
5. The temple is to be a place where Christ is praised (v.15-16).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:12-16) **Temple**: one must understand the layout of the temple in order to see what was happening in this event. The temple sat on top of Mt. Zion and was thought to have covered about thirty acres of land. It consisted of two parts, the temple building itself and the temple precincts or courtyards. The Greek language has two different words to distinguish which is meant.

1. *The temple building* (naos) was a small ornate structure which sat in the center of the temple property. It was called the Holy Place or Holy of Holies, and only the High Priest could enter its walls, and he could enter only once during the year, on the Day of Atonement.
2. *The temple precincts* (hieron) were four courtyards which surrounded the temple building, each decreasing in their importance to the Jewish mind. It is critical to remember that great walls separated the courts from each other.
   a. First, there was the Inner Court of the Priests. Only the priests were allowed to enter this court. Within the courtyard stood the great furnishings of worship: the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Brazen Laver, the Seven Branched lampstand, the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Showbread.
   b. The Court of the Israelites was next. This was a huge courtyard where Jewish worshippers met together for joint services on the great feast days. It was also where worshippers handed over their sacrifices to the priests.
   c. The Court of the Women was the third Courtyard. Women were usually limited to this area except for worship. They could, however, enter the Court of the Israelites when they came to make sacrifice or worship in a joint assembly on a great feast day.
   d. The Court of the Gentiles was the last courtyard. It covered a vast space, surrounding all the other courtyards, and was the place of worship for all Gentile converts to Judaism.

Three facts need to be noted about the Court of the Gentiles.

1. It was the courtyard farthest removed from the center of worship, the Holy of Holies which represented God's very presence (see note—Eph.2:14).
2. A high wall separated the Court of the Gentiles from the other courts, disallowing any Gentile a closer approach into God's presence. There were, in fact, tablets hanging all around the wall threatening death to any Gentile who went beyond his own courtyard.
3. It was in the Court of the Gentiles where so much commercialism took place. There was a regular commercial market within its walls. How did a commercial market ever get into the temple of God? Very simply, greed. Worshippers needed animals, (oxen, sheep, doves), incense, meal, wine, oil, salt, and other items for their sacrifices and offerings. Pilgrims from foreign nations needed money exchanged. At some point in the history of the temple, the priests had decided to take advantage of the market themselves instead of letting retailers on the outside reap all the profits. So the priests began to set up booths within the court of the Gentiles and to lease out space to *outside* retailers. These often turned out to be family members. The owner of the booths or space was the High Priest or Annas. The courtyard was filled with booth-like spaces where worshippers could find any kind of service they needed. The atmosphere was one of commercial traffic and commotion, not of worship and prayer.

Remembering the teeming thousands who attended the great feasts, we can imagine the loudest commotion and our picture would still come short of the actual scene. Who can picture thousands of animals with their peculiar noises, wastes, and smells within the temple of God? And for what? What would cause men to so abuse the worshipping center of God? As said above, money, the greed of men. It is no wonder Christ did what He did. He could not do otherwise, for He was the Son of God, the Messiah sent into the world to bring about a true worship of God. And there was no hope of worship within the Court of the Gentiles. Prayer and worship were impossible.

1 (21:12) **Temple—Church**: the temple or church is not to be a place where people are exploited. Note what Jesus did to show this.

1. He went into the temple (Court of the Gentiles) where God's presence was to be and where He and others should be able to worship in quietness and meditation. But what He found was the very opposite: commotion, commercial selling, and buying.
2. He reacted in the power and cleansing judgment of God—the kind of power and cleansing judgment that causes men to tremble before God (Ph.2:9-11).
3. He ran through the temple doing three things: (a) He chased out *all* who were buying and selling; (b) He threw over the tables of the moneychangers; and (c) He threw over the chairs of the dove dealers.

"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (Jn.2:16).

"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in [businesses to buy and sell in]? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (1 Cor.11:22).

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:30).

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it" (Jer.7:30).

"Her [the temple, the churches] prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (Zeph.3:4).

Thought 1. There is serious warning here. The temple was corrupted for money; the church can be. People who came to worship were taken advantage of; they were used for material gain. Note something that should really speak to the church. The people were sold items that were necessary for their worship. They were not just items that would help them in their spiritual growth and their worship; they were essential items. Without them, the people were not able to worship.

Now think for a moment. If the items were necessary for their worship and growth, what was wrong with what they did? The words of v.12 tell us: "Jesus...cast out all them that sold and bought *in the temple*." The buying and selling of the items for worship and growth were necessary and good, but *not within* the temple. They were to be done outside the temple walls, off the temple grounds. The temple and church are not the place for commercialism.

Thought 2. People's desire for worship and spiritual growth is not to be used for material gain, not by the church nor within the church. Church leadership has to be responsible for protecting its worshippers from abusing the hallowed ground set apart for the worship of God.

Thought 3. Legitimate things, such as buying and selling items that help us grow, can be used wrongly. *Where* something is done is critical. Buying and selling is not to take place in God's church. The point is: worship should be the preoccupation of a person's mind when he is within the church.

Thought 4. Jesus' anger can be fierce. Note who aroused such fierce anger in Him.
1) Those who abused God's temple (church).
2) Those who exploited others.
3) Those who made it impossible for others to truly worship God.

Thought 5. Note what happens to the man who abuses God's temple and exploits others: he is "cast out."

2 (21:13) **Temple—Church**: Jesus proclaimed the temple to be a house of prayer. This was an Old Testament quotation from two passages.

"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (Is.56:7).
"Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" (Jer.7:11).

Christ made two points.

1. The temple was to be a house of prayer *for all people*. This included the Gentiles as well as the Jews. All people should have been able to worship in quietness and peace within God's temple. No one should have been barred, separated, or discouraged from worshipping God in His temple. All should have been welcomed.

Note something else. The temple (church) was called a house of prayer, not a house of sacrifice, offerings, teaching, prophecy, or preaching. Everything done within the House of God was to lead to prayer, the *worship and communion* of the Father.

2. The temple was not to be used for commercial purposes. It was not to be a place of buying and selling, marketing and retailing, stealing, and cheating. It was not to be profaned. The temple was the House of God, God's House of prayer. It was to be a place of sanctity, refined and purified by God Himself. It was to be a place of quietness and meditation, a place set aside for worship, not for buying and selling where man gets gain.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Ps.23:6).
"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps.84:10).
"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Ps.122:1).

Thought 1. The temple or church is a piece of ground and a structure that is set apart for the worship of God. This is the very difference between it and all other grounds and structures. It is specifically set apart and dedicated for the sole purpose of worshipping God. It should, therefore, be used for that purpose. Once it is set apart for Him and His worship, God expects it to be His and to be used for that purpose alone.

Thought 2. There are plenty of markets surrounding the church, places where all services involving buying and selling can take place. The church is to be the house of prayer, not a market place, not a place where man is to get gain. It is not to be profaned, either to a minor degree or to a major degree, by becoming a "den for thieves."

Thought 3. A person's thoughts are to be centered upon God when he first steps on the hallowed ground of God's temple. While he is on the grounds of God's temple, He is to be praying and meditating upon His Lord. There should be nothing to distract his thoughts until he steps off God's property. Just think! How revered would God's temple, our churches, be if we really brought them back to God's original purpose? How far away have we really gotten from true worship centers, from the house of prayer?

3 (21:14) **Church—Ministry**: the temple or church is to be a place for ministry. Jesus used the temple as a place for ministry, and by such, He demonstrated that it was to be a place of ministry for all men.

Two wonderful things happened when the temple was cleansed of its corruptions.

1. The worshippers, those in need (symbolized by the blind and lame), were able to come to Christ to worship and have their needs met quietly.

2. Christ was able to take His rightful position within the temple. He was able to become the prominent figure and to receive the worshippers and to minister to those who had need.

Thought 1. People are barred, kept away from the church, when corruption is within its walls. It may not be only buying and selling; it may be divisiveness, grumbling, complaining, gossiping, and a host of other sins. But nothing will keep people away from the church quicker than sin within the church.

When such sins are removed and the church is purified, then Christ can and will be known to have His rightful place in the church. People can then come and be helped. They can worship and have their needs met.

Thought 2. The needy are often barred, cut off, and unwelcomed by society. Such is not to be true of the church. The church is to have open arms and a pure heart, welcoming all, no matter how poor and needy. In fact, the church is to be the very worship center for ministry.

4 **(21:15) Temple, Purpose:** the temple is to be a place where wonderful things are done. The term "wonderful things" (Ta Thaumasia) means wonders, wonderful things, wonderful works. It refers to all the things Christ was doing in the temple. This is the only time the word is used in the New Testament. What a beautiful description of what the church is to be: a place where wonderful things are to be done for God.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20)

5 (21:15-16) **Temple—Church:** The temple is to be a place where Christ is praised. Note three things that happen in this scene.

1. Children are in the temple (Court of the Gentiles) crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Apparently, these children had participated with their parents in the Triumphal Entry the day before and were now witnessing the ministry of Christ to the lame and blind. They pick up the chorus which they had either sung along with their parents or heard sung the day before. The chorus, of course, proclaims Jesus to be the Messiah. It is most unlikely that the children were playing, as some suggest. Two facts suggest a seriousness in what the children were saying: Christ's clearing out all the commotion and noise and the extreme seriousness and hallowedness of His ministry to the people coming to Him. It is very difficult to picture too much commotion allowed by Christ in His serious moments of ministry; and He certainly would not have allowed the commotion and disturbance of His meeting by a group of children playing around. He would have dismissed them along with the others if they had not been serious in their worship and praise. It would be particularly difficult to picture Christ's allowing commotion after what He had just been through.
2. The religionists (chief priests and scribes) are displeased and object to what they see and hear. They do not like the "wonderful things" being done in the temple, nor do they like Jesus' being praised in the temple. They object for at least three reasons.
   a. They are angered. Their own establishment and procedures for handling things have been disrupted and, in their minds, declared "no good" or else "less good" than what they should be.
   b. They do not like Jesus' being proclaimed the Messiah of God.
   c. They do not like the unseemly behavior occurring: ministering to the needs of common men, healing the lame and blind (v.14), and teaching (cp. Mk.11:18; Lk.19:47).

Note that these are the very reasons people often become disturbed in the church today.

3. Christ insists that He is to be praised. He simply replies to the objections, "God Himself has taken the mouths of these children and provided (brought forth) the praise you hear. And it is perfect praise because it is brought forth by God Himself and heaped upon His Son. The church is to be a place where God's Son is to be praised."

Thought 1. Self-examination is called for. Is Christ really praised in our church? Really acknowledged and proclaimed as the Messiah, the Son of God?

Thought 2. Children should be encouraged to praise God.
1) Note how the children were in attendance when Christ taught and ministered (Mk.11:18; Lk.19:47). They were welcomed by Him and felt comfortable around Him.
2) Note how Christ stood up for the children against the leadership (priests).

Thought 3. The children follow the example of their parents. They had seen and participated with their parents in praising Christ the day before. Now they praise Him on their own as they witness His ministry and teaching.

Thought 4. Some leaders make the same three tragic objections in churches today.
1) They object to the old way being changed, especially if it affects one's position, recognition, or authority.
2) They object to Christ's being proclaimed the Messiah, the Son of God. Some are willing to acknowledge Him as a great teacher and only as a great teacher.They deny Him as the Savior of the world who died for the sins of men.
3) They object to a public praising of God and to a ministry that helps the needy within the church walls.

Thought 5. Note something. Christ says that God Himself raised up these children to praise Him and His ministry within the church. If a church ceases to praise Him, the likelihood is that God will raise up another to fill its voices with the praise and ministry of His Son.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(21:16) **Old Testament Reference** Cp. Ps.8:2.

	C. The Fig Tree Cursed: The Source of Power, 21:17-22 (Mk.11:12-14, 20-26)		
1 Jesus lodged in Bethany a. He returned to Jerusalem[DS1] b. He hungered	17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.	ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.	over the physical world demonstrated
2 Jesus' great power over the physical world[DS2] a. His expectation: Fruit[DS3] b. His disappointment: No fruit c. His absolute power	18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. 19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow for ever. And presently the on thee henceforward for	20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! 21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. 22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.	**3 Jesus' great source of power: Faith, not doubting** a. The power of Christ stirred marvel, wonder, & questioning b. The great source of power 1) Faith 2) Not doubting at all 3) God's authority: Given to those who speak the Word **4 Jesus' promise of power to the disciples: Through prayer & faith**

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

C. The Fig Tree Cursed: The Source of Power, 21:17-22

(21:17-22) **Introduction—Power—Judgment**: Jesus destroyed the fig tree. Why? Some have said such destruction is out of character for Christ. He would never destroy a tree for not bearing fruit.

Why did Jesus destroy the tree?

⇒ He destroyed it for the same reason that He angrily ran through the temple casting out all who bought and sold (Mt.21:12-16).

⇒ He destroyed it for the same reason that He lashed out at the Pharisees for being hypocritical (Mt.23:13-39).

⇒ He destroyed it for the same reason that He cast the evil spirits into a herd of swine, killing them (Mt.8:28-34).

⇒ He destroyed it for the same reasons that He became indignant (angry) with the disciples for keeping little children from coming to Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mk.10:14).

⇒ He destroyed it for the same reason that He deliberately demanded uncompromising loyalty despite family or personal needs (Mt.8:18-22; 10:34-39).

Why did Jesus act with such force in destroying the tree? For the same reason He acted with such force in all of the above. Jesus always acted either to teach man or to save and help man. In destroying the fig tree, He was teaching man a much needed lesson.

The lesson: the Messiah has absolute power over all the physical universe. The unfruitful among men (symbolized in the fig tree) do not have such power. Contrariwise, He alone has such enormous power. He alone has the power to judge and to determine fruitfulness and unfruitfulness, life and death, salvation and condemnation. He alone laid down His life; no man took it from Him (Jn.10:11, 15-18, esp.18).

Remember this was Jesus' last week. It was Tuesday, just three days before He was to be killed by unfruitful men. Jesus had to do all He could to prepare His disciples for His onrushing death and for all they were to bear through the ensuing years. He had only two days left, so He had to undergird them all He could. He was hungry and He saw a fig tree full of leaves. He walked up to pluck some fruit, but He found no fruit. He saw an object lesson in the event—a lesson that could be uniquely used in teaching and preparing the disciples.

In destroying the tree, Jesus was showing the disciples (in an unmistakable way) that He had absolute power over all the physical world, even the power to keep from being killed. He was not dying out of weakness, not dying because He was not the Messiah, not dying because of the plots and intrigues of men. Men may be judging Him to be unfruitful and unworthy of life, but He was not dying because of them. He was dying because the death of God's Son was the way of salvation (Jn.3:16; 2 Cor.5:19-20; 1 Pt.2:24). He was not being judged by unfruitful men or events; rather, unfruitful men and events were being judged by Him upon the cross (1 Pt.2:24; cp. Eph.2:13-22).

Very simply put, Jesus was picturing that He was truly God's Son with omnipotent power, picturing it in a way that we can never forget. He had the power to save Himself and to destroy the unfruitful men who would take His life. But He of course could not—not then. Right then He was sent into the world to die for men and to save men, including the very ones who were judging and condemning Him to be unfruitful and unworthy of life. However, the day is coming when He will judge the unfruitful just as He judged the fig tree. But that day is out in the future, for the present He was to save men.

Note: the lesson of *power through prayer and faith* was the lesson Christ drew from His action (v.20-22).

1. Jesus lodged in Bethany (v.17-18).
2. Jesus' great power over the physical world (v.19).
3. Jesus' great source of power: faith, not doubting (v.20-21).
4. Jesus' promise of power to the disciples (v.22).

Thought 1. Jesus returned to Jerusalem despite the threat to His life. He returned because it was God's will. He would not be stopped from doing God's will. So it should be with us. We should never allow opposition and threats to stop us from doing God's will. Note that like Christ, Paul did not shirk from God's will, from setting his face toward Jerusalem despite the bonds and trials that awaited him there (Acts 21:13-15).

1 (21:17-18) **Bethany**: Jesus lodged in Bethany, which was a suburb of Jerusalem. It lay about two miles east of the great city. Bethany was the home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. Jesus stayed with the family when ministering in and around Jerusalem. We must remember that Jesus apparently had no home of His own, which was partly due to the fact that His immediate family did not believe in Him (Jn.7:1-5, esp.5). He Himself had said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt.8:20). The only housing He had was the homes of others such as Mary and Martha (Jn.11:1f; cp. Lk.11:1f; Lk.10:38-42; 19:29f; Jn.12:1f).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(21:18) **In the morning** (proias): means early morning, very early, the fourth or last watch of the previous night (Mk.1:35). Jesus began the events of Tuesday so early it was in the wee hours of the morning, or according to Jewish time, in the last hours of the previous day.

2 (21:19) **Jesus Christ, Power**: Jesus had great power over the physical world. He demonstrates His great power by three acts. These same acts are applicable to a human life.

1. His expectation: fruit. The tree looked healthy and full of leaves. It was time for Him to feast, and He had the right to expect fruit on such a *mature* looking fruit tree. It professed fruit.
2. His disappointment: no fruit. The tree had life; it was living. It had the sap to produce a rich foliage of leaves and it was professing fruit, but it had none. Its very purpose was to bear fruit, but it did not. It failed at three points.
   a. It had an empty profession.
   b. It had an unfulfilled purpose.
   c. It deceived instead of served.
3. His absolute power over the physical world demonstrated. Christ demonstrated that He has the right and the power to execute judgment as He wills. He can deliver or He can destroy. His disciples needed to have this lesson fresh on their minds. His omnipotent power, the enormous power available to them, would encourage them as they experienced His death and as they faced the trials that lay ahead of their own witness. (See note—Mt.21:17-22.)

Thought 1. The fig tree is a clear picture of hypocrisy, of false profession (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.21:19).

Thought 2. If a tree is living, it is expected to bear fruit. That is its purpose for living. If it does not bear fruit, it is useless and good for nothing but to be cut down and burned (cp. Lk.13:7). Note another fact: the more alive a tree is, the fuller it appears and the more fruit it is expected to bear. If we give the appearance of righteousness, then God expects us to bear righteousness.

Thought 3. There are two times in particular when Christ looks for fruit within a person.

1) There are the times of deep sensitivity wrought by life's great trials and great opportunities. These times cause a person to think of God, of his need for God, and of his obligation to use his life for good (for example, feeding, clothing, and giving to others). Christ expects us to bear fruit in a very special way during these times: to turn to Him in trial and to help and bear witness when great opportunities arise.
2) There will be the time of eternal judgment. There is a day coming at the end of the world when Christ will judge all men, both believers and unbelievers. Fruit will be expected (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.5:10; cp. Gal.5:22-23).

Thought 4. Christ has absolute power over the universe. He did not die at the hands of men. He died purposefully for the sins of the world just as God willed. He had the power to keep from dying, but He chose to lay down His life for the sake of men (Ro.5:8).

Thought 5. There is no question, the cursing of the fig tree shows the enormous power of Christ to do three things. (1) It shows the power of Christ to deliver His disciples out of great trial. (2) It shows the power of Christ to determine when His disciples should depart out of this world (cp. 2 Tim.4:6-8). (3) It shows the power of Christ to judge and condemn. The great day of His wrath is not yet come (Rev.6:17), but the day will come. When the day does come, then all unfruitfulness of men shall be judged by His absolute power. (Cp. the parable of the fig tree, Lk.13:6-9.)

Thought 6. Some things will doom us: hypocrisy, false profession, uselessness, purposelessness, and no fruit. The cursed fig tree symbolizes all this.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(21:19) **Fig Tree Cursed**: there are some who say the fig tree represented Israel. The fig tree was full of leaves, appearing fruitful; but it had no fruit. So Israel appeared to be full, that is, to be religious. The nation professed spiritual fruit, yet the nation bore no fruit. Its religion was barren, legalistic, and fruitless ceremony. Thus, the tree was a sign of God's disappointment and of the justice and punishment to be executed upon Israel.

We must note, however, that this is not the lesson drawn by Christ. There may be many lessons drawn from the event, including Israel's experience; but the application made by Christ is clearly power, power that comes through faith and prayer (v.20-22).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(21:19) **Fig tree**: some claim that late-bearing fruit would bear late in the fall and remain on the tree until the next spring. When the sap returned to the tree and began producing its leaves, the fruit would ripen. A tree in full leaf would therefore be expected to have some early fruit. Whatever the case, this much is known: the fig tree is unusual in that its fruit *appears* before the leaves. Therefore, when the tree is full of developed foliage, a person could expect the earliest fruit to be either ripe or close to ripening. Perhaps at least some fruit would be tasty enough to be edible to a hungry traveller.

Remember also that the word *Bethphage* means "House of Figs." It is possible that the latest methods of fruit growing had grafted an early developing variety. Who knows? Early, mid, and late varieties are a common practice today. There are certainly indications that the people of old were astonishingly advanced in some areas.

3 (21:20-21) **Power—Faith**: the demonstration of Jesus' great power did just what He had wanted. It stirred the disciples to marvel and question. In amazement they asked, "How did the fig tree *immediately* wither away?" (This is a better understanding of the Greek.)

Jesus had them just where He wanted them: they were asking about His great power. He wanted to teach them that He had absolute power over the physical world and that the same power was available to them in the future as they served Him. He had demonstrated His absolute power; now they were asking about the source of that power.

Note how Jesus shared the source of His power. He said in essence, "Here is the source of my power, and the same power source is available to you." He was explaining the source of His power in the *second person* which makes it applicable to all His disciples. He was answering their question about His power, but He was doing it in such a way that they would know the same power was available to them.

What is the source of Christ's great power? Or, we may ask, what is the source of great power for the disciple of Christ? It is three things. (All the notes referred to in the following points give an excellent study on faith. Also see complete outline and notes—Mt.17:14-21.)

1. Faith (see notes—Mk.11:22-23; Heb.11:1; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:6).
2. Not doubting at all. This means never having a thought as to whether a thing can be done or not. It means not hesitating, not wondering, not questioning, not considering, not being concerned at all. Realistically, only God Himself could ever know whether or not something would happen—know so perfectly that no wondering thought would ever cross His mind. What Christ is after is that we grow in belief and trust. He wants us to believe that all things are possible through Christ who strengthens us (Ph.4:13). (See outlines and notes—Mt.17:15-16; 17:17-18; 17:19-20; Mk.9:18.)
3. God's authority: given to those who speak the Word. Note the phrase "Shall say" (see note—Mt.17:20). The power of Christ came from the authority of God. All He had to do was *say*, that is, speak the Word, and it was done. That is the very point He is making to us. If we believe, not doubting, then we stand in the authority of God. We may *say*, that is, speak the Word, and it shall be done.

> **"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:19-20).**
>
> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:23-24).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).**

4 (21:22) **Prayer**: Jesus' promise of power to us is through prayer and faith. Christ drives home two striking points.

1. His promise is comprehensive: "all things." It is all inclusive, much beyond the sphere of what we can ask or even think (Eph.3:20).
2. His promise is conditional: "in prayer, believing." We have to *pray and believe* to receive.
   a. Prayer is to be constant. The person who receives answers from God knows God personally. He is in constant, unbroken fellowship and sharing with God. A person cannot come every now and then to God and expect answers. This is not what Christ means.

> **"They all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14).**
>
> **"Continuing instant in prayer" (Ro.12:12).**
>
> **"Give yourselves to fasting and prayer" (1 Cor.7:5. Refer to this whole verse for a graphic picture.)**

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

b. Believing is, of course, essential. Mark says it well: "Whosoever shall say...and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass" (Mk.11:23). (See note—Heb.11:1.)

Thought 1. see note—Mt.21:22. See outline and notes—Mt.7:7-11.

Thought 2. God's supernatural power is available to us, but it is conditional. We do not possess supernatural power within ourselves. God's power comes only through prayer and faith.

Thought 3. Prayer is the vehicle; faith is the energy. It takes both to reach the desired destination.

Thought 4. Faith stirs prayer and communion with God. A person who really *believes*, who has real faith in God, is driven to pray and commune with God.

Thought 5. This great promise should stir us to pray and believe God, to ask and ask.

	D. The Questioning of the Messiah's Power: The Problem with Obstinate Unbelief, 21:23-27 (Mk.11:27-33; Lk.20:1-8)	tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From	to question b. The question: Was John's ministry of heaven or of men?
1	**The obstinate unbelief of leaders**	heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe	**5 Unbelief causes a threefold sin & guilt**
2	**Unbelief treats Christ with disdain: They disturbed the people's teaching & worship**	him? 26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.	a. A deliberate denial by men b. A deliberate cowardice by men
3	**Unbelief questions the authority of Christ**	27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell.	c. A deliberate ignorance or expediency of men
4	**Unbelief must face the personal interrogation of Christ**	And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what	**6 Unbelief results in Christ's silence: He refuses to reveal Himself**
	a. Must face His right	authority I do these things.	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

D. The Questioning of the Messiah's Power: The Problem with Obstinate Unbelief, 21:23-27

(21:23-27) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Opposition**: from this passage to the end of chapter 23, Jesus deals with His opponents, self-righteous religionists and civil leaders (the elders). All the events of this section as well as the Olivet discourse (Mt. 24-25) seem to have taken place on Tuesday (cp. Mt.22:23; 25:1; 26:1-2). A quick reading of this section is an eye-opener into the great tragedy and problem with self-righteousness and unbelief. Christ was forceful, very forceful, in attacking self-righteousness and unbelief. He delivered a *sustained attack*, leaving no doubt that a person who continues in self-righteousness, even a religionist, is unworthy of God's kingdom. Obstinate unbelief is doomed.

1. The obstinate unbelief of leaders (v.23).
2. Unbelief treats Christ with disdain (v.23).
3. Unbelief questions the authority of Christ (v.23).
4. Unbelief must face the personal interrogation of Christ (v.24-25).
5. Unbelief causes a threefold sin and guilt (v.25-27).
6. Unbelief results in Christ's silence: He refuses to reveal Himself (v.27).

1 (21:23) **Unbelief, Obstinate—Sanhedrin**: the obstinate unbelief of leaders. This event continues the Lord's final ministry in the courtyards of the temple. Pilgrims from all over the world were in Jerusalem. A large number had gathered in the temple and were surrounding Christ. They were listening to Him teach. Matthew said, "the chief priests and elders" became extremely upset and confronted Christ. Mark and Luke tell us that the Scribes were also present. This indicates that the leaders were an official delegation representing the ruling body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin (see notes—Mt.26:57; 26:59). All that had happened naturally created a crisis for the ruling body: the triumphal entry, Christ's acceptance of the people's homage, the cleansing of the temple, the disruption of the priests' profits from those who sold and bought, the healing of the blind and lame, and the worship of the children. What Christ was doing simply infuriated them, sending them into a rage. It aroused them to question: "Who does Jesus of Nazareth think He is?" (Mt.21:10-11).

But note: the question was one of contempt, not of seeking. The question was an attempt to discredit, not to learn the truth. The question was aroused because their own position, esteem, and gain were disturbed, not because they wanted to really know if He were the Messiah. Their minds were closed or shut to His claims. They had many claims and many proofs of His Messiahship, but they wilfully ignored and denied His divine mission. They had plenty of opportunities to learn the truth, yet they allowed nothing to change them (see note—Jn.3:2). They were gripped with obstinate unbelief (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9. These notes will give some background to the opposition against Christ.)

Thought 1. See notes—Mt.21:23. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32.

Thought 2. These things often happen to a person who has position, esteem, and wealth and who seeks more gain.

1) He fears the truth lest it threaten what he has.
2) He is forced to continue in unbelief and denial. The person fears facing the issue honestly lest he has to confess he has been wrong. Such would be too embarrassing and humiliating, causing more ridicule than he is willing to bear.

2 (21:23) **Unbelief**: unbelief treats Christ with disdain. Christ was teaching and people were worshipping. Nevertheless, in utter rudeness, the unbelievers walked right in, interrupting His teaching and the people's worship.

Thought 1. Unbelief treats Christ with contempt. Unbelief pays no attention to what Christ says and does. Imagine how serious the contempt is. Christ, the Son of God...

- has left the glory of heaven and come to earth.
- has spoken, revealing the truth about God, man, and the world.
- has secured salvation and everlasting life for man.

Yet despite all that Christ has done, man denies Christ. He prefers a few years of human esteem and pleasure to believing and committing his hope upon the fact that life continues on forever. Speaking of contempt—there is no greater contempt than to deny the Son of God. Unbelief definitely treats Christ with disdain.

Thought 2. Unbelief always interrupts. What God wants is a free flow for the spirit of belief. When one unbelieving person is present, he disrupts the spirit of belief. There is not a free flow of the spirit of belief. The more unbelief present, the more the free flow is hindered. Unbelief hinders, hampers, disrupts, and disturbs belief.

> **"And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Mt.27:39-40).**
>
> **"Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him" (Mk.15:31-32).**
>
> **"And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God" (Lk.23:35).**
>
> **"And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (Lk.5:21).**
>
> **"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn.5:18).**
>
> **"Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" (Jn.8:53).**
>
> **"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn.10:33).**

3 (21:23) **Unbelief**: unbelief strikes at the very core of Christ's nature; it questions His authority, who He really is.

The Sanhedrin (chief priests, elders and Scribes) were the leaders of the nation and the chief priests were the guardians and rulers of the temple. They wanted to know who gave Christ the right to do what He was doing. He was interfering with their management and had no right to interfere.

They asked two questions: "By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority?" They were questioning the authority for His works (first question) and for His person (second question). Unbelief always questions both works and person: *by what* authority "these things are done" and "who gave thee" such authority. Christ can give one of three possible answers: by the authority of Himself, of God, or of one of the temple authorities. His questioners knew that no temple authority had given Him authorization to do what He was doing; thus, by the questioning, they hoped to discredit Him.

If He said His authority came from God, they could demand a sign from heaven and accuse Him of blasphemy (see note—Mt.12:38-40; cp. Mt.26:65). If He said His authority was of Himself, the people would probably turn away from Him.

Thought 1. Unbelief strikes at the very core of Christ's nature. A man may say He believes in Christ but show no sign that he has committed his life to Him. Such belief is not biblical, not what the Bible means by belief. Such belief is only mental acceptance of an historical person. Belief that does not commit one's life is nothing more than thoughtless, mental acceptance. If a person really knows that Jesus is God's Son, that person will commit His life to Christ. Unbelief, whatever its claim or thoughts, questions and denies that Christ is truly the Son of God.

Thought 2. Unbelief always questions a person's genuineness and works. Unbelievers are always around watching for a chance to justify their position when a believer falls into sin. Therefore, every believer should know by whose authority he acts. Is he acting because of self or because of God? Minister and congregation alike need to be sure their action and behavior are of God and not of self. Living a life of righteousness is acting under God's authority. Righteousness is the only thing that will silence unbelief.

4 (21:24-25) **Unbelief**: unbelief must face the personal interrogation of Christ. Christ has as much right to question unbelievers as unbelievers do Him. He asked only one question: "Is John's ministry from heaven or of men?"

If John's ministry were from heaven, then Christ was God's Son. Why? Because John bore testimony: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world...and I saw, and *bore record* that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:29, 34).

If John's ministry were of men, then how can we account for so many changed lives and marvelous works? This one question shows the absurdity and sin of unbelief, not only of unbelievers in Jesus' day but of unbelievers in our day as well. (See outline and notes—Mt.3:1-17; Lk.7:29-31.)

Thought 1. Is John's ministry from heaven or of men? The very same question is applicable to our day. The question forces confession or denial, and denial is totally absurd and ridiculous. How can so many changed lives and wonderful works throughout the world and history be accounted for apart from Christ? There is an abundance of witnesses.

Thought 2. Think for a moment. Was John's ministry really of himself, from his own mind? How could so many down through history minister from their own minds? Imagine—an unbeliever has to say unbelievable things:
1) That every believer who has ever ministered created his own ministry (works) out of his own mind.
2) That every believer who has ever ministered was mistaken about Christ (knowing Him personally as the Son of God and being called and gifted by Him).

> **"And all the people that heard him [John] and the publicans, justified God, being baptized of John" (Lk.7:29).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).**
>
> **"And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracles: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there" (Jn.10:41-42).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**

5 (21:25-27) **Unbelief**: unbelief causes a threefold sin and guilt. The words "they reasoned with themselves" (par eantois) mean they discussed their answer among themselves. They did not just reason in (en) themselves, each left to his own thoughts. This was a planned attack against Christ, a deliberate rejection of Christ.

The Lord's questioners immediately knew their predicament. If they replied that John's ministry was of God, then Christ would ask them why they did not believe John's testimony about the Messiah. If they replied that John's ministry was of men, they would arouse the people against themselves, for the people believed strongly that John was a true prophet from God.

Note how the questioners reasoned among themselves. Their concern was not to discover the truth but to save face and protect their position, esteem, and security. They committed a threefold sin.

1. They deliberately denied Christ. To confess that John was of God would force them to acknowledge Christ, and they just were not willing to confess Him. They feared the loss of all they possessed (position, power, wealth, esteem, image, security).

> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).**

2. They feared men; they were deliberately cowardly. They feared the reactions of men (abuse, ridicule, persecution).

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**

3. They chose expediency, to deliberately be ignorant. They feared being shamed, embarrassed, and ridiculed. To confess Christ would mean confessing they had been wrong all along. It would mean denying self completely and doing so publicly. Most men...

- choose expediency rather than principle.
- choose to play it safe rather than to stand up for the truth.
- choose to say, "I don't know," rather than to speak the truth.

> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38)**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**

Thought 1. It is the duty of every thinking man to know whether or not Christ is true. For a thinking man to say, "I do not know," is unacceptable. A *thinking man* ought to know, for he has the capability to know. He is to think, determining the true from the false. If he fails to do this, he condemns himself.

Thought 2. Two things are absurd.
1) It is absurd to acknowledge a truth and then reject it. An unbeliever cannot acknowledge that John and Christ *are of God* and then not confess them. To say that they are *of God* and then deny them is the height of absurdity.
2) It is absurd not to confess Christ. Denial is the height of absurdity. The evidence is overwhelming.

Thought 3. At least two things cause a man to reject and oppose the truth.
1) Sin: a man loves sin too much to give it up. His sin may be such things as the flesh, pride, fame, power, wealth, self will, position, property. He is just too possessed to turn to Christ.
2) Fear: men fear two things.
   a) They fear God. If they confess Christ, they fear God will make demands upon them and they will have to give some things up. They fear the loss of whatever they have and enjoy: position, wealth, pleasure.
   b) They fear men. If they confess Christ, they fear ridicule, embarrassment, persecution, shame, abuse, rejection, being passed over. These things and so many more cause men to commit the threefold sins of unbelief.

6 (21:27) **Decision—Unbelief**: unbelief results in Christ's silence. His questioners said, "We cannot tell." They lied. They knew perfectly well that John's baptism was of God. They just were not willing to run the risk of losing their position, livelihood and security. They loved the world more than God and the hope He extended toward them. Thus they denied, acted cowardly, and chose the route of expediency.

Thought 1. The point is this: these unbelievers would not be convinced of the truth. It is not that they *could not* be convinced, but they *would not*. Such obstinate unbelief seldom, if ever, sees the truth of Christ. Even if Christ openly revealed the truth to them, they would reject it.

> **"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).**

Thought 2. When the sins of unbelief are pointed out, men are often provoked and retaliate. They act with malice, often legally and legitimately within society's rules. Sometimes they attempt to denounce and discredit, sometimes persecute.

Thought 3. The judgment of Christ stands against obstinate unbelief. What judgment? The judgment of silence; Christ will honor unbelief, honor it by not revealing Himself to the unbeliever. Unbelief is doomed.

> **"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).**
>
> **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn.5:40).**
>
> **"[God] sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come" (Mt.22:3).**
>
> **"And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not....And I will cast you out of my sight" (Jer.7:13, 15).**
>
> **"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days" (Dt.30:19-20).**
>
> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**

	E. The Parable of Two Sons: What It Takes to Enter God's Kingdom, 21:28-32	go, sir: and went not. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.	c. The first son did his father's will 2 **The point: Sinners enter the kingdom before religionists (the self-righteous & those who make a false profession)**
1 **The parable: A man & two sons** a. Commands first son to go work in his vineyard 1) He says "I will not" 2) He later repents & goes	28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. 29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.	32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.	3 **The reason: Religionists do not believe John—that Jesus is the Son of God** a. Yet John was rgt. b. Sinners believe John c. The religionists' problem: See changed lives but still do not repent & believe
b. Commands second son 1) He says "I go, sir" 2) He never goes	30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I		

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

E. The Parable of Two Sons: What It Takes to Enter God's Kingdom, 21:28-32

(21:28-32) **Introduction**: the words "what think ye?" tie this parable to the Jewish leaders who had just confronted Christ and tried to discredit Him. The Lord wanted to convey a critical message to them, a message that would determine their eternal destiny.

What does it take to enter God's Kingdom? Not only profession and righteousness, but also repentance and belief.

1. The parable: a man and two sons (v.28-31).
2. The point: sinners enter the kingdom before religionists (the self-righteous and those who make a false profession) (v.31).
3. The reason: religionists do not believe John's message—that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (v.32).

1 (21:28-31) **Parable—Work—Service**: the parable is simple and clear. It concerns a man who had two sons. Note several facts.

1. The command "go work" is an emphatic imperative. The father meant what he said: "You go! You work!" There is no other choice in the father's mind; no other alternative. The sons were to work and serve their father.
2. Note the word "today." Today is the day to go. Today is the day to work, not tomorrow. Tomorrow may be too late. The harvest will rot in the field. The night will come when no man can work (Jn.9:4). The sons could also die (Heb.9:27). They had to go today while they had a chance to help their father.

> **"...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
> **"Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart" (Ps.95:7-8).**

3. The first son said, "*I will not.*" This was disrespectful rebellion. It was the refusal of a son who wished to go his own way in life, who rebelled at being told what to do. He was selfish, worldly, carnal, fleshly, materialistic, and prideful. He would have his own way and do his own thing regardless. However, note that the first son *repented and went*. The word *repent* means to change, to turn. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repent*—Acts 17:29-30.) The first son changed and turned from his self-chosen life of rebellion and worldliness—turned back to his father and went into his father's vineyard to work. He did exactly what his father commanded him to do.
4. The second son said "*I go, sir.*" Note: his response indicates that he will go immediately and serve zealously in the father's work. He said I go to work *for you*. But he failed; he *never* did go to work for his father. He went to work, but not for his father. He was just like the first son: selfish, disregarding the father and his needs. He went about his own life, living and working for *himself*. The only difference between the two sons is that the second son *professed* respect for the father and *professed* to work for the father, but he *never* went into the father's vineyard. He never did the father's work. (This implies that what he did day by day was his own work, his own labor. He worked and lived as he wished, disregarding the father entirely. It was a life of religion and moral strictness as we shall see.)
5. Christ asked the religionists standing around which of the two sons did the father's will. The religionists did not see the point of the parable yet, so they gave the obvious answer: the first son did the father's will.

Their immediate response to Christ is interesting. They demonstrated just how much religion and self-righteousness can blind a person, giving a sense of false security. A person, clergyman and layman alike, who sincerely lives a life of religion and moral purity has great difficulty understanding why he is not acceptable to God and cannot enter God's kingdom.

2 (21:31) **Salvation—Self-righteousness—Labor**: Jesus gave the point of the parable. Sinners enter the kingdom before religionists (the self-righteous and professors only). Note what Jesus did.

1. Jesus identified the man and the two sons in the parable.

a. The man who owned the vineyard was God. God is the Person who possesses the kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

b. The first son represents the non-religious and worldly of this earth. These do not profess religion, and they do not know they are lost. They desire to go their own way, wanting nothing to do with God. The publicans or tax collectors represented the rejected and worldly-minded, those more interested in money and in the things of this world than in God. The harlots represented the immoral and sensual, those more interested in pleasure than God.

c. The second son represents the religious of this earth (the self-righteous and those who make a false profession). These were either reared in church from earliest childhood or else came into the church sometime in later life. They professed religion and righteousness to be the way a person should live.

2. Jesus identified the vineyard and work that was to be done. The vineyard is the Kingdom of God and the work is "Go into the kingdom of God"—serve God within His kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Note two things:

a. Both sons (all men) receive the same command and obligation: "Go into the vineyard."

b. God respects both sons. He does not force either son to work, neither the son who rebels nor the son who makes a commitment but fails to work in God's vineyard. The sons' wills are honored. They may go and work wherever they wish.

3. Jesus clearly stressed the point of the parable.

a. He said emphatically "Verily, I say unto you." Verily means surely, truly, sit up and take notice. The word "I" means the Messiah, the Son of God Himself. The Messiah is revealing a critical truth.

b. He said in unmistakable terms: sinners "go into the kingdom of God before you," before the self-righteous and false religionist and false professor. It is important to pay close attention to the Lord's words. He said, "before you." He was not shutting the door of heaven to the religionists. They just could not enter as they presently were. As Christ said in the next verse, they lacked one thing, and they must do that thing in order to enter God's kingdom.

4. Jesus shocked His audience. He declared that man's idea of religion is wrong. Religion and righteousness are not enough to enter God's kingdom. It takes more. Religion is not enough (worship services, ceremony, ritual, profession, and ordinance). Righteousness is not enough (morality, virtue, law, rules and regulations, good works, and commitment). Christ shockingly declared to the religionist and to the righteous: "Sinners go into the kingdom *before you*. What *you* have is not enough; it takes more. Something else is needed."

> **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).**
>
> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).**
>
> **"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).**

3 (21:32) **Salvation—Rejection**: the reason sinners enter God's kingdom and religionists do not is clearly stated: religionists do not believe John's message that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Note that Christ said three things.

1. John was righteous. John came in "the way of righteousness," the very righteousness that religionists say is necessary to live for God. John was godly and lived just like religionists said he should live, yet religionists did not believe John; that is, they did not believe his ministry and witness—that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God.

Christ said to the religionists standing around Him: "You are contradictory. John came to you in 'the way of righteousness' which you profess. He was godly, yet you did not receive his ministry and witness":

> **"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn.1:29 cp. Jn.1:29-36).**
>
> **"And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).**
>
> **"But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of Him (John)" (Lk.7:30).**

Thought 1. The great tragedy of religionists is this: they stand aloof. They reject the counsel of God; they do not go and work in His vineyard.

2. Sinners believed John's witness: "The publicans and harlots believed him." The first son did exactly what John said to do: he repented of his loose life and believed that Jesus was the Son of God (see note—Mt.21:31).

3. Religionists saw the evidence, but they rejected it. They saw the evidence of John's righteousness and of the changed lives of sinners ("when ye had seen it"). But the religionists still denied the facts. Note: a religionist commits two gross errors that are seen in this passage.

a. The religionist lives a strict religious life, but he does not repent of coming short. He tells God he will *go and work in His vineyard,* that is, *His kingdom*, but he does not go into *God's* vineyard. However, note: he does work. In fact, he is very strict in his work, but he works in the vineyard of his own *religion* and righteousness and rules. He never enters God's vineyard (kingdom) to serve the Father.

What happened is what Jesus said. The religionists rejected the Scriptural witness which began with John's ministry and witness. This witness said that the only way to get into God's vineyard is through faith in Christ, and the only way to serve God adequately is through the indwelling power of Christ (Jn.14:6; 1 Tim.2:5).

> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).**

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

b. The religionist does not believe John's personal witness: that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. The religionist most likely accepts Jesus as a great teacher, but not as the Lamb of God who sacrificed Himself for the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24).

"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it [my life] down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:18).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

Thought 1. John's witness is the standard by which Jesus is measuring religionists. It is not enough to be religious and righteous, that is, a good, moral, outstanding citizen. A person has to do more.

1) He has to repent for not going into *God's* vineyard or God's kingdom. The religionist created his own vineyard of religion and righteousness, but his vineyard was not God's vineyard. God's vineyard is the vineyard of faith.
2) He has to believe in God's Son, Jesus Christ. He has to enter the vineyard of faith, and he has to work within the vineyard of faith.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph.2:8-10).

F. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: Israel's Rejection of Jesus' Messiahship, 21:33-46
(Mk.12:1-12;Lk.20:9-19; cp. Is.5:1-7)

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:
34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.
35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.
36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.
37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.
38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.
39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.
40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?
41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.
42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?
43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.
44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.
45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.
46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

1 The parable: Israel's history as God sees it
- a. God planted a vineyard (the nation of Israel)[DS1]
- b. God entrusted His vineyard to the cultivators[DS2]
- c. God sent messengers to gather the fruit[DS3]
  - 1) Fruit was expected
  - 2) The cultivators rebelled & rejected God's messengers
- d. God showed patience—He continued to send messengers[DS4]
- e. God finally sent His Son[DS5]
  - 1) Christ claimed to be God's Son
  - 2) They saw God's Son
  - 3) They plotted His death
  - 4) They planned to seize His inheritance
  - 5) They murdered the Son
- f. God is to judge the cultivators[DS6]
  - 1) God is coming
  - 2) God will miserably destroy the wicked
  - 3) God will trust His vineyard to others (to the Gentiles, v.43)

2 The three claims of Jesus
- a. He is the Head cornerstone[DS7]
  - 1) At first, He is rejected
  - 2) But He becomes the Head cornerstone
- b. God shall take His kingdom away from Israel & give it to another nation[DS8]
- c. Some are doomed[DS9,10]
  - 1) Those who stumble over the stone
  - 2) Those who oppose the stone

3 The results of the parable
- a. The religionists saw that Christ spoke to them
- b. The religionists reacted instead of repenting
- c. The people saw Christ as a prophet, not as the Messiah

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

F. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: Israel's Rejection of Jesus' Messiahship, 21:33-46

(21:33-46) **Introduction**: this is one of the most interesting parables ever told by Christ. It is interesting because it is both historical and predictive. Christ covered the history of Israel from God's perspective, just as God sees it (v.33-36). Then He predicted or revealed exactly what was going to happen to Israel: they were going to reject God's own Son (v.37-39, 42), and because of their rejection and cruelty, God was going to reject them by giving the Kingdom of God to another people (v.43).

What is said throughout this passage is applicable to all nations as well as to Israel. God has entrusted the vineyard of the church and of the world to us (Mt.28:19-20), the new nation, the new creation of God (see notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4, 2:14-15; 4:17-19). Every point covered in Israel's history should, therefore, be a dynamic message speaking loudly and clearly to our hearts.

There are three major points in this passage.
1. The parable: Israel's history as God sees it (v.33-41).
2. The three claims of Jesus (v.42-44).
3. The results of the parable (v.45-46).

1 (21:33-41) **Israel**: Israel's history as God sees it. The householder is God. The vineyard is Israel, true Israel, the people of God. The cultivators are the religious leaders of Israel; the servants are the prophets; and the Son is Jesus Christ, the Messiah (cp. Is.5:1-7). (The subpoints of this point are so important they are discussed in separate notes. See DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2,3,4,5,6*—Mt.21:33-41.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:33) **God—Care—Provision—World—Church—Israel**: God planted a vineyard. The vineyard can be looked upon in several ways.

1. The vineyard is Israel, that is, true Israel, a people for God (Is.5:7).
2. The vineyard is the Kingdom of God which Israel was to look after. This is probably the most accurate understanding of what Christ meant and what actually happens in God's dealing with men. He entrusts His kingdom or church (vineyard) into our hands and expects us to cultivate it (cp. v.43. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.)
3. The vineyard can also be applied to the earth itself, to which Israel was to minister (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22).

Note three marvelous things that God did for His vineyard. He provided every conceivable thing needed to take care of His vineyard and the cultivators. Everything was provided to assure growth and fruitfulness. The cultivators had no excuse for not producing.

1. God "hedged it round about." This was a wall built around the vineyard to keep the animals away from the grapes. The hedge or wall *assured* growth and fruitfulness.

> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).**
>
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col.1:10-11).**

2. God dug a winepress. This was a trough or vat into which the wine was pressed. The trough was sometimes dug in rock, sometime built out of wood. The trough stands for the equipment which God provides to get His work done.

> **"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" (Mt.25:15).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us" (Ro.12:6).**
>
> **"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor.12:4).**

3. God built a tower. This was a watchtower used to guard and protect the vineyard from thieves. The tower stands for the assurance and security of God's care which He gives to His cultivators (cp. Mt.6:25-34).

> **"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Mt.6:31-32).**
>
> **"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Lk.12:7).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(21:33) **Labor—Responsibility—Ministry**: God entrusted His vineyard to cultivators. The cultivators were the nation and people of Israel, in particular the leaders (both religious and civil). Everyone was responsible to take care of the whole nation, looking after everyone else, thereby contributing to the welfare and provision of all. (Cp. the whole body of the church and every member's responsibility to labor in the vineyard, 1 Cor.12:12f.)

Note two things.

1. God puts trust in men. Think what a glorious privilege it is to be trusted by God! Imagine how dear God's vineyard is to Him, and then think about how He entrusts its care to us and not to angels nor to some other higher form of being. What a wonderful and marvelous thing that God would trust us with His most precious vineyard!
2. God gives freedom to man. God left the cultivators to care for His vineyard as they wished. They were to exercise their will and energy in caring for the vineyard. They had the glorious privilege of freedom, of being free to use their own ingenuity and ideas and not have someone looking over their shoulders forcing behavior.

> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen.1:27-28).**
>
> **"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps.8:6).**

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods" (Mt.25:14).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).

"Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Tim.6:20).

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(21:34-35) **Man—Rebellion—Rejection—Persecution**: God sent messengers to gather the fruits of His vineyard. The messengers would be the prophets and the good and godly leaders throughout Israel's history (judges, kings, and priests).

Note three things.

1. Fruit was expected. Every cultivator, that is, every person was responsible for the vineyard; everyone was expected to labor and produce.

2. A day of accountability came. Every man was expected to pay his dues and to make his contribution for the wonderful privilege of living in the beautiful vineyard and being blessed by it. (The Kingdom of God, the world, the church—however one applies this passage—all are wonderful vineyards for which we are responsible to contribute what fruit we can.)

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn.15:2).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:5-6).

3. The cultivators rebelled and refused to pay the Master. In fact, their rebellion led to the persecution and murder of God's servants.

   a. Man deliberately rebels against God. Man wants to rule the vineyard himself. He wants to be the king of the kingdom, the ruler of the earth, and even the head of the church. He wants things to go his way, to rule and reign as he desires and wills. He wants no authority above himself; he wants to live as he wishes and do things as he wishes. He wants to claim the fruit for himself.

   b. Man wants his own way so much that he ridicules, slanders, persecutes, and even murders the true servants of God.

"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:52. Cp. Mt.23:34-37; Heb.11:36-38.)

   c. The servant of God must understand that he is called to suffer (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.21:36. Cp. note and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(21:36) **Persecution**: God showed patience—He continued to send messengers. All through Israel's history God loved and showed His loving-kindness by not reacting and rejecting the nation. God has given us chance after chance. He sends messengers across our path time after time. He loves us and longs for us to pay our dues. He longs for us to bear fruit and live as we should.

Tragically, most cultivators continue as always: rebelling and claiming all rights to the vineyard and to their own lives. Therefore, they continue to react against God's messengers.

Thought 1. How many believers, laymen and ministers alike, are mistreated by the world!

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13; cp. 1 Pt.2:21; 4:5-6; Mt.19:29; Ro.8:16-17).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(21:37-39) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Death**: God finally sent His Son. God wanted to speak to man Himself. Perhaps they would listen to His voice and reverence His rights. He condescended and asked His Son to leave the glory of eternity and to bring His Word to earth, speaking face to face with man.

Note five facts.

1. Christ claimed to be God's Son. He was different from all the servants sent before. He was more than another man-servant; He was God's very own Son. There is no question that Christ was making this unique claim for Himself.
2. The cultivators saw God's Son. There were all kinds of evidence: Old Testament prophecies; the testimony of John the Baptist; Jesus' own claim and the miraculous works; the signs of the times (Gal.4:4); the feeling that He was the promised Messiah, even among those who now opposed Him (see note—Jn.3:1-2; cp. Jn.11:47-52). This is the tragic indictment against the Jews. Down deep within they had a sense that Jesus really was the Messiah, but sin and greed for position, esteem, power, and security kept them from acknowledging Him. Their unbelief was deliberate and obstinate (see outline and notes—Mt.21:23-27).
3. The cultivators plotted His death (cp. Mt.12:14; Jn.11:53).
4. The cultivators planned to seize His inheritance. Man wants to possess the kingdom, nation, property, power, rule, reign, position, esteem, fame, recognition, and wealth. Whatever the possession is, man wants the possession himself; and he will deny, deceive, lie, cheat, steal, and even kill to get it. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.)
5. The cultivators murdered the Son. They committed the worst crime in human history. They killed the Son of God Himself. Note that Christ's death was being prophesied. He was predicting His death Himself, and His death was to be a willing act on His part. He knew death lay ahead and could have escaped, but He chose to die. It was in "the determinate counsel of God" (Acts 2:23).

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(21:40-41) **Judgment—Church**: God is to judge the cultivators. There are three important points here.

1. Christ said that the Lord of the vineyard is coming. He is coming to revenge the death of His only Son.
2. God is coming to destroy the wicked. The destruction is to be miserable (kakos) and terrible. Note: it was both the rulers and the people who said that justice would be executed. Man, by his very nature, expects injustice to be punished.
3. God is going to trust His vineyard to others. Again, it was the crowd who said this. Even man knows that a vineyard will not lie unkept. It will be cultivated by someone. God will raise up a new people to care for it (the church, the new creation of God. See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.21:43; notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4, 2:14-15; 4:17-19.)

> **"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).**
>
> **"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).**
>
> **"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).**

2 (21:42-44) **Jesus Christ, Cornerstone**: Christ made three astounding claims in these verses, claims that affect both world history and the personal destiny of everyone who ever lives in the world.

1. He is the Head Cornerstone. (See DEEPER STUDY # 7—Mt.21:42 for discussion.)
2. God shall turn away from Israel to another nation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.21:43 for discussion.)
3. A man's rejection of Christ will cause that man to be crushed.

DEEPER STUDY # 7

(21:42) **Jesus Christ, Head Cornerstone**: Christ is the Head cornerstone (see note—Lk.2:34). This is a quotation from Ps.118:22-23 which was recognized as a Messianic prophecy. The Messiah was to be the Head Cornerstone who was to begin building the Kingdom of God and who was to support all other stones or leaders who came later. The religious leaders standing around Christ would know that He was referring to the Messiah (Is.28:16; Dan.2:34; Zech.3:9).

But note the prophecy: the stone is to be rejected at first. It is considered unsuitable, useless for the building, so the builders do not allow the stone to be a part of the building. It is cast aside and treated as undesirable.

However, the great Architect overrules the builders. He raises the stone from the graveyard of rejected stones and exalts it to the position of Head cornerstone, the stone which supports all other stones and which holds the building of God's kingdom together (cp. Ph.2:9-11. See notes—Eph.2:20.)

The symbolism of the Head cornerstone says at least two significant things.

1. The cornerstone is the first stone laid. All other stones are placed after it. It is the *preeminent* stone in time. So it is with Christ; He is *the first* of God's new movement.

⇒ Christ is the *captain* of salvation. All others are crew members who follow Him.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:10).

⇒ Christ is the *author* of eternal salvation, of our faith. All others are the readers of the story.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).

⇒ Christ is the *beginning and the ending*. All others come after Him and are in between Him.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev.1:8; cp. 21:6; 22:13).

⇒ Christ is the *forerunner* into the very presence of God. All others enter God's presence after Him.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb.6:19-20).

2. The cornerstone is the supportive stone. All other stones are placed upon it and held up by it. They all rest upon it. It is the preeminent stone in position and power. So it is with Christ; He is the support and power, the Foundation of God's new movement.

⇒ Christ is *the Head cornerstone*, the only true foundation upon which man can build. All who are not laid upon Him will crumble.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

⇒ Christ is *the chief cornerstone* upon which all others are fitly formed together. All who wish to be fitly formed together have to be laid upon Him.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:20-22).

⇒ Christ is *the living stone* upon which all others are built. It is upon Him that we are built up into a spiritual house. All others have to be built upon Him if they wish to live and have their spiritual sacrifice accepted by God.

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:4-5).

DEEPER STUDY # 8

(21:43) **Israel—Gentiles—Church—New Creation**: God shall take away His kingdom and give it to another nation. Christ gave a prophecy that dramatically affects world history: His vineyard or kingdom is going to be taken away from Israel and given to another nation.

There are several important facts that need to be understood at this point in order to grasp the significance of the Lord's prophecy.

1. Israel was the nation of people raised up by God to be His witness to the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22).

a. Israel bore up the name of God in the world.

"In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel. In Salem [Jerusalem] also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion" (Ps.76:1-2).

b. Israel was given the oracles of God, that is, the Word of God, the revelation of God to the world.

"What advantage then hath the Jew?...chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Ro .3:1-2).

c. Israel was a greatly privileged people in spiritual things.

> **"[They] are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Ro.9:4-5. See notes—Ro.9:3-5 for a discussion of their great privileges.)**

d. Israel was given the glorious plan of salvation.

> **"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews" (Jn.4:22).**

e. Israel was given the glorious privilege of being God's witnesses upon the earth.

> **"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).**

2. Israel failed God in its God-given mission and failed God miserably. Therefore, God took His kingdom away from them. As Christ points out in this parable, they "took [God's] servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another" (v.35-36). Then they committed the most atrocious crime of history: they rejected and killed God's very own Son (v.39). All through its history Israel was unfruitful except for a bright spot here and there. They opposed the reins of God upon their lives, and in the final step of rebellion, they rejected and opposed the gospel of Christ. Therefore, they forfeited their Godly privileges. The Kingdom of God was taken from them and given to another nation.

a. God turned from Israel because they killed His Son.

> **"And they caught Him [God's son], and cast Him out of the vineyard, and slew Him....[Therefore] God will let out His vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their seasons" (Mt.21:39, 41).**

b. God turned from Israel because they were unfruitful.

> **"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Mt.21:43).**

c. God turned from Israel because they sought after righteousness by law and not by faith.

> **"But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Ro.9:31-33).**

d. God turned from Israel because they would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God.

> **"They [Israel] have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God (Ro.10:2-3).**

e. God turned from Israel because they did not obey the gospel.

> **"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Ro.10:16).**

f. God turned from Israel because they were a disobedient and obstinate people.

> **"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying [obstinate] people" (Ro.10:21).**

g. God turned from Israel because of unbelief.

> **"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Ro.11:20-22).**

3. Israel as a nation was never saved. Not all citizens believed in God. When God chose Israel to be His people, He did not mean *national salvation*. God knew that not all the citizens of Israel would believe. Not all citizens of any nation believe. What God meant, very simply, was that Israel as a nation was to be the *primary recipient and messenger* of His Kingdom and gospel (see the special privileges of Israel above—point 1). Salvation was never a national matter, not a matter of race or heritage. It was always a matter of personal belief. There was never a moment in Israel's history when every Jew believed in the promises of God.

"Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed by called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Ro.9:6-8).

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved...And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrha" (Ro.9:27, 29).

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Ro.2:28-29).

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith" (Ro.4:13).

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Ro.4:3-8).

4. Israel did, however, always have a remnant, a small number of genuine believers (see outline and notes—Ro.11:1-10; cp. 9:27-29).

"Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved....And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrha" (Ro.9:27, 29).

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot [know] ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Ro.11:1-5).

5. God turned to a new nation and gave His kingdom to them.

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Mt.21:43).

"As he saith also in Osee [Hosea], I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God" (Ro.9:25-26).

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Ro.9:30-33).

"But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me" (Ro.10:20).

"For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief" (Ro.11:30).

6. God's new nation was to be a new creation; that is, it was not to be an existing nation. Just as God had created Israel to be a new nation through one man, Abraham, so God was to create another new nation through one Man, Jesus Christ.

Two things need to be noted about God's new nation.

a. The land or inheritance of this new nation is not of this earth but of heaven. The inheritance is of the spiritual dimension of being; it is heavenly and eternal. It is not of the physical dimension of being; it is not worldly and temporal.

b. The citizens of this new nation are people from all earthly nations who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a person from any nation of the earth believes in Christ, God takes that person and gives him a new birth spiritually, (Jn.3:3-17; 1 Pt.1:23; 1 Jn.5:1, 4-5). The person becomes a new creature and a new man (2 Cor.5:17; Eph.4:24; Col.3:10).

All believers counted together are said to comprise...

- the citizens of the new nation (Eph.2:19; 1 Pt.2:9).
- the family and household of God (Eph.2:19; 5:1, 8; cp. Ro.8:16-17).

- a new body of believers (1 Cor.12:12-14; Eph.2:16).
- a holy temple (Eph.2:21-22).
- a new race (Eph.4:17).
- a spiritual house (1 Pt.2:5).
- a holy priesthood (1 Pt.2:5).
- a chosen generation (1 Pt.2:9).
- a royal priesthood (1 Pt.2:9).
- a peculiar people (1 Pt.2:9).
- the people of God (1 Pt.2:10).
- strangers and pilgrims on earth (1 Pt.2:11).

7. God is going to restore Israel; that is, He is going to have mercy upon Israel and turn them from ungodliness. Why? That He might have mercy upon all, both Gentile and Jew (Ro.11:32). (See outlines and notes—Ro.11:25-36. Cp. Ro.11:11-16. God's historical dealings with the Jews and Gentiles are covered in detail in Romans, chapters 9, 10, and 11. Also see outline and notes—Rev.11:3-13 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 9

(21:44) **Judgment—Stone, Stumbling—Stone, Crushing**: Christ said two types of people are doomed.

1. The people who stumble over Christ, the Head cornerstone of God, are doomed. Many who stood around Christ in that day stumbled and many stumble today. Many cannot believe that God actually sent His Son into the world. The idea that God would humiliate Himself that much is beyond understanding, so they refuse to believe. The belief that Christ was a great teacher is acceptable to them; but acknowledging Him to be more than a man, to be the Son of God who was to die for the sins of the world, is beyond them. Therefore, they stumble over the cornerstone, the very foundation which God has laid for the salvation of man. They stumble and fall over who He is, and they are shattered and broken (see note—Lk.2:34).
2. The men who oppose Christ over His being the Head cornerstone are doomed. Some actively oppose Christ and His kingdom. They say and teach that He is not really the Son of God. Neither He nor any other human being could ever be the Son of God. A good man, yes, but never the Son of God who has been exalted to the right hand of God. Christ says the Son (He Himself) will crush those who oppose Him, those who lead others astray trying to stamp out belief in Him and His kingdom. Severe judgment, holy vengeance shall straighten out all the injustices and sins of men.

DEEPER STUDY # 10

(21:44) **Jesus Christ, Names—Titles**: there are four pictures of Christ as the Stone given in Scripture. Each shows how the coming of Christ affects the world (see note—Lk.2:34).

1. Christ is the Head or Chief Cornerstone, the Foundation Stone. He is the Foundation and Cornerstone upon which every man must build his life. There is no other Foundation upon which man can build and be secure. In addition, Christ is the Foundation and Cornerstone of the church (see DEEPER STUDY # 7—Mt.21:42. Cp. 1 Cor.3:11; Eph.2:20-22; 1 Pt.2:4-5.)
2. Christ is the Stumbling Stone and the Rock of Offense. Some cannot understand the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. Others are repulsed by the cross and His blood. They stumble and are offended by His deity and death for sins. Israel was the first to stumble and multitudes have stumbled ever since (see DEEPER STUDY # 9—Mt.21:44. Cp. Is.8:14-15; Ro.9:32-33; 1 Cor.1:23; 1 Pt.2:8.)
3. Christ is the Crushing Stone or the Smiting Stone of Destruction (Mt.21:44; Dan.2:34). Christ rules and reigns at the right hand of God now. However, with so much evil and destruction in the world, it may appear as though He is not ruling; but He is. He is just waiting until more and more persons believe, not willing that any should perish. But the day of redemption for the believer and of destruction for the unbeliever is coming. He shall become the Crushing Stone, the Smiting Stone of Destruction to all who *oppose* Him. He shall crush and smite, destroying all who stand in opposition to Him. This apparently refers both to individuals and to world powers who oppose Him (DEEPER STUDY # 9—Mt.21:44. Cp. Dan.2:34; Rev.16:13; 19:17.)
4. Christ is the Living Stone (1 Pt.2:4-5). He was disallowed by men but chosen by the Chief Architect, God Himself, and counted as the most Precious of Stones. All men who come to Him are laid upon Him, and they are built up into a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices (see DEEPER STUDY # 7—Mt.21:42).

3 (21:45-46) **Jesus Christ, Response**: the results of the parable are threefold.

1. The religionists saw that Christ was speaking directly to them, but their consciences were seared by obstinate unbelief (1 Tim.4:2). They were insensitive to His warnings (Mt.21:41-44).
2. The religionists reacted instead of repenting. They should have heeded the Lord's warning, but they did not. They were set against Him, seeking to destroy Him and to silence His claim.
3. The people saw Christ only as a prophet (a great teacher) and not as the Messiah. This too is tragic, but God was able to use their respect to protect Christ until the appointed time of His death.

	CHAPTER 22	
	G. The Parable of the Marriage Feast: Israel's Rejection of God's Great Invitation, 22:1-14 (Lk.14:15-24)	
1 Jesus again shared a parable	And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,	
a. Of the Kingdom of Heaven		
b. Of a marriage prepared by God for His Son	2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,	
2 God's invitation to Israel	3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.	
a. God invited Israel, but they rejected		
b. God showed great mercy		
1) Extended a second invitation	4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.	
2) Prepared an abundance		
c. God saw His second invitation rejected	5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:	
1) By a busy farmer		
2) By a busy merchant		
3) By the rel. & worldly: Who denied, scoffed, abused, & persecuted	6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.	
d. God judged Israel for rejecting His invitation	7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.	
1) Destroyed the abusers & murderers		
2) Rejected the rejectors	8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.	
3 God's invitation to any & all	9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.	
a. God then invited all		
1) Those who were out in the highways	10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.	
2) Those who were both good & bad		
b. God's invitation was accepted		
4 God's confrontation with the guests	11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:	
a. God entered to see the guests		
1) He saw a man without a garment	12 And he saith unto him, Friend, How camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.	
2) He asked only one question		
3) The man was speechless		
b. God judged the man who was not clothed properly	13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.	
1) Was bound		
2) Was taken away		
3) Was cast into outer darkness[DSI,2,3]		
c. God calls many, but few are chosen	14 For many are called, but few are chosen.	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

G. The Parable of the Marriage Feast: Israel's Rejection of God's Great Invitation, 22:1-14

(22:1-14) **Introduction—Lord's Great Marriage Feast**: several things need to be noted about this parable.

1. This parable should be compared with the parable in Luke 14:15-24. There are many similarities, but they do differ. Matthew's parable is *The Great Marriage Feast*; Luke's parable is *The Great Supper*. Luke's parable was told at a much earlier date. Matthew's parable was shared during the last week of Christ's life. Each parable had a different purpose and was shared in a different place. Some details also differ.

It is important not to confuse the two parables with each other. Each has its own lesson and truths. Christ is bound to have repeated His parables and teachings often, for all trials are common to all men (1 Cor. 10:13). All men need the same lessons and the same truth. Christ just varied the details to apply to various congregations and their particular needs.

2. This parable, the Great Marriage Feast, deals with the *Kingdom of Heaven* (v.2). This is important. Although the parable tells how God dealt with Israel and turned from Israel, its major point is God's dealings with His new people, the church (the new nation. See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.21:43; esp. pt.6.)

3. The meaning of the various points of the parable is clear.

⇒ The King is God.

⇒ The Son is Christ Himself. Note that He again claims to be the Son of God, distinctive from the servants of the King. This is a critical point to see. There is no question about Christ's understanding just who He is (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.21:37-39).

⇒ The Great Marriage Feast is the glorious day of redemption. It is the glorious day when the church will see Christ for the very first time and be joined with Him forever (cp. 1 Th.4:13-18).

⇒ Those "that were bidden" to the marriage refers to Israel. They were called by God from the very first, beginning with Abraham. However, this point can be applied to any of us—the farmer, the merchant, the religionist, the worldly—any who scoff, abuse, persecute and deny that Christ is the Son of God.

⇒ Those in "the highways" are the Gentiles, people from all other nations who are willing to accept God's glorious invitation to His dear Son's wedding.

⇒ The wedding garment is righteousness. No guest is acceptable for the wedding unless he is properly clothed, and the only proper clothing is righteousness, the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The parable has both an historical and personal meaning. That is to say, its points can be applied to any of us. A quick glance at its points, both major and minor, will show this.

1. Jesus again shared a parable (v.1-2).
2. God's invitation to Israel (v.3-7).
3. God's invitation to any and all (v.8-10).
4. God's confrontation with the guests (11-14).

1 (22:1-2) **The Great Marriage Feast**: Jesus again shared a parable about the Kingdom of Heaven. God has prepared a Great Marriage Feast for His Son and His true followers. The intimate relationship between Christ and His Church are often compared to a marriage (cp. Mt.9:15; Jn.3:29; 2 Cor.11:2; Eph.5:23-32).

> **"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev.19:7).**
>
> **"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev.21:9).**

The covenant of faith is like a covenant of marriage. When a person believes, Christ promises an eternal relationship with Himself. The relationship or union is forever, once and for all.

2 (22:3-7) **Israel—Invitation**: God's invitation to Israel is both historical and prophetic. This is clearly seen as we see the various events covered by Christ in verses 3-7. The various invitations sent out by the King were the practice of Jewish custom. The King would announce the upcoming occasion and then send out reminders as the day approached (cp. Esth.5:8 with 6:14). Note four points.

1. God invited Israel, but they rejected.
   a. The words "them which are bidden" refer to the fact that Israel had *already* been invited. From the very first, beginning with Abraham himself (Gen.12:1f), God had invited Israel to the great feast of His Son.
   b. The servants "sent forth" with this particular invitation were those living during the life of Christ. In relation to time, this parable picks up the story of God's dealing with Israel during the life of Christ. The servants would, therefore, be John the Baptist, the twelve apostles (Mt.10:5f), and the seventy who were sent out into every city to prepare the people for the coming of Christ (Lk.10:1f).
   c. "They [Israel] would not come." The words are few and simply stated, yet the fact is so tragic. This was the first invitation, and they would not accept it. Why would anyone not accept the first invitation of a King to the marriage celebration of His only Son? (Cp. Lk.13:34-35.) A person...
      - can be too busy.
      - can set aside the invitation to accept later.
      - can be committed to something else.
      - can not care enough for the King.
      - can prefer some other festivity.
      - can wish to show personal dislike.
      - can not trust, not believe that the King will actually have a feast.
      - can not believe in the Son.
      - can dislike the Son.

> **"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:2-3).**
>
> **"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Ro.10:21).**
>
> **"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me" (Ps.81:11).**
>
> **"And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not" (Jer.7:13).**

2. God showed great mercy. He had been spurned and rejected with all the disrespect and disgrace imaginable. Yet He did not react—despite the people's disregarding the invitation of the King the way they had. He acted with mercy and grace, still asking the people to attend the Great Marriage Feast of His only Son.
   a. God extended a second invitation. The servants who carried this invitation were the witnesses who went forth immediately after the Lord's resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

      Note that the dinner was now said to be ready: "all things are [now] ready." The great sacrifice necessary to prepare the meal had taken place. They were to come now, come immediately to the feast that *preceded* the marriage itself. Everyone was still invited (2 Cor.5:11, 20; 2 Cor.6:1).
   b. God prepared an abundance.
      ⇒ It was time for all dislikes and differences to be laid aside. The day for the King's only Son to be married had arrived.
      ⇒ It was time for joy: the only Son of the King was about to be married. The Feast was to be the greatest feast ever held. It was to be the most joyful of all occasions.
      ⇒ It was time for feasting.

Thought 1. The very fact that God calls and calls reveals how His heart is *ready* to receive us. He longs for us to be present and prepared for His Son's Great Marriage.

3. God saw His second invitation rejected. The people treated it lightly. The word for "made light" (amelesantes) means to care little if any; to be careless. In the Greek, this is an aorist participle: they were *making light of it*. They were *definite* in their decision not to attend the Great Marriage Feast. They were *careless and negligent* about it. They were *too busy* to be concerned with the King's invitation, too busy with the world and making a living and getting more and more for pleasure and comfort (cp. Jas.4:13).

a. Some were busy farmers. Property and crops needed to be looked after. Note the words "His farm" (ton idion agron). It was his *own* farm or property. The idea seems to be that of selfish enjoyment. The man went to the selfish enjoyment of his own property. He was *wrapped up* in the possessions of this world.

> **"For what is man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).**
>
> **"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:14).**
>
> **"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).**
>
> **"Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).**
>
> **"Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labor which I took under the sun" (Eccl.2:20).**

b. Some were busy merchants (city dwellers). They were engaged in commerce, business, trade. They were wrapped up in the business of the world.

> **"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain" (Jas.4:13).**
>
> **"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:4).**
>
> **"And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused" (Lk.14:18-19.)**

c. Some were worldly-minded and religious. They were so attached to the world that they wanted nothing to do with the King. He disturbed their interests and their lives. He was a threat to their position, prestige, wealth, and security. Therefore, they were hostile to Him. In fact, they would have overthrown His reign and taken His kingdom for themselves. They persecuted and slayed His servants, anyone who reminded them of their obligation to keep the Marriage Feast of the King (cp. Acts 4:3; 5:40; 7:58; 9:2; 12:2f; 14:19; 16:23; 2 Cor.11:23-25).

Thought 1. Men are always rejecting God's invitation. Why? *Not because* they *have* to but because they *want* to.

> **"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn.5:40).**

Thought 2. What a paradox! If anyone should ever be received with open arms, it is the messenger who brings the invitation to the King's Great Marriage Feast for His Son. Yet, the very opposite is too often true. The King's messengers are often unwelcomed, ridiculed, criticized, mistreated, abused, cursed, persecuted, murmured against, and sometimes killed.

> **"Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day" (1 Cor.4:13).**

4. God judged Israel for rejecting His invitation. Some interpret this verse to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by Titus. Perhaps such an application can be made, but it would mean that the death referred to is only physical death and destruction. Such an interpretation comes far short of what Christ meant. He was primarily referring to the eternal judgment which will take place in the future. Wrath will come upon all rejectors to the uttermost (1 Th.2:15-16). This is a parable, so the reference to armies and the burned city is parabolic language. Israel had the privilege of attending the Great Marriage Feast of God's only Son, but the people of Israel abused their privilege by rejecting the invitation and killing the messengers of the King. They have, therefore, lost their witness as God's people and are to be judged eternally just as all rejectors of God's invitation are to be judged.

Note the words, "They which were bidden were not worthy." They were not worthy to attend the Feast and wedding. And they shall not attend.

Thought 1. Note the two sins that bring the judgment of God upon our heads.

1) Ridiculing and abusing God's servants. Note that God "destroyed those murderers" (v.7), the people who had persecuted His messengers.

2) Rejecting God's invitation. Note the words: "not worthy." The thing that made them unworthy was rejecting God's most gracious invitation. It is the rejection of the invitation that caused their judgment, not the act of God. When we reject God, it is our rejection that causes us to be condemned. Rejection equals condemnation.

> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Lk.3:9).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Th.1:7-9).**

3 (22:8-10) **Invitation—Gentiles—Man**: God's invitation is now given to any and all. This is what is meant by the word "highways." God's servants are to go out into the highways of the world to invite any and all to the Great Wedding Feast of His Son.

Note several things.

1. God's servants are to invite as many as they can find. The invitaton is no longer just to the few. It is universal: to the Jew and Gentile, the rich and poor, the high and low, the free and slave, the moral and immoral, the religious and irreligious. Note an important point. Few, if any, out in the highway would ever expect an invitation to a King's wedding.

> **"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).**
>
> **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).**
>
> **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).**

2. God's servants are to invite both good and bad, that is, both the moral and thoughtful (for example, Cornelius, Acts 10:1f; the devout Greeks, Acts 17:4), and the immoral and irreligious (1 Cor.6:9-11). This could also mean that some bad do presently accept the invitation, but never really dress for the occasion (v.11-14). The visible church contains both bad and good (cp. Mt.13:1f).

> **"But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mt.9:13).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

3. God's servants are to fill the wedding with guests *from the highways*. God assures His Son: His wedding will have guests; but note, only as many as they can "find" (v.9), and only as many as they "found" (v.10).

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

4 (22:11-14) **Judgment—Great Wedding Feast**: God's confrontation with the guests was a momentous occasion. However, note the emphasis of this parable. The emphasis was not on the joy and festivity of the Marriage Feast but on a guest who came improperly dressed for the occasion. A man tried to attend the wedding without the proper clothing. He was not clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Christ said three things.

1. God entered the Feast to see the guests. Upon entering, He immediately saw the man without a wedding garment. The words "to see" (theasasthai) mean to view attentively; to carefully look over; to closely look upon and contemplate and inspect. The stress is upon the person who is seeing. He beholds and inspects. The idea is that God entered the banqueting feast *for the purpose* of looking over and inspecting the guests. He wanted to make sure everyone and everything was in order for His Son's great celebration. No one can be allowed to detract from His Son by being improperly dressed or clothed. (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 2—*Righteousness*, Ro.13:14; note—2 Cor.5:21. See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; note—5:1.)

   a. The guests did not know that the man lacked the proper garment, but the King did. The man deceived the other guests, but the King knew the kind of dress He had spelled out for all His guests to wear. And observe: the man was showing disrespect and dishonor by not following the King's request for proper dress.

   b. He asked only one question, and He asked the question before the feast began: "Friend, why have you come not wearing a wedding garment?" He could not allow an eyesore to detract from the joyful occasion. He had to deal with the detraction. The man had been invited, and he was responsible for wearing a *proper* and *clean* garment (cp. Eph.4:24f; cp. Eph.4:1; Ph.1:27).

> **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

c. The man was speechless (ephimothe). The word means muzzled, muted, silenced, tongue-tied, closed-mouthed. He had no excuse. He stood guilty of disrespect and dishonor for wearing the wrong garment, a garment that was not right for a kingly occasion. The garment was unclean.

2. God judged the man who was not clothed properly. Note that God called His servants together. The servants (diakonois) were not the same servants who delivered the invitations. They were not the disciples (v.3, 4) and preachers (v.8, 10) of the Lord. They were the angelic guardians of heaven who minister to the Godhead (cp. Mt.13:41-43, 49-50). Three things were done.

a. The man was bound hand and foot. The hand and foot are usually the bodily parts used by man to sin. The hands are bound so there is no resistence. The feet are bound so there is no escape. Whatever the King says is done in the Great Day of the Feast. No man can resist or flee.

b. The man was taken away, out of the King's presence and out of the presence of His Son and of the other guests. He was not allowed to share in the joy and bounty of the occasion.

c. He was cast into outer darkness, far, far away from everyone else. He was not only cut off from the sharing of the occasion but from ever seeing the occasion. Whatever light and brilliance there was in the Great Wedding Feast, he was cast into the *outer* regions of darkness, never to glimpse the light.

3. God calls many, but few are chosen. Christ had said this before (Mt.20:16). In the context of this parable, there were several calls of God to the Great Wedding Feast of His Son.

a. There was God's call to the Jews, but few responded.

b. There is God's call to the Gentiles, but few are responding.

c. There is God's call to all those who enter in, but few wear the wedding garment. The only garment they have is that of hypocrisy and false profession.

What Christ was saying becomes clear if we look at the church and consider all who are in the church...

- There are those within the church who care more for the things and possessions of this world than they do for Christ.

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Lk.12:29-30).

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows....Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:7-10, 17-18).

- There are those within the church who do not deny self nor sacrifice all they are and have to follow Christ (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

- There are those within the church who are still conformed to the world.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

- There are those within the church who are careless in their conversation.

"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Eph.5:4).

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim.2:16-18).

"For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body....Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of

deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God" (Jas.3:2, 5-9).

- There are those within the church who demonstrate spirits other than the spirit of love.

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (Jn.13:33-34).

- There are those within the church who live after the flesh instead of living for Christ.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

- There are those within the church who do not worship God consistently, either daily or weekly.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).

- There are those within the church who profess Christ, but live hypocritical lives.

"Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Mt.6:2).

The warning of Christ was clear and should cause thought and concern.

"Many are called, but few chosen" (Mt.22:14; 20:16).
"Many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Lk.13:24).
"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mt.7:14).
"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

Thought 1. The Lord walks among the churches. He knows how much or how little we work, labor, endure, and love (Rev.2:1-2).

Thought 2. Note that God in particular sees the hypocrite. The hypocrite stands out like a cancerous sore in God's eyes, and God is forced to treat the hypocrite as the master physician treats a cancerous sore.

Thought 3. The Great Feast Day is first of all a Great Inspection Day. Before God presents us to Christ, He is going to cast out all who do not wear the garment of righteousness (see outline and notes—1 Cor.3:10-17).

Thought 4. The wedding garment which the man lacked was righteousness. The man did not possess the righteousness of Christ nor did he live righteously (see note—Mt.5:6).

1) The man had not trusted the righteousness of Christ to make him acceptable to God. (See note, *Justification*—Ro.5:1 for more discussion.)

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).
"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

2) The man had not lived a moral and self-denying life (see note—Lk.9:23). He was not what he had professed to be.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(22:13) **Outer darkness**: see note—Mt.8:12 for discussion.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(22:13) **Weeping**: see note—Mt.8:12 for discussion.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(22:13) **Gnashing of Teeth**: see note—Mt.8:12 for discussion.

	H. The Question about God and Caesar: The Two Citizenships, 22:15-22 (Mk.12:13-17; Lk.20: 20-26)	give tribute unto Caesar, or not?	to the rejection of truth & self-condemnation[DS3]
1 The false concepts of citizenship a. Religion is supreme: The Pharisees[DS1] b. The state is supreme: The Herodians[DS2]	15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.	18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?	**3 The truth about citizenship: There are two citizenships** a. Christ sees through false concepts & evil motives
2 The sins common to false concepts of citizenship a. Selfish ambition: Leads to compromise b. Deception: Leads to false flattery & destruction c. Close-minded & obstinate unbelief: Leads	16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.	19 Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's	b. There are things which belong to Caesar: An earthly citizenship c. There are things which belong to God: A heavenly citizenship
	17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to	22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

H. The Question about God and Caesar: The Two Citizenships, 22:15-22

(22:15-22) **Introduction**: this is the second challenge or attack by the leaders against Christ. The words "took council" indicate that the ruling body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin, held an official meeting. They plotted how they might deal with this man who was claiming to be the Messiah. They feared Christ, for He was gathering the loyalty of the people so strongly around Himself.

Their plot was to ask Him a question about a person's citizenship. The question was supposed to "entangle him in his talk" (v.15); that is, it was supposed to be impossible for Christ to answer without discrediting Himself either with the people or with the Roman authorities. If He discredited Himself with the people, they would react and desert Him; if He discredited Himself with the Romans, they would arrest Him.

Christ *is* the Messiah, the Son of God Himself; therefore, He saw through their plot. Christ used the occasion to teach the truth about citizenship, a truth which was both astounding and earth-shaking to the people of that day—earth-shaking because the Jews believed that the loyalty of a citizen belonged only to God, and the rest of the world believed that loyalty belonged to the ruling monarch of their territory.

Christ astounded the world of His day by declaring there was an earthly, physical citizenship to which some things are to be given; and there was a spiritual, heavenly citizenship to which some things are to be given.

1. The false concepts of citizenship (v.15-16).
   a. Religion is supreme: the Pharisees.
   b. The state is supreme: the Herodians.
2. The sins common to the false concepts of citizenship (v.16-17).
   a. Selfish ambition: leads to compromise.
   b. Deception: leads to false flattery and destruction.
   c. Close-minded, obstinate unbelief: leads to rejection of the truth and self-condemnation.
3. The truth about citizenship: there are two citizenships (v.18-22).
   a. Christ sees through false concepts and evil motives.
   b. There is something which belongs to Caesar: an earthly citizenship.
   c. There is something which belongs to God: a heavenly citizenship.

1 (22:15-16) **Citizenship**: these two false concepts of citizenship are seen in the Pharisees and Herodians. However, it must be remembered, the world did not know the concepts were false until this experience.

1. The first false concept is that *religion is supreme*. This is seen in the view of the Pharisees (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8). They believed strongly in the heavenly world, so much so they believed that all obedience and loyalty were due God and God alone. In fact, all things on earth were due God. The state and all other power and authority were to be subject to religious rule. Therefore, they were strongly against paying taxes to a foreign king. Such was an infringement upon God's right.
2. The second false concept is that *the state is supreme*. This is seen in the view of the Herodians (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.22:16 for discussion).

Picture the scene and how strange it was. The Pharisees held that religion was dominant over government, and they despised Roman authority and taxation. The Herodians held that government was dominant over religion; consequently, they would agree that taxes must be paid to Caesar rather than to God. The Herodians and the Pharisees were bitter enemies. To find them together was strange indeed, but their hatred of Jesus brought them together against One whom they considered a common enemy. (See notes—Mk.3:6; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8.)

Thought 1. The world's concept of citizenship is still the same as it was in Christ's day, despite His teaching. The vast majority of the world would be humanists and secularists, that is, worldly-minded citizens and unbelieving politicians. They would hold that the state is supreme. On the other hand, there would be some who would hold that religion is supreme and is to dominate the state. However, the position of religious supremacy is very difficult to practice in an educated and industrialized society. To a large degree, it can be held only theoretically.

> **"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).**
>
> **"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).**
>
> **"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Is.5:14).**
>
> **"Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Is.66:5).**
>
> **"Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters" (Ezk.24:25).**
>
> **"As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos.4:7).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(22:15) **Pharisees**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(22:16) **Herodians**: the Herodians were not a religious party but a political party of Herod, the King of Galilee. They were supportive of Rome, compromising wherever they could in order to preserve their own power and influence. They had compromised to such a point that they gave some degree of consent to pagan temples. Religiously, they were mainly Sadducees who gave their first loyalty to the state (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8). Thus, they opposed all Messianic claims because of the disturbance the claims caused among the people. They would agree that taxes must be paid to Caesar rather than to God.

2 (22:16-17) **Citizenship**: there are sins that are often committed by those who hold false concepts of citizenship. Some of these sins are seen in the plot of the Pharisees and Herodians against Christ.

1. There is *selfish ambition* which often leads to compromise and intrigue. Nothing could have been more surprising than to see the Pharisees and Herodians working together. They stood diametrically opposed to one another. The Pharisees thought the Herodians no better than the heathen doomed for hell, yet they were seen working with the Herodians against Christ. What was it that brought them together? Selfish ambition. They feared the loss of their position, influence, power, wealth, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9. These notes will help considerably in understanding why the rulers feared Christ so much.) A man who lives for this world will become a bedfellow with almost anyone to protect his security. The degree or strange appearance of the compromise will seldom matter.

The depth of the sin in selfish ambition is also seen here. The primary plotters were religious leaders; and they were not only willing to plot evil, they were trying to cause a man, Christ Himself, to be put to death. Just how evil government and religion can be in their ambition is clearly seen in this passage.

2. There is *deception* which usually leads to flattery and destruction. The deception is seen in two facts.
   a. Deception is seen in that the Pharisees themselves did not go to Christ. They sent "their disciples with the Herodians." The disciples were learners or students who would actually be seeking the answer to such a question themselves. The Herodians were along to give the appearance that the disciples had asked them first, but the disciples were not satisfied with their answer. It would seem that the disciples of the Pharisees wanted to know what Christ, One who claimed to be the Messiah, would answer. Thus, Christ would think the question was the legitimate question of a student, never suspecting a plot to entrap Him.
   b. Deception, the lowest kind of deception, is seen in the words of flattery which were used in approaching Christ.
      ⇒ "Master...
      ⇒ "We know that thou art true...
      ⇒ "And teachest the way of God in truth...
      ⇒ "Neither carest thou for any man...
      ⇒ "...for thou regardest not the person of men."

Note that everything they said about Christ was true.
- ⇒ He was Master: a rabbi, a teacher. He was even more: He was the Master and Lord of the universe.
- ⇒ He was true or truthful: a teacher from God. (Contrast their hypocritical approach with the sincerity of Nicodemus, Jn.3:2.)
- ⇒ He did teach the way of God: how a man is to live and behave if he wishes to please God.
- ⇒ He did not care what men said about Him: it did not influence Him or His action.
- ⇒ He did not regard man's person: show partiality or favoritism.

The problem is that they did not mean what they were professing, not in their hearts. What they were professing about Him was coming from an evil motive. They wanted to use Him to secure their own selfish purposes. In the end, they were successful; they were able to do what they were plotting and to have Him destroyed. As always, deception destroys that which is truthful and strong and lovely.

> **"For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty" (Job 15:5).**
> **"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulcher; they flatter with their tongue" (Ps.5:9).**
> **"A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved" (Pr.12:3).**
> **"A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet" (Pr.29:5).**

3. There is *close-mindedness and obstinate unbelief* which leads to rejection of the truth and self-condemnation. The question asked of Christ was simple: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?"

⇒ The Pharisees, sincere Jewish religionists, would shout, "No."
⇒ The Herodians (and those securing position and wealth by Roman rule) would say, "Yes."

Standing there, the questioners thought they had entrapped Christ. If He said, "No, taxes should not be paid to Caesar," then the authorities would arrest and remove Him. The people would then know that His claim to Messiahship was false.

If He said, "Yes, taxes should be paid to Caesar," then He would be denying the Sovereignty of God; and the people, who strongly opposed Roman rule and taxes, would rise up against Him. Both the Pharisees and Herodians were close-minded. They saw nothing beyond themselves and the threat to their position and wealth. They were steeped in obstinate unbelief. Thus, they rejected the truth; and, as results from all rejection of the truth, they condemned themselves (cp. Jn.3:18-21).

> **Thought 1.** Selfish ambition can, and too often does, penetrate the very heart of those who are called to serve. The halls of government and the sanctity of religion are not exempt. Regardless of who a man is, he can crave and be corrupted by position, influence, power, wealth, and security.
>
> **Thought 2.** Too many will compromise anything to hang on to their earthly possessions.
>
> **Thought 3.** Any man who loves the things of this world will turn away from Jesus, and any man who feels threatened by Jesus and His claims will react against Jesus (1 Jn.2:15-16).
>
> **Thought 4.** Note the testimony Jesus had even among His enemies. He was true, teaching the way of God, self-denying and courageous, and completely impartial toward others. Knowing and professing the truth about Jesus is not enough. Those who opposed Christ knew the truth about Him. They were just not willing to surrender to the truth.
>
> **Thought 5.** Obstinate unbelief, pride, and haughtiness will cause us to be condemned by the Lord. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32 for a discussion of their obstinate unbelief.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(22:17) **Tribute—Tax**: the tax asked about is the poll tax. It was a tax that had to be paid by every person between the ages of twelve or fourteen to sixty-five. The poll tax amounted to about one day's wage in that time (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.13:6).

3 (22:18-22) **Citizenship**: the truth about citizenship. A man has two citizenships. A man is a citizen of this world; this is clearly evident. Therefore, he owes to the earthly powers what belongs to them. But a man is also a citizen of heaven, of the spiritual world; therefore, he owes to God what belongs to Him.

Note three things.

1. Christ saw through the false concepts of these men. He was the Son of God, so He naturally knew that they held a false concept of citizenship. Moreover, as the Son of God, He also saw that they had an evil motive.

Christ was pointed and forceful: "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" He knew their hearts...

- their selfish ambition with every act of compromise and intrigue.
- their deception with all the flattery and destructive poison of their tongues.
- their close-mindedness and obstinate unbelief that led them to reject Him and to condemn themselves.

Note the words "their wickedness" and "ye hypocrites" (v.18). They were wicked and they were hypocrites. They were pretending something that was not so.

⇒ They were pretending to be something they were not.
⇒ They were pretending to seek the truth when they were not really after the truth.
⇒ They were pretending to honor Him when they really did not.

2. There is something which belongs to Caesar: an earthly citizenship. Christ was brilliant and brief as He dealt with the Pharisees and their false concept of citizenship. "Show me the tribute money...Whose is this image and superscription," He simply asked.

Note two things.

a. He forced the Pharisees (religion is supreme concept) to admit that some things belonged to an earthly power. The image was Caesar's; the superscription was Caesar's; and the coin had been made or coined by Caesar's government. Therefore, the coin was Caesar's if Caesar said it was due him. The point was clear: since the religionists, as citizens, *used what was owned and provided by Caesar*, then they owed to Caesar what was due him. Christ said strikingly, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

b. He revealed a very important truth for believers of all time: they *have a double citizenship*. They are citizens of heaven, yes, but they are also citizens of this world. They have an obligation to the government under which they live. They receive the benefits of government just as *the worldly-minded* do: for example, roads, sewage, water, protection, public transportation, and on and on. Therefore, believers are to pay their due share. (See note—Ro.13:1-7. This note is a thorough discussion of citizenship.)

> **"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).**
>
> **"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee" (Mt.17:27).**
>
> **"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Tit.3:1).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pt.2:13-15; cp. 1 Pt.2:17).**
>
> **"And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment" (Ezra 7:26).**
>
> **"I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God" (Eccl.8:2).**

3. There is something which belongs to God: a heavenly citizenship. Christ was just as brilliant in dealing with the Herodians and their false concept of citizenship as He had been with the Pharisees. The Herodians not only subjected religion to the state, but they were worldly minded and denied much of the supernatural, including life after death and the spiritual dimension of being.

Note two things.

a. Christ declared unequivocally to the Herodians: there is a spiritual world. God is; God exists, and there are some things which belong to God. "Render therefore...unto God the things that are God's." Again, the point is clear. Since the Herodians (the state is supreme concept) as citizens of the world and of life itself, used what was owned and provided by God, then they owed God what was due Him.

b. Christ revealed a very important truth to all men. They are beings of God as well as of this world, spiritual as well as physical beings. Therefore, they are responsible to live as citizens of God as well as citizens of this world. All men have received much from God:

⇒ life that was made to exist with God forever; therefore man owes God his life.

⇒ a spirit that can be "born again" and live a self-denying life of love, joy, and peace for the sake of all men everywhere (Gal.5:22-23).

⇒ a mind and body that have the power to enjoy the aesthetic beauty of the earth, learning to reason and produce for the betterment and service of all mankind.

All men receive these benefits and many more from God. Therefore, they are to pay their due share to God.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**
>
> **"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).**
>
> **"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day" (Dt.8:18).**
>
> **"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full" (Dt.11:13-15).**

Thought 1. See notes—Ro.13:1-7; 13:8-10; 1 Pt.2:13-17. These notes are sufficient to stir thoughts for application. One may also wish to refer to the Master Subject Index for a complete study on citizenship.

Thought 2. The truth that Christ covers in this passage is just what He says: there are two citizenships—an earthly and a heavenly citizenship. A man is to be a good citizen of both.

> **"Fear God. Honor the King" (1 Pt.2:17).**

	I. The Question about the Resurrection: The Resurrection Denied, yet Proven, 22:23-33 (Mk.12:18-27; Lk.20: 27-38)	died also. 28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.	supposedly shows the absurdity of the resurrection: Whose wife is she in eternity?
1 The Sadducees tried to discredit Christ **2 The resurrection was scoffed at & denied** a. Moses' law: The levirate law or law of the brother-in-law 1) To carry on family 2) To protect property b. The logical situation: A childless widow marries seven brothers	23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resur-rection, and asked him, 24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: 26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.	29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.	**3 The resurrection was denied for two reasons** a. Did not know Scripture b. Did not know the power of God **4 The resurrection exceeds earthly relationships** a. Exceeds marital relat. b. Equal to angels & God **5 The resurrection has four basic proofs** a. God has spoken & revealed the resurrection in His Word b. God is; God exists c. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob d. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living
c. The logical question	27 And last of all the woman	33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.	**6 The resurrection causes astonishment**

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

I. The Question about The Resurrection: The Resurrection Denied, yet Proven, 22:23-33

(22:23-33) **Introduction**: it was still Tuesday of the Lord's last week. (Note the statement, "the same day.") On this day, the challenges to His authority had been pressing in ever so heavily upon Him.

First, the chief priests and lay leaders (elders) had challenged His authority (see outline and notes—Mt.21:23-27). Christ had met the challengers head on and routed them. In so doing, His mind had been focused upon His death and Israel's rejection. The very thought that Israel, in whom God had put so much trust, was failing God by putting His Son to death was bound to be ripping out the heart of Christ (see outline and notes—Mt.21:33-46; 22:1-14).

Second, the Pharisees and Herodians (Herod's political party) had attempted to discredit Christ by pitting Him either against the government or the people (see outlines and notes—Mt.22:15-22). Again, Christ had met and routed His challengers; but again, the struggle had been tiring and pressuring, hard and heavy.

Now, for a third time, the Lord was confronted and challenged; and again, it was a different group who tried to outargue and discredit Him. His challengers were the Sadducees, the religious and political liberals of the day. As Matthew pointed out, "[They] say that there is no resurrection" (v.23). Luke added, "The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.16:12; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8). Their liberal position caused two things.

1. It caused them to stumble at the spiritual and supernatural. They ridiculed and scorned both. In their minds, the teachings of Christ lacked philosophical analysis and natural or scientific proof; therefore, they were the teachings of an unthinking and illogical man.
2. Their liberal position caused them to feel threatened and to oppose Christ. The people were flocking to Christ and soaking up His teachings. This meant the Sadducees were losing their grip on the people; their position and wealth were being jeopardized. Therefore, they were compelled to attack and discredit Him before the people.

It was their liberal belief—their denial of the spirit and of a spiritual world, of life after death and of the resurrection—that they used to attack Christ.

1. The Sadducees tried to discredit Christ (v.23).
2. The resurrection was scoffed at and denied (v.23-28).
3. The resurrection was denied for two reasons (v.29).
4. The resurrection exceeds earthly relationships (v.30).
5. The resurrection has four basic proofs (v.31-32).
6. The resurrection caused astonishment (v.33).

1 (22:23) **Sadducees**: this sect had already been seen on two other occasions. They had already opposed John the Baptist (Mt.3:7f) and Christ (Mt.16:1-12. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.16:12; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8.)

2 (22:23-28) **Resurrection—Sadducees**: the resurrection was denied and scoffed at by the Sadducees. Down through the centuries many liberal-minded men have continued in their steps (cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58; 2 Pt.3:3-18). Note the argument of the Sadducees.

1. They used Moses' law, the levirate law, as the basis of their argument (Dt.25:5-6). When a husband died without a son, the levirate law said that his brother was to marry his wife and bear a son. By law, the son was considered the first-born son of the deceased brother. This assured two things: (a) that the family name continued, and (b) that the property holdings were kept in the family. This was a law that had been given to help preserve and to enlarge the nation of Israel (cp. Ruth 4:5).
2. The Sadducees then suggested a logical situation that could have arisen. Note the words, "There were *with us* seven brethren." The first brother married, but he died before bearing children. Each of the other brothers obeyed the law, but each died before bearing a child. Finally, the woman died also.
3. The logical question was now asked, the question which in the Sadducees' mind showed the absurdity of the resurrection. They asked, "Whose wife shall she be in eternity?" Note three things by reading through verses 23-28 several times.
   a. The situation was logical; but the spirit of questioning was cold and coarse, egotistical and unbelieving, regrettable and revolting. The unbelievers's spirit is often self-incriminating and self-condemning.
   b. The argument was thought to be irrefutable by the Sadducees. They believed it pointed out just how foolish the idea of another world was to the thinking person.
   c. The Sadducees were thinking that the spiritual world would be just like the physical world, that it would be nothing more than a continuation of this world, both in *its nature and in its relationships*.

As this point is closed, a picture of what the Scripture says about the natural man is clearly seen.

> **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).**

Thought 1. Every generation has its Sadducees, those who are liberal minded and who scoff at the idea of the resurrection and of a spiritual world. God knows this. He has always known that many would scoff and ridicule, so He has dealt with the issue in at least two extensive passages of Scripture (1 Cor.15:12-58; 2 Pt.3:3-18).

> **"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor.15:12).**
>
> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt.3:3-4).**

Thought 2. Today's arguments against the existence of a spiritual world and resurrection arise from...

- logical and rational thought
- philosophical positions
- a natural and scientific hypothesis
- humanistic beliefs
- an unwillingness to change one's lifestyle
- a fear of rejection and ridicule by one's peers
- a refusal to admit that one's former position was wrong

Thought 3. Most unbelief in the spiritual world arises not from a thinking position, but from a worldly position. Few study through both the natural and spiritual positions. Most just love the world and the things of the world so much that they wish to reject the restraints which the spiritual world puts upon them.

3 (22:29) **Resurrection—Spiritual World—Scripture—God, Power of**: Christ said very pointedly to the Sadducees and to all who followed their liberal position: "You are in error. You deny the resurrection for two erroneous reasons."

1. "You do not know the Scriptures." The Scriptures are plain and clear. They leave no doubt that there is a spiritual world—that there is to be a resurrection into the spiritual world or spiritual dimension of being.

> **"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).**
>
> **"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Is.26:19).**
>
> **"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan.12:2).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:25).**
>
> **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).**

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor.15:22).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Th.4:16).

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (Ps.49:15; cp. Ps.71:20; Hos.13:14).

Thought 1. There are three reasons why a person may not know the Scriptures.
1) He simply has not *studied* the Scriptures, not *really studied.*
2) He does not believe the Scriptures. He rejects the Scripture as God's Word.
3) He does not take the Scriptures for what they say. He spiritualizes or allegorizes them.

2. "You do not know the power of God." There are three reasons why a person does not know the power of God.
   a. He is ignorant of God. He knows nothing about God and seldom, if ever, gives any thought to God and His power.
   b. He does not believe in God or His power. He refuses to acknowledge God's eternal power and Godhead seen in creation and goes about *creating* gods of his own (both mental and physical images). (Cp. Ro.1:20-32.) He refuses to acknowledge the picture of nature that clearly illustrates the resurrection:

> **"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor.15:36-38).**

   c. He believes, but his belief in God and His power is weak. He cannot picture much happening beyond the physical world and the power of natural laws.

Thought 1. The idea of a spiritual world is perplexing to the natural man. Just imagine! While we are sitting here surrounded by all that we see...
- there is another world, a spiritual world, an unseen spiritual dimension of being that actually exists.
- there is a spirit, the real life within our bodies, that is destined to exist forever.
- there is to be a resurrection of all the dead bodies that have been lying scattered and decaying in the graves for ages and ages. God shall *call* all the parts of decayed bodies back together again, no matter where they are scattered, and these bodies shall be perfected and glorified to live and work again. How can He do such a thing? By the Word of His power *as God.*

Thought 2. When we really think about the facts of the resurrection, two confessions have to be made by every man, believer and unbeliever.
1) The natural man, that is man within himself and his world, *can never know* about a spiritual world. He is bound by the physical and material world of which he is a part. He can only think and guess and theorize that a spiritual world exists and speculate on details such as a resurrection. Man cannot, while living in this world, penetrate the spiritual world with his body to scientifically prove the existence of the spiritual world.
2) God alone can reveal the reality of the spiritual dimension and the fact that a resurrection will take place. Such can be known and experienced only by the power of God. No man has the power to bring it about. If a resurrection is to take place, God's power will have to do it.

Thought 3. By its very nature of permanence, the spiritual world supersedes and becomes much more important than the physical and dying world. Therefore, the spiritual world demands that man give preeminence to it. It is these demands that man rebels against. Therefore...
- a scientific society questions what it cannot prove.
- a materialistic society questions what it cannot use to satisfy its lust for more.
- an immoral society questions what it fears will correct its behavior.
- a worldly society questions what it fears will restrain its pleasure.
- a power society questions what it fears will loosen its grip and lessen its authority.

4 (22:30) **Resurrection—Spiritual Dimension**: Christ said that the resurrection exceeded earthly relationships. The Sadducees did not know the Scriptures nor the power of God. When they thought of being resurrected into another

world, they simply saw life continuing on as it does now. They pictured heaven as being just a continuation of this world. Very simply, they could not conceive that the qualities of life would be changed and that man would be given a totally new environment in which to live.

Christ said two things.

1. Future life and relationships shall exceed earthly relationships—even the bond of marital relationships. The strong union and bond of marriage will not be less, it will be greater and stronger.

2. Future life and relationships shall be equal to that experienced by the angels and God. This means at least two things. (Note: Christ had just admitted the existence of angels, refuting the disbelief of the liberal minded Sadducces.)

   a. Heavenly life and relationships will be perfect. In heaven our relationships will not cease to be. They will be changed in that selfishness and sin will not affect our love and lives. Our love will be perfected; thus, we shall love everyone perfectly. A wife on this earth will not be loved as she was on this earth—imperfectly. She shall be loved more and loved perfectly. Everyone will love everyone else perfectly. God will change all relationships into perfection, even as the relationships between angels and God are perfected.

   b. Heavenly life and relationships shall be eternal. There will be no ending of relationships. A man and wife will always have the other to love. One shall not cease to be (die) before the other (as is the case now). Everyone will always have everyone else to love. God will change the brief time we have with each other now into an eternal relationship. We shall enjoy the presence of each other eternally, even as the relationship between angels and God is enjoyed eternally.

Thought 1. Two warnings must always be issued when thinking of heaven and eternal life.

1) A person can *materialize* heaven and *humanize* eternal life; that is, we can conceive heaven to be nothing more than a *glorified* world and eternal life to be nothing more than physical life plus a little more. This was the mistake of the Sadducees and is often the concept pictured by liberal thinkers when they hear about the resurrection.

2) A person can *idealize* heaven and *allegorize* eternal life. We can think of heaven as little more than an ideal land for which we should seek and toward which we should direct our lives. And we can think of eternal life as little more than a utopian state of being, a utopian dream of an indefinite quality, or of floating around and being free of trouble and trials.

The teaching of Scripture or of God's revelation must always be kept in mind when thinking of heaven and eternal life. Scripture teaches that the very nature of things will be changed.

1. Heaven is said to be a spiritual dimension, a real world of being, and Scripture declares that the heavens and earth shall one day be transformed into that spiritual dimension of being. There will be a new heavens and earth, a perfect and eternal heavens and earth (2 Pt.3:3-13; Rev.21:1, 5).

2. Eternal life is said to be life that shall exist forever in the spiritual dimension of being. The Scripture says:

> **"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44. Cp. 1 Th.5:13-18.)**
>
> **"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15:49-54).**

(See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18. Cp. Jn.1:4.)

5 (22:31-32) **Resurrection**: Jesus said the resurrection had four basic proofs.

1. God had spoken and revealed the truth of the resurrection in His Word (cp. Job 19:26; Ezk.37:1f; Daniel 12:2). The Sadducees held only to the first five books of Moses as God's Word, that is, Genesis through Deuteronomy (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8). Therefore, Christ used this Scripture to prove the resurrection.

Note three facts about what Christ said: "Have ye not *read* that which was spoken to you by God" (v.31).

   a. Christ said that God had spoken to man; God had revealed the truth to man in the Scripture.

   b. Christ said the Scripture *is* God's Word.

   c. Christ questioned why they had not read what God had spoken. "Have ye not read" hints that they were without excuse. They should have read and understood; therefore, they should have known the truth of the resurrection (and all other truths) as God had revealed it.

2. God is; God exists. The fact that *God is* proves the resurrection. The Greek (ego eimi) means the self-existent, eternal One (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20; 18:4-6).

> **"I am the God...." (Mt.22:32).**
>
> **"He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Heb.11:6).**

Since God is, He possesses omnipotent power—power that is perfect and eternal. God can do anything, and He can do it perfectly and eternally. He can call the elements of a decayed body back together again and raise it up to live in the spiritual world both perfectly and eternally.

Note carefully: the argument for *God's being* (living) is irrefutable. Note carefully the great passage in Ephesians dealing with the spiritual blessings that are ours in Christ: "We have obtained an inheritance...*that we should be*" (Eph.1:11-12).

The resurrection is a fact. It will be experienced by all men of all ages because *God is*. God has willed to give us an inheritance to *be*, that is, to live eternally with Him. We shall undergo a transformation of nature, a transformation of perfection and permanency. For this reason, we need to pay close attention to what Scripture says: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that *he [God] is*, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

We must believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek after Him; that is, He rewards all who seek to live eternally with Him.

> **"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:11).**

3. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Christ meant at least two things in this point.
   a. God's relationships are active relationships not inactive. God says, "I am the God of...," not "I was the God of...." His relationships with His people are continuous. They are maintained. God is eternal; therefore, He creates and maintains eternal, active relationships. God's people enter into the spiritual realm of His presence and actively relate to Him. The resurrection is a fact.
   b. God's relationships are good and rewarding. The patriarchs of old were promised rewards, personal rewards (cp. Heb.11:13-16). There has to be a resurrection if our relationship with God is good and rewarding. To die and be left dead as a decayed corpse is not good nor rewarding. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a good and rewarding relationship with God. They are alive, more alive than they were while on earth, for they are now perfected and eternal. They are with God Himself. And so shall we be. The resurrection is a fact.

4. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not the God of dead, decayed corpses. When Moses wrote these words, the three patriarchs had been dead for many years. If they were dead, God was not their God. Since He was their God, they were alive, living in God's presence and living in relationship to Him, perfect and eternal. There is to be a resurrection.

> **"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:7-9).**

Christ makes one point, and makes it very clearly: *since God is*, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

> **"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8).**
> **"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).**

Note what Scripture says about the resurrection (see notes—Mt.17:23; Acts 2:29-31; Col.3:1-4. See Related Subjects, General Subject Index.)

1. Note the emphatic statements of Christ:

> **"[All that are in the graves] shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:29).**
>
> **"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day...No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day...Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:39-40, 44, 54).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25-26).**

2. Note the personal testimony of Paul.

> **"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question" (Acts 23:6).**
>
> **"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust...Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day" (Acts 24:14-15, 21).**

3. Note the unquestionable teaching of Scripture.

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Ro.6:5).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (1 Cor.6:14).

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor.15:12-14; cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:11).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Th.4:16-18).

"...others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection" (Heb.11:35).

"...This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev.20:5-6).

4. Note the reactions of men to the resurrection (cp. 2 Pt.3:3-18).

"And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:1-2).

"Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection" (Acts 17:18).

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor.15:12).

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ....If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:7, 11).

6 (22:33) **Resurrection**: the glorious hope of the resurrection not only caused amazement in Christ's day, it causes amazement today.

1. The believer is amazed that God would love him so much.
2. The unbeliever is amazed at such an idea as the resurrection, that anyone could believe such a thing.

	J. The Question about The Great Commandment: A Study of Love, 22:34-40 (Mk.12:28-34; cp. Lk.10:25-37)	36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?	c. The question: Which is the great commandment[DS2]
1 The Pharisees plotted a. They were gathered together	34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.	37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.	**2 First: Love God**[DS3] a. Love as *your own God* b. Love with *all your being*: Your heart, soul, & mind[DS4,5,6]
b. They appointed a brilliant lawyer to challenge Christ[DS1]	35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,	38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.	c. Love is man's chief duty **3 Second: Love your neighbor**[DS7] a. Love self b. Love neighbor as self **4 The conclusion: Love includes & embraces all the commandments**

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

J. The Question about the Great Commandment: A Study of Love, 22:34-40

(22:34-40) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Challenged**: Jesus had just met His third group of challengers, the Sadducees. He had *silenced* and routed them. The Pharisees, the strict religionists of that day, heard about Christ's conquering His challengers again. In their minds, His threat to their security had increased. All three attempts to discredit Him had failed. They felt that they must somehow discredit Him before the people in order to break His hold on them. There was a very live possibility that the people might follow through with their proclaiming Him to be the Messiah by rising up against the Roman authorities. The responsibility for such action, of course, would lie at their feet as Jewish leaders; and they would be replaced as the ruling body of the Sanhedrin, losing their position, authority, esteem, and livelihood.

They met together to plan and plot again. This time they took a different approach. They had, over the last few hours, challenged Christ as a body of questioners; now they chose from among their body one who was most brilliant and versed in the law, a lawyer or a Scribe.

However, there was something about this brilliant lawyer that the others did not know. Apparently, his heart had been touched by Christ. There are two indications of this. First, Mark tells us that the man was present when Christ was "reasoning together" with the Sadducees (Mk.12:28), and he perceived "that [Christ] had answered them well." Second, at the conclusion of his own discussion with Christ, Christ said to the man, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk.12:34). This indicates that the lawyer had been in deep thought about Christ and was under conviction.

Something about Christ struck a chord within this man. His heart was touched and stirred rather deeply. True, he was being put forward by the official body to challenge Christ; but personally, the spirit, the wisdom, the self-consciousness, the authority—something about Christ when He was answering the Sadducees—had stirred his heart to wonder and to want to search more into Christ.

Christ used the occasion to teach man the greatest *provision* and *duty* of human life: love. Love will provide for every need man has; therefore, love is the greatest duty of man.

1. The Pharisees plotted (v.34-36).
2. First: love God (v.37-38).
3. Second: love your neighbor (v.39).
4. The conclusion: love includes and embraces all the commandments (v.40).

1 (22:34-36) **Religionists**: the Pharisees plotted against Jesus. The word *"they"* seems to indicate that the Pharisees and Sadducees met together when the Pharisees heard about the Sadducees being *silenced* or routed by Christ. They met together in the council (Sanhedrin) to determine the next step to take (see note—Mt.22:34-40).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(22:35) **Lawyer** (nomikos): a profession of laymen who studied, taught, interpreted, and dealt with the practical questions of Jewish law. They were a special group within the profession commonly called Scribes (cp. Mark 12:28). They functioned both in the court and synagogues (cp. Lk.7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3; Tit.3:13). They apparently dealt more with the study and interpretation of the law.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(22:36) **Commandment**: note the question, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" Through the years, Jewish teachers had set up six hundred commandments. No person could keep them all, so the question was often asked and discussed: Which commandment or commandments must be absolutely obeyed? Which ones are important and which ones are not? Can the failure to obey some be condoned or not? Which commandments are heavy and which are light? If a person keeps the greatest of the precepts, can he be excused for his failure to keep others (cp. Mt.19:16f)?

Note two things about the tendency to count some of God's laws important and some not.

1. This was the sin which James attacked.

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas.2:10).

2. Christ taught that some laws are all inclusive and broader than others.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Mt.23:23).

The Pharisees were trying to turn the people against Jesus. People differed as to what the greatest commandment was. Some believed that it had to do with circumcision, others with sacrifices, and still others with the Sabbath. The Pharisees hoped that by stating His opinion, Christ would disturb the people who held a position different from His. He would thereby lose their following. There was the strong possibility that a man's giving his judgment would seem to be lessening the weight of other very important commandments.

Thought 1. All of God's laws are important—equally important. One is first and *weightier* only because it includes and embraces other laws. This means several things.

1) We may think in terms of supreme laws and lesser laws—that if we keep the greater laws, we do not have to pay much attention to the lesser. We may think that if we break the lesser laws we can be excused, but such thinking is false.

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas.2:10).

2) Just because we may deny the importance of some laws does not make them unimportant. Our unbelief and denial do not void the law, not a single one. They still condemn us. Each law, in the force of its pronouncement, strikes out at our violation. It condemns us—no matter how little value we may place upon it.

This is a common deception of man: unbelief makes a thing ineffective and voids it. A man thinks, "If I deny something, ignore it, refuse to accept it, push it out of my mind, it will not be, nor will it come to pass." Many treat God's Word and some commandments in this way, especially if they wish some sensual or stimulating pleasure. Too many conform their religion and their principles, their beliefs and the laws they obey to their behavior. They want the right to do as they wish, so they make all things fit their wishes, including their principles. They follow only the commandments that allow them to satisfy their desires, and because they obey some standards, they feel acceptable and secure.

Thought 2. This passage is a profitable passage for lawyers and for other professionals, in particular if they are open and honest as this man seems to have been. Just a passing thought—in the day of judgment it will be interesting to see if this lawyer is one of the converts mentioned in Acts 6:9.

2 (22:37-38) **Commandment**: first, love God. Which is the great commandment in the law? (Cp. Dt.6:5.) Christ's answer was powerful; it is an eye opener to people steeped in man-made religions.

1. Love God: "Love the Lord *thy* God." Love God as *your* very own God. The word *your* is a personal relationship, not a distant relationship. God is not impersonal, far out in space someplace, distant and removed. God is personal, ever so close, and we are to be personally involved with God on a face-to-face basis. Note another fact: the command is to "love the Lord thy God." *Loving* God is an act that is alive and active, not dead and inactive. We are, therefore, to maintain a personal relationship with God that is alive and active.

2. Love God with all your being. Christ breaks our being into three parts: the heart, the soul, and the mind (see DEEPER STUDY # 4,5,6—Mt.22:37).

3. Love is man's chief duty. Man is responsible to maintain a loving relationship with God. Very practically, loving God involves the very same factors that loving a person involves (see outlines and notes—Eph.5:22-33).

a. A loving relationship involves *commitment and loyalty*. True love does not allow lustful behavior with others. True love does not covet; it does not care for a carnal definition of love that allows fleshly acts and sensual relationships with others.

True love is commitment and loyalty to one another. This is very significant. The first commandment deals with *commitment and loyalty*. God strikes out at the very core of man's carnal and fleshly behavior, at his tendency to define love in terms that allow him to satisfy his lust. God irrevocably says, "Thou shalt have no other gods" (Ex.20:3). God demands our total commitment and loyalty.

b. A loving relationship involves *trust and respect* for the person loved. It is loving the person just for who he is. So it is when we love God. We love God because of Himself, because He is who He is. We love Him because...

- He is the Creator and Sustainer of life.
- He is the Savior and Redeemer of our souls.
- He is the Lord and Owner of our lives.

c. A loving relationship involves the *giving and surrendering* of oneself. The drive is to give oneself, to surrender oneself to the other, not to take and conquer. We are to so love God, to give and surrender ourselves to Him.

d. A loving relationship involves *knowing and sharing*. The desire is to know and to share, learning, growing, working, and serving ever so closely together. We are to know and share with God, learning, growing, working, and serving ever so closely with Him

Thought 1. The importance of a personal relationship with God cannot be overstated.
1) It is the greatest, the sum and substance of all commandments.
2) God demands that He be loved. It is His first commandment, and to love is both personal and active.
3) The commandment to love God is given by Christ, the Son of God Himself.

Thought 2. A personal relationship can be maintained only through communication: we must talk to God and allow God to talk to us through prayer, His Word, and the presence of His Spirit.

Thought 3. A person's heart, soul, and mind are focused upon something: self, possessions, the world, the flesh, power, fame, a person. God demands that we focus our whole being upon Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(22:37) **Love**: cp. Dt.6:5. See note—Jn.21:15-17.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(22:37) **Heart**: the *seat* of man's affection and will (devotion). The heart attaches and focuses our will and devotion. The heart causes us to give either good things or bad things. The heart causes us to devote ourselves to either good or bad. Therefore, Christ says we are to love God "with all our heart." We are to focus our heart, our affection, and our will (devotion) upon God. We are to love God supremely.

"For where your treasure [object of affection] is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).
"...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Mt.12:34-35; cp. Mt.15:18-19).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(22:37) **Soul** (psuche): the seat of man's breath and life or consciousness. The soul is the life of a man, the consciousness, the breath, the essence, the being of a man. The soul is the *animal life* of a man. The soul is the breath and consciousness that distinguishes man and other animals from vegetation. The world of vegetation lives and man and animals live, but there is a difference in their living. Man and animals are *breathing* and *conscious* beings. The essence of their being is breath and consciousness. They are living souls. This is clearly pointed out in the Hebrew language of Gen.1:20: "Let the waters bring forth abundantly '*living souls*' [nephesh] that hath life." The "living souls" that God created were different from the vegetation He had just created. The "living souls" were creatures (fish) that breathed and possessed consciousness.

Christ said we are to love God "with all our soul," that is, with all our life, our breath, our consciousness. We are to love God with all the breath and consciousness, all the life and awareness, we have.

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(22:37) **Mind**: the seat of reasoning and understanding. God has given intellectual powers to man. Man thinks, reasons, and understands. Christ says that our minds and thoughts are to be centered upon God. We are to love God "with all our mind."

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).
"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).
"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).
"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).
"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).

3 (22:39) **Love—Brotherhood—Neighbor**: Christ gave a second commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighor as thyself." (Cp. Lev.19:18.) The lawyer had not asked for the second greatest commandment, but the first commandment is abstract. It cannot be seen or understood standing by itself. There has to be a *demonstration, an act, something done* for love to be seen and understood. A profession of love without demonstration is empty. It is profession only. Love is not known without showing it.

Several important things need to be said about love at this point.

1. Love is an active experience, not inactive and dormant. That is what Christ is pointing out. Love for God *acts*. Love acts by showing and demonstrating itself. It is inaccurate and foolish for a man to say, "I love God," and then be in-

active and dormant, doing nothing for God. If he truly loves God, he will *do things* for God. Any person who loves does things for the one loved.

2. The primary *thing* God wants from us is love for our neighbors, not the doing of *religious things*. Doing *religious things* is good, but it is not the first thing God wants. God wants us to make loving our neighbor the first order of our lives. To do *religious things* is only dealing with things such as rituals, observances, ordinances, and laws. Such things are lifeless, unfeeling, and unresponsive. They are immaterial. They are not helped by our doing them; we alone are helped. They make us feel good and religious which is beneficial to our growth, but *religious things* are not what demonstrates our love for God. Loving our neighbor is what proves our love for God. A man may say he loves God, but if he hates and acts unkindly and spitefully toward his neighbor, everyone knows his religion is profession only.

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:20-21).**

3. The great commandment to love God flows downward into another great commandment—to love our neighbor as ourselves. The fact is inescapable.

> **"God commendeth [demonstrated] His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**

When a man really sees the love of God for him, he cannot help but love God and share the love of God with his neighbors. It is the love of Christ for us, His death and sacrifice, that compels us to go and love all men everywhere.

> **"We love him, because he first loved us....and this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:19, 21).**
>
> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).**

4. We are to love ourselves.
   a. There is a corrupt love of self that feels the world should center around oneself. This self-love...
      - wants all attention centered around oneself.
      - pushes self forward.
      - insists on one's own way.
      - demands and revels in recognition.
      - shows conceit and ignores others.

   b. However, there is a godly love for self that is natural and pleasing to God. It is a love that stirs a strong self-image, confidence, and assurance. It is a love that even helps in preventing some illnesses such as ulcers, tension, and high blood pressure. The godly love of self comes from knowing three things.
      ⇒ That one is actually the creation of God: the highest creation possible.
      ⇒ That one is actually the object of God's love: the most supreme love possible.
      ⇒ That one is actually the trustee of God's gifts: the greatest gifts possible.

   c. The godly love of self has three traits that are clearly seen.
      ⇒ It esteems others better than self. It does esteem self ever so highly as God's glorious creation, but it esteems others more highly.

> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Ph.2:3).**

      ⇒ It looks on the things of others. It looks on one's own things as a trustee of God's gifts, but it also looks on the things of others.

> **"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:4).**

      ⇒ It walks humbly before others.

> **"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:11-12).**
>
> **"...all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).**

5. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Note three very specific things about this second great commandment.
   a. To love our neighbor is a command, not an option. If the commandment is not obeyed, God is displeased and we stand guilty of having broken the law of God.

b. To love our neighbor arouses the question: Who is our neighbor? Christ answers the question Himself in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

⇒ A good neighbor is *he that shows mercy on any who need mercy*—even if the needy person is socially despised (Lk.10:25-37, esp. 36-37).

Therefore our neighbor is everyone in the world, no matter his status, condition, or circumstances. Every man is to be esteemed ever so highly and helped no matter who he is. No man is to be injured or wronged. Every man is to be esteemed better than oneself (Ph.2:3).

c. To love our neighbor is a very practical command. It involves some very practical acts that are spelled out in Scripture.

⇒ Love suffereth long (endures long, is patient).
⇒ Love is kind.
⇒ Love envies not (is not jealous).
⇒ Love vaunts not itself (does not brag; does not boast).
⇒ Love is not puffed up (vainglorious, arrogant, prideful).
⇒ Love does not behave itself unseemingly (unbecomingly, rudely, indecently, unmannerly).
⇒ Love seeks not her own (is not selfish or self-seeking; does not insist on one's own right and way).
⇒ Love is not easily provoked (not touchy, angry, fretful, resentful).
⇒ Love thinks no evil (harbors and plans no evil thought; takes no account of a wrong done it).
⇒ Love rejoices not in iniquity (wrong, sin, evil, injustice), but rejoices in the truth (justice and righteousness).
⇒ Love bears all things.
⇒ Love believes all things (exercises faith in everything; is ready to believe the best in everyone).
⇒ Love hopes all things (keeps up hope in everything, under all circumstances).
⇒ Love endures all things (without weakening; it gives power to endure).

Thought 1. *Religious things* can enslave a person. A person can be so engrossed in religion, buildings, ritual, ceremony, rules, and regulations that he neglects and ignores people, in particular the poor and downtrodden.

Thought 2. The church and *religious things* are the picture of religion among men. Therefore, a man feels *good* and *religious* when he attends church and does *religious things*.

Thought 3. A man loves God when he loves his neighbor. In fact, a man loves God only if he truly loves his neighbor (1 Jn.4:20-21; cp. Jn.13:34-35).

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(22:39) **Love**: cp. Lev.19:18. See note—1 Cor.13:4-7.

4 (22:40) **Love**: Christ says that love includes and embraces all the commandments. In fact, the term "the law and the prophets" is a term often used to refer to all Scripture. What Christ really says is that all Scripture hangs on love for God and love for one's neighbor. Christ actually paints a picture by using the word "hang." He says that love for God is a *hanger* and love for neighbor is a *hanger*. Upon these two hangers hang all that God has ever said, whether commandments or revelation of truth or practice of ceremony and ritual. The sum and substance of all that God has said and done is love. And the sum and substance of all that God wants of man is love: love of God and love of neighbor.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).
"Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart" (1 Tim.1:5).
"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Mt.7:12).

	K. The Question Asked by Jesus: What Think Ye of Messiah? 22:41-46 (Mk.12:35-37; Lk.20: 39-44)	43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,	**4 Scripture's claim: He is Lord—Lord of David**[DSI] a. Fact: David called Him Lord—*in Spirit* 1) Is exalted with God 2) Will have enemies subjected to Him
1 Jesus questioned men	41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,	44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?	b. Question: How can He be David's Lord & Son?
2 The critical question: What think ye of the Messiah?	42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.	45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?	**5 Conclusion: The question silenced the critics of Jesus**
3 Man's idea: He is the Son of a man—of David		46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

K. The Question Asked by Jesus: What Think Ye of Messiah? 22:41-46

(22:41-46) **Introduction**: it was still Tuesday of the Lord's last week on earth. He had just been challenged four different times by four different opponents. He had met each group and questioner in a unique way. He had answered the questions and turned them around to teach a much needed truth (cp. 21:23f; 22:15f; 22:23f; 22:34f). Christ had silenced those who opposed His claim to be the Messiah.

Now it was His turn; He questioned His opponents. But Christ did not stand against them as an opponent. Christ questioned them as men who were in error and needed to see the truth. He was reaching out to them in hope. He hoped that some would receive the truth of His Messiahship and accept Him as the Son of God. The spirit of His questioning is seen in the discussion He had with them. Note the question He asked: it is the all important question which He asks of every man: "What think ye of Christ, the Messiah?"

1. Jesus questioned men (v.41).
2. The critical question: What think ye of the Messiah (v.41-42)?
3. Man's idea: He is the son of a man—of David (v.42).
4. Scripture's claim: He is Lord—the Lord of David (v.43-45).
5. Conclusion: The question silenced the critics of Jesus (v.46).

1 (22:41) **Jesus Christ, Questions**: Jesus questioned and questioned men, and there are reasons why He questioned them. These are clearly seen in His dealing with these men.

1. Christ is long-suffering and tender. These men had challenged Christ time and again trying to discredit and embarrass Him before the crowd, yet He never reacted once. He answered their questions honestly and in such a way that He opened up new truths which they desperately needed to know. He questioned them because He was patient and long-suffering. He wanted to open up further truth to them. He longed for them to see and surrender to His Messiahship.
2. Christ questioned and questioned in order to reach people *with* the truth. In the case of these men, Christ was making a last-ditch effort, a last appeal to them. They had rejected and rejected until there was little hope. But Christ was still hoping, still reaching out to them. He questioned them in order to lead them to see that He is the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God Himself.

While considering the Lord's questioning, there is another fact to consider, a critical fact. There is an end to His questioning, a time when He knows there is no hope and no chance that a man will repent and believe. There is a time when He begins to pronounce judgment. This question of Christ was His last question; after asking it, He began to pronounce judgment. Christ discussed and questioned the truth with these men time and again, but after they continually rejected it and became steeped in their unbelief, Christ ceased the discussion and began to pronounce judgment (cp. Mt.23:1-39).

> **Thought 1.** Most people, at one time or another, think and wonder who Christ is. God uses such things as preaching, teaching, events, circumstances, situations, and tragedies to cause us to think about Christ and who He is. He tries to stir us to reason with Him so that we might be led to believe.
>
> **Thought 2.** Man can become obstinate in unbelief, reject and reject until he becomes so hardened that he will not believe. These men (leaders) demonstrate such obstinate unbelief (cp. Gen.6:3; Pr.29:1).

2 (22:41-42) **Messiah**: Jesus asked the critical question. "What think ye of the Messiah?" This is the critical question for all men. Note two things about the question.

1. The Greek uses the definite article "*the* Messiah" (tou Christou). Jesus was trying to stir these men to think about the Messiah. He did not ask them what they thought of Him but what they thought about *the Messiah*. A man's destiny is determined by what he thinks about the Messiah.
2. Jesus asked a specific question about the Messiah: "Whose son is he?" Think about the Messiah. What is His origin? Who is to give birth to Him? In practical day-to-day terms, Christ was asking three things.
   a. Where does your deliverance come from? The Messiah is to deliver man from all the evil and enslavements of the world. Where will such a One come from?

b. Where does your Lord come from—the person you are to follow? The Messiah is to be the Lord who is to rule and reign and govern all lives, executing perfect justice and care. Where will He come from—from earthly parents or from God?

c. Where does your utopia come from—the person who is to bring about the perfect world and all that is good and beneficial? Where will the One come from who is to bring utopia, the Kingdom of God to earth? Will He come from earth or heaven?

Thought 1. It is not enough to ask this question: "What do you think of the Messiah?" True, it must be asked; but standing alone, the question will not lead a man to the truth. This is clearly seen in the experience of these religionists. Christ asked them the critical question, yet they did not come to the truth. Two things are necessary before answering the question.

1) A man must think. He must be willing to study and think through the question of the Messiah.
2) A man must be honest. He must rid himself of bias and presuppositions. He must approach the subject of the Messiah with a willingness to see and confess the truth.

Thought 2. There are three critical questions which need to be asked by each of us.

1) Where does my deliverance come from? From the son of a mere man like myself or from God?
2) Where does my Lord come from—the person I am willing to follow as long as I exist? From the son of a mere man like myself or from God?
3) Where does my utopia come from—the person who is to bring about the perfect world and all that is good and beneficial? From a man who is like myself or from God?

Thought 3. In all honesty, are there parents anywhere who can give birth to a son...

- who can deliver us?
- who can be a true Lord to us?
- who can bring about a world that is nothing but good and beneficial to all?

3 (22:42) **Messiah**: the Pharisees answered Jesus' question by giving the common idea of man—the Messiah is the son of a man, the son of David.

Note two facts about their answer.

1. The common title for the Messiah was "the Son of David." The Old Testament definitely said the Messiah was to come from the line of David. It was from such passages as these that the Messiah was known as "the Son of David." (See note—Lk.3:24-31 for the Davidic promises and their fulfillment.)

> **"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (Ps.89:35-36).**
>
> **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Is. 9:6-7).**
>
> **"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Is.11:1-5).**

The Messiah was to do four specific things. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23. These notes are important for the full concept of the Messiah.)

a. He was to free Israel from all enslavement. Enslavement was to be abolished and all men set free under God's domain.
b. He was to give victory over all enemies, and Israel was to be established as the seat of His rule. This, of course, meant Israel was to be the leading nation of the world.
c. He was to bring peace to earth. All people were to serve God under the government established by the Messiah.
d. He was to provide plenty for all. The Messiah was to see that all men had the benefits of God's rule and care.

2. The common idea of the Messiah's origin was that He was to be human, born of a man. The idea that he might be of divine origin, of God Himself, was just unacceptable to men.

Thought 1. Note two striking points about man's common concept of the Messiah.

1) Man thinks of deliverance and plenty in terms of power.
   ⇒ national power ⇒ political power
   ⇒ military power ⇒ institutional power
   ⇒ personal power ⇒ monetary power

2) Man thinks that deliverance and plenty come from human ability and fame, from...
- a national leader
- a political leader
- a military leader
- an institutional leader
- a business leader
-

4 (22:43-45) **Messiah**: Jesus then pointed out the claim of Scripture—the Messiah is Lord, the Lord of David. Scripture says that the Messiah is the Son of David, but it also says that He is the *Lord* of David.

The Scripture is strong in its statement.

1. David called the Messiah Lord *in the Spirit*; that is, David's words were spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God was directing Him (cp. 2 Pt.1:21 and 1 Cor.12:3).
2. David said that "the Lord [Jehovah God] said to *my* Lord [the Messiah]." David unquestionably called the Messiah, "*My Lord*."
3. David said that *my* Lord sits on the right hand of God. The Messiah is *Lord*, for He is *exalted* by God.

> **"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:9).**
>
> **"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb.8:1).**

4. David said that my Lord's "enemies are to be made His footstool." The Messiah is Lord, for all His enemies are to be subjected under Him.

> **"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:10-11).**

After quoting the Scripture, Christ asked the pointed question: How can the Messiah be both David's Lord and Son? Jesus is doing at least two things in this question.

1. Jesus was saying this: man's concept of the Messiah as being only human is inadequate—totally inadequate. It is not enough to think in terms of earthly power, of national and political, military and institutional leadership. There is no way a mere man can bring *perfect* deliverance, leadership, and utopia to this earth. The Messiah is not only man, He is the Lord from heaven.
2. Jesus was claiming to be the Son of God Himself. Man's concept has to *go beyond* the mere human and physical. Man's idea has to *stretch upward* into God's very own heart. God loves this earth; therefore, God sent His Son to earth, sacrificing Him in order to save the earth and all those within it (Jn.3:16).

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16).**
>
> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:67-69).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).**
>
> **"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).**
>
> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).**

Thought 1. Christ's emphasis upon the inspiration of Scripture was very important. He was unmistakably declaring the authority of the Old Testament. We should note the attention and reverence Christ gave to Scripture—a striking lesson for us.

Thought 2. The Messiah is the Son of David. He is Man, but He is more: He is both God's Son, the Lord from heaven, as well as man.

Thought 3. Man's concept of an earthly deliverer or Messiah is foolish. There is no way permanent peace and perfect utopia can be brought to a corruptible world *apart from God*. If permanency of anything is ever to be known, it has to come through Him who is permanent. (See notes—Jn.8:21-22; Ro.10:6-7. These notes discuss the very practical and spiritual needs of man for the Messiah and/or utopia.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(22:43) **Old Testament Reference**: cp. Ps.110:1.

5 (22:46) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: Jesus' question silenced His critics. A heart that is truly honest and a mind that is willing to study and think has to confess the truth. If either is missing, the honest heart or the thinking mind, then a man will turn from Christ and be silent. He will be silent in belief and act in unbelief.

	CHAPTER 23	make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,	a. A religion of appearance: Dress, clothing
	L. The Warning against False Religion 23:1-12 (Mk.12:38-40; Lk.20:45-47)	6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,	b. A religion of position: Positions that honor & exalt men
1 Jesus spoke to the multitudes & to the disciples	Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,	7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.	c. A religion of titles: Titles that honor & exalt men
2 False religion is a religion that claims to "sit" in the truth, Moses' seat	2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:	8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.	**6 False religion is a religion to be guarded against**
3 False religion is a religion of hypocrisy	3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but	9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one	a. Bc. position & relationships are already established
a. It is good to obey their preaching	do not ye after their	is your Father, which is in heaven.	1) God is your Father
b. It is not good to follow their practice	works: for they say, and do not.	10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master,	2) Christ is your Master
4 False religion is a religion of heavy burdens	4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be	even Christ.	3) You are brothers
a. Leaders imposed heavy burdens upon others	borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they	11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.	b. Because greatness is measured by service
b. Leaders did not impose the burdens upon themselves	themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.	12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and	c. Because judgment is coming
5 False religion is a religion of show, of ostentation	5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they	he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

L. The Warning against False Religion, 23:1-12

(23:1-12) **Introduction**: in order to understand what is happening in this passage, it is helpful to recall the events which led up to it. It was still Tuesday of Jesus' last week on earth. On Sunday, just two days before, He had been escorted into the city by teeming thousands proclaiming Him to be the Messiah. On Monday, He had cast out the money changers and those who were doing business within the temple walls. Following these two dramatic events, He had taken upon Himself the right and authority to teach and heal within the temple. Naturally the governing leaders, both religious and civil, were upset and angered by what was happening. More to the point, the leaders felt threatened by Christ, fearing the people might rally around Him as the Messiah and rise up against the Romans. Such action, of course, would cause the Romans to march against Jerusalem and blame the Jewish leadership for not maintaining order. Then after putting the insurrection down, Rome would remove the present Jewish leadership from office. In the minds of the leaders, Christ was a threat to their position, power, wealth, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12). They were forced to discredit Jesus before the people.

They sent group after group to challenge Christ, attempting to trip Him up. Each time He answered brilliantly, teaching a much needed lesson not only to those standing around, but to men of all generations. Finally, the leaders were baffled and silenced. But Christ did not give up trying to reach them. He reached out once more, trying to lead them to the truth: the Messiah is not only Man, He is also Lord, the Son of God Himself (cp. Mt.22:41-46). The result? Again, the leaders refused to open their minds and hearts. They remained closed to the truth, obstinately so. They rejected Christ and turned and walked away. They began the final plot—not to challenge Christ in argument again but to kill Him.

As the present passage is studied, it is helpful to keep in mind the major reason these leaders opposed Jesus so violently: they feared the loss of all they held dear and possessed in this world: position, power, livelihood, wealth, and security. In their minds, as long as Christ was alive, He was a threat to them and to their nation (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).

The great tragedy was that they were supposed to be the godly teachers and leaders, God's very own representatives and messengers to the people. Yet, they were so far removed from God that they were unable to recognize God's very own Son. Despite appeal after appeal and proof after proof by Christ Himself, they still refused to believe and follow Him. They deliberately chose to be obstinate in their unbelief and chose to follow the way of the world by plotting to kill Him.

This background lies behind the present chapter—the most severe attack Christ ever spoke against a people. The true nature of these religionists, the Scribes and Pharisees, is clearly seen as Christ opened up the hypocrisy of their lives and religion point by point. In this particular passage, Christ warned against their religion—a religion which stands as a symbol of the false religions of the world. (Also see outline, note, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.2:17-29.)

1. Jesus spoke to the multitudes and the disciples (v.1).
2. False religion is a religion that claims to "sit" in the truth, in Moses' seat (v.2).
3. False religion is a religion of hypocrisy (v.3).
4. False religion is a religion of heavy burdens (v.4).

5. False religion is a religion of show, of ostentation (v.5-7).
6. False religion is a religion to be guarded against (8-12).

1 (23:1) **Religion, False—Scripture**: in this particular passage, Jesus spoke to the multitude and to the disciples, not to the religionists, not to the Pharisees and Scribes. There are at least four reasons why Christ warned the multitude and disciples at this point. These same reasons make this passage extremely applicable to every generation.

1. Everyone needs to know what is true and what is false in religion. Man-made religion always includes some truth and some error. And unfortunately even the true religion, God's revealed religion, is sometimes added to or taken away from by men. This is what had happened to the Pharisees and Scribes, the religionists of Jesus' day. They were staunch followers of God's Word, the Old Testament Scriptures, but they added to the Scripture. Therefore, Christ needed to teach what was true and what was false in the present religion (cp. v.2-3).
2. Everyone needs to have the hypocrisy and sin of religion exposed. When men add to or take away from God's revealed truth, it creates and causes hypocrisy and sin within religion. When men *add* rules and regulations to Scripture, self-discipline is demanded and super-spirituality results. When men deny or *take away* certain portions of Scripture, it creates and causes the exaltation of man and his rationality, making *gods* out of man and his ability. Again, pride and vain glory result.
3. Everyone needs to be warned against following the error of religion. Just being religious is not enough (cp. Mt.5:20). A person must follow the truth. If a person follows false religion, he is doomed (v.8-12).
4. Everyone needs to have his false ideas about Christ corrected. The false teaching and attacks of the religionists had influenced the people. Unbelief and false ideas about the Messiah were running rampant. Christ needed to declare the truth (v.7-10).

Thought 1. The warning concerning false religion was directed primarily to the public and the disciples because there is always more hope for them. It is always difficult for a leader who teaches error to repent and change.
1) He fears embarrassment in admitting that he has held to error and taught error.
2) He fears the ridicule and rejection of his peers.
3) He fears the loss of position, power, and security.

2 (23:2) **Religion, False—Minister—Teaching**: false religion is a religion that claims to "sit" in the truth, that is, in Moses' seat. Moses was the great teacher and interpreter of God's law and Word. Christ said that the Scribes and Pharisees "sit in Moses' seat." They were responsible for teaching and interpreting God's Word just as Moses had been. The application is clear: all religions, false and true, "sit in Moses' seat"—all religion is responsible for teaching the truth of God's Word. As shall be seen, all teachers shall be held accountable for how they "sit in Moses' seat," how they *sit* in their position as teachers and interpreters of God's Word.

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk.6:46).

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Ro.2:1).

"Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ro.2:23-24).

Thought 1. The place of religion in the world has been *set* and *ordained* by God. Just because bad men may sit in places of leadership does not mean that all religion is bad nor that all religion is to be invalidated or ignored. Hypocrites within the church, even within positions of leadership, do not mean that the church is evil and can be neglected and avoided. We are to *test the spirits*, distinguish between the true and the false, and we are to go on worshipping God and edifying those who follow the truth.

Thought 2. It is a terrible thing for a false teacher to "sit in Moses' seat." The most severe judgment awaits those who teach error (cp. Mt.23:12; 23:13-36, esp. 14, 15, 33).

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt.23:33).

3 (23:3) **Religion, False**: false religion is a religion of hypocrisy (v.3). However, there is a fact that must be noted: not all religion is false, even when it is taught by a false teacher. Christ says, "Observe, obey the truth of what they say, in so far as it is God's Word (v.2); but do not follow after their works." Note several things.

1. Jesus is condemning false religion and teachers, but not the truth. False teachers can and do teach some truth. The truth is to be obeyed, no matter who teaches it. The truth and our duty to obey it are not invalidated just because a hypocrite teaches it.
2. Jesus is saying that teaching the truth does not mean that a person is acceptable to God. Being acceptable to God depends upon one thing and one thing alone: living the truth. A man may teach the truth yet be unacceptable to God. He is unacceptable because he is a hypocrite and does not obey the Lord. He simply does not live the truth. A man is not acceptable just because he proclaims and professes the truth—even if he is a teacher. He is acceptable because he walks in the truth day by day.

"Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou

commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?" (Ro.2:21-23).

3. We must separate the office from the officer, the ministry from the minister, the church from the people, the truth from the teaching, the doctrine from the practice. The spirits must be tried.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 Jn.4:1).

4. Jesus is saying that the claims of religion and of men must not be allowed to lead us. The doctrine, morality, and discipline of religion and men may be commendable; on the other hand, both religion and men may be false.

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).

Thought 1. Preaching and practice must always be separated. There is always some difference. Every man is human, and every man comes short, but God's Word is perfect.

4 (23:4) **Religion, False**: false religion is a religion of heavy burdens. Jesus said that false religion and teachers impose heavy burdens upon men.

There are four ways heavy burdens are laid upon the shoulders of men.

1. God's Word and law can be imposed upon men in such a strict and severe way that mercy is lacking.
2. Religion and men can add to God's Word through rules, regulations, rituals, observances, and traditions. Such tends to become more important than the truth.
3. Religion and men can deny and take away from God's Word, leaving men to stumble around searching for the truth within themselves and other imperfect and frail men.
4. Religion and men can exercise undue authority, lording it over people, insisting that tradition and ritual and other man-made burdens be kept.

In discussing rules and regulations, many are willing to impose the rules upon others, but not upon themselves. There are two particular failures with such hypocrisy.

1. Some teachers and laymen fail to lift a finger to practice the burden themselves. They are strict in laying the burden upon others but lax in bearing the weight themselves. They will not be bound by such rules themselves, at least not strictly, but they will preach and teach the rules to others and bind them to keep the rules. The shoulders of others are weighed down ever so heavily, yet they will not lift their own fingers to carry the weight of the rule or restriction.
2. Some teachers and laymen fail to lift a finger to ease the burden for the weak and heavy laden. This is another possible interpretation of what Christ is saying. Some just will not show mercy; they will not help those who need help in practicing the burden. Some teachers are so strict and assuming that they know little of the love and mercy of God. They know little about Christian liberty (cp. Acts 15:28. See outline and notes—Ro.14:1-23.)

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal.5:1).

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" (Col.2:20).

Thought 1. There is the possibility of terrible pride in imposing burdens upon men. The right to impose burdens sets a person up as *lord* over others. Of course, there is a place for authority in proclaiming and exercising God's Word, but not for imposing man-made rules (legalistic conservatism) and human rationalizations (liberalism). Both weigh man down ever so heavily. Both force man to secure the approval of God by keeping rules through a person's own strength. Both know little if any of the mercy and discipline of God's Spirit. God's Word is fully adequate for both faith and practice. God's Word is all man needs to direct and govern his life. We do not have to add to or take away from God's Word.

5 (23:5-7) **Religion, False—Pride**: false religion is a religion of show and ostentation. Christ points out three things these teachers did to be seen by men.

1. They changed their appearance, dress, and clothing to draw attention to themselves.
   a. They wore phylacteries. These were little leather type boxes which contained a piece of parchment with four passages of Scripture written on it. The Scriptures were Ex.13:1-10; 13:11-16; Dt.6:4-9; and Dt.11:13-21.

      The use of the phylacteries seems to have arisen from a literal translation of Ex.13:9 and Pr.7:3. The true meaning of these two passages seems to be that we are to have the word of God in our minds just as clearly as if we had them before our eyes.

      The great fault of the religionists was that they interpreted these passages literally, and they enlarged the little leather boxes to draw attention to themselves as being religious.
   b. They also enlarged the borders of their garments; that is, they wore tassels on their clothing. God had instructed the Jews to make fringes or tassels on the borders of their outer robe. When a person noticed

them, he was to be reminded to keep God's commandments. Again, the error was that the religionist changed his appearance from others; he enlarged his tassels, drawing attention to the fact that he was more religious than others.

Thought 1. A person can wear clothes that expose the body, that actually attract attention to certain parts of the body. A person can wear clothes that are too tight, too low cut, too high cut, too thin. A person can wear too little clothing and clothing that fails to cover enough of the body.

Jesus said to beware of dressing to attract attention. The religionists did it to appear righteous. Others do it to appear worldly (appealing).

> **"Neither yield ye your members [bodily parts] as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).**
>
> **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim.2:9-10).**
>
> **"[Women] whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:3-5).**

2. They loved the positions of honor, special seats, and places of recognition. There are those who love the restricted neighborhoods and clubs and the preferred lists. They love the preeminence (3 Jn.9). Note what is condemned: not being in these positions and places, but the *love* of them. Someone has to hold the upper positions and fill the major places of responsibility. It is the *love* of such, the love and the feeling of pride because of the place and position that is wrong.

> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**

3. They loved the titles that honored and exalted them. The title was simply "Rabbi" which meant teacher or master. It carried with it the modern idea of *Doctor* or *My lord*. It was a title that took a man who was supposed to be God's messenger and said, "Here he is; this is he." It honored the man and not the Lord.

> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).**

Thought 1. Too often men change their clothing and seek the upper places, positions, and titles to draw attention to themselves and their abilities. They are honored and not the Lord (cp. Mt.6:1-7, 16-18).

Thought 2. There is nothing wrong with living holy and godly lives, with being religious. But it is wrong to draw attention to oneself instead of to the Lord. We should not *overdo* or *remake* our outward being (appearance, position, titles) to draw attention to ourselves. We should always walk humbly among men, walk as one of them, walk pointing them to Christ by our lives.

Thought 3. God has no favorites among men. Why should we seek to appear as a favorite? Why should we seek *appearance*, *position*, and *honor* that would point toward us as being special?

Thought 4. If there is anyone who should walk humbly before men and point them toward God, it is the man who professes to serve God. He, of all men, should not love the appearance and positions and titles and honor that point toward him instead of his Lord.

6 (23:8-12) **Religion, False**: false religion is a religion to be guarded against. There are three strong reasons why we are to guard against false religion.

1. All positions and relationships are already set in the Kingdom of God. There is no position and no relationship left to be determined. All have already been determined.

   a. God is the Father of our faith, of the true religion. No earthly founder or teacher is *Father*. Therefore no man is to be acknowledged as such. God alone is to be proclaimed *Father*.

> **"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph.4:6).**
>
> **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas.1:17).**

   b. Christ is our Master. One alone is Master, even Christ. We are not to be called masters (kathegetes, leaders, guides, v.10. Cp. Ro.2:19-20.) We are servants of the Master. Note that Jesus is claiming to be the Messiah.

c. Believers are brothers. One is not above or more exalted than another. Each stands as an equal before God and one another. Each is to serve and help the other.

2. Greatness is measured by service, not by earthly honor. (See outline and notes—Mt.20:20-28. This is a good discussion on "The Price of Greatness.") When religion is conceived by man or influenced by man, that religion focuses upon ritual, ceremony, rules, and regulations and upon honor, recognition, position, and influence.

"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt.20:26-27).

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

3. Judgment is coming. It is what a person does himself that determines his fate: he exalts himself or humbles himself. Again, someone has to fill positions of leadership; but if a person pushes himself forward for the honor of the position and not for the purpose of serving, he is to be judged by God. The rule is: we are called to serve, not to rule.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).

"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Lk.1:52).

"Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place" (Job 40:12).

"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps.49:6-7).

"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Pr.29:23).

"For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (Is.2:12).

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal.4:1).

Thought 1. One thing that can be said of the Christian faith is this: Christian faith is a faith of *oneness* (Eph.4:1-6, esp. 4-6; 1 Cor.12:4-13). There is no room for pride or divisiveness, neither for the love of position, honor, or title.

M. The Nine Accusations against False Religionists, 23:13-36
(Lk.11:39-50)

1 False religionists shut the door to heaven against seekers[DS1,2,3]
- a. They do not enter themselves
- b. They do not allow seekers to enter

2 False religionists use the guise of religion for greed, esp. to steal from widows
- a. Their hypocrisy: Use religion and prayer
- b. Their doom: To be a greater damnation

3 False religionists are missionaries who double the corruption of new followers[DS4]

4 False religionists mislead others: They are blind guides in oaths & commitments[DS5]
- a. Their blindness: They stress the secondary over the primary (two examples)
  - 1) They stress the temple gold over the temple
  - 2) They stress the gift over the altar
- b. Their folly: They try to evade commitments & responsibility, v.17,19
- c. The raw facts
  - 1) All commitments & oaths are heard by God—there is no evasion
  - 2) All commitments & oaths are binding & are accountable to God

5 False religionists stress the lighter commandments & omit the weightier ones[DS6]
- a. They stress the lighter duties *& omit* the weightier duties
- b. They avoid the lesser sins & commit the greater sins

6 False religionists are blind to real cleanness
- a. Their outside appears clean
- b. Their inside is full of greed & excess (indulgence)
- c. Their need: First clean the inside; then the outside will be clean

7 False religionists disguise inner decay
- a. Illust: They are like white tombs
  - 1) Outward: Appear clean & beautiful
  - 2) Inward: Full of death & uncleanness
- b. Their wrong
  - 1) Outward: Appear righteous
  - 2) Inward: Full of Hypocrisy & iniquity

8 False religionists pride themselves in a godly heritage
- a. Honor the relics of the past
- b. Denounce the former abuses
- c. Pride themselves in being better: Would not have committed such sins
- d. Witness against themselves (by rejecting Christ)
  - 1) Show themselves to be sons of murderers
  - 2) Fill up the father's cup of murder
- e. Result: Have become serpents, vipers—doomed to hell

9 False religionists reject & abuse many of God's present-day messengers[DS7,8,9]
- a. Their abuse: They persecute & kill
- b. Their judgment
  - 1) They shall have imputed to them the sins of all the righteous blood shed throughout history[DS10,11]
  - 2) All these things shall come upon this generation[DS12]

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

M. The Nine Accusations against False Religionists, 23:13-36

(23:13-36) **Introduction—Religion, False**: this is probably the most stern and sustained denunciation in all history. It is beyond doubt the most tragic because it involves the souls of men, and it is pronounced by the Judge of all the earth, the Lord Himself. But it was deserved, and it stands as a dramatic warning to all men, in particular religionists of every generation.

Four things need to be seen before studying this passage.

1. The sin of these religionists (Pharisees) was great: it was hypocrisy.
   a. They professed religion, but they did not really follow God. They never entered heaven themselves, and by their lives and teaching, they misled others and kept them out of heaven.
   b. They used religion for their own ends, to advance themselves professionally and materially (cp. v.14-15).
2. Christ was angry, but He was also sorrowful. He was harsh and condemning, but He was also broken-hearted and full of pity. Two facts show this.
   a. The Greek word *woe* includes both wrath and pity (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.23:13).
   b. Jesus expressed great lament over Jerusalem (v.37-39).
3. Christ was attacking and denouncing the religionists, but He was also warning them. Their sin was a great and terrible sin, but it was not unpardonable. They were shutting the door of heaven against themselves and others, and they were close to never being able to enter themselves. But all was not hopeless, not yet. Those *who will* hear this warning of Christ can respond by fearing and shaking under its denunciation, and they can repent and turn to God with a believing heart.
4. Some Scribes and Pharisees did repent and accept Christ and begin to follow Him (cp Lk.13:31; Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17).

Christ levelled His denunciation against the religionists of His day. He dealt frankly and openly with them. He exposed the truth of their human hearts: they were full of hypocrisy. Nothing thereafter would be hid; all would be exposed. They had to look at themselves and see the corruption of their hearts; and they had to repent, believe, and follow Christ or else be doomed to "the damnation of hell" (v.33).

Christ, frankly and openly, levelled nine accusations against the religionists.

1. False religionists shut the door to heaven against seekers (v.13).
2. False religionists use the guise of religion for greed, especially to steal from widows (v.14).
3. False religionists are missionaries who double the corruption of new followers (v.15).
4. False religionists mislead others; they are blind guides in oaths and commitments (v.16-22).
5. False religionists stress the lighter commandments and omit the weightier ones (v.23-24).
6. False religionists are blind to real cleanness (v.25-26).
7. False religionists disguise inner decay (v.27-28).
8. False religionists pride themselves in a godly heritage (v.29-33).
9. False religionists reject and abuse many of God's present-day messengers (v.34-36).

1 (23:13) **Religionists—False Teachers**: false religionists shut the door to heaven against seekers. The word "against" (emprosthen) means *in the face of*. The picture is that of men's standing right at the door desperately needing to enter, but the false religionist shuts the door of heaven in their *faces*.

Christ said two things in this point.

1. The false religionists did not enter heaven themselves. There are three reasons why they did not enter. (These reasons are pointed out in the preceding Scriptures.)
   a. They rejected God as Messiah, as being the Lord from heaven, the very Son of God (cp. Mt.22:41-45; Jn.10:31-39).
   b. They preferred their own ideas of religion rather than God's ideas. They preferred a religion that honored man's ability to do religious things rather than a religion that honored God's mercy for man (see outline and notes—Mt.23:1-12).
   c. They chose the world over God's demand for self-denial. They chose the things of the world such as position, honor, recognition, esteem, wealth, power, authority, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).
2. The false religionists not only did not enter heaven themselves, they did not allow *seekers* to enter. They shut the door by misleading people, and thereby doomed them to an eternity apart from God.
   a. They tried to discredit Jesus Christ, denying that He was the Son of God incarnated in human flesh (Mt.21:23-22:46).
   b. They twisted the Scriptures, falsely interpreting them (cp. Mt.22:41-46).

> **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Mt.22:29).**
>
> **"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor.2:17).**
>
> **"But [we] have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor.4:2).**

"As also in all his [Paul's] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pt.3:16).

c. They ridiculed and threatened anyone who confessed Christ (Jn.9:22, 34).

"Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered" (Lk.11:52).

"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.2:7-8).

Thought 1. The fields are white unto harvest. Many seek to enter heaven, yet the door is often shut in their faces. By whom? By false religionists.

1) False religionists deny Christ: they do not teach and preach that Jesus is the true Savior of men, the Son of God. Therefore, the seeker never knows the salvation of Christ. He never knows that Christ died for his sins and that he must trust Christ, giving all he is and has to Christ.

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

2) False religionists have their own thoughts about religion and how to be right with God. They teach their own thoughts on religion and righteousness. Therefore, the seeker never knows God's true righteousness and religion.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Ro.3:20).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).

3) False religionists often choose the world over the denial of self. They choose place, position, honor, and security over sacrifice and true service.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

Thought 2. Many religionists mislead people. They prefer their own ideas of religion rather than God's ideas. They prefer their own ideas that exalt self and honor their own abilities.

Thought 3. A man must guard against his own ideas and prejudices. Personal ideas and prejudice must not replace what God has revealed to be the truth. Personal ideas and prejudices shut the door of heaven to everyone who accepts and believes them.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(23:13) **Woe** (ouai): means both wrath and sorrow, anger and pity. There is no single English word to express what it means. It is a grieving denunciation; a sorrowful wrath; a pitying anger. It is a godly threat.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(23:13) **Hypocrites** (hupokrites): one who pretends, puts on a show, acts out something he is not. At first, the word simply meant one who replied or answered. Then it came to mean acting, as actors play-acted the lines of a scene. Finally, the word was used in the worst sense: play-acting; pretending; one who wore a mask to hide his real self; one who acted one way but who was really another way; one who put on an outward show.

The religionists, the Scribes and Pharisees, were hypocrites.

⇒ They acted as though they believed and loved God, yet they did not accept God's Son.

⇒ They pretended to be seeking God; but they were really seeking profession, esteem, recognition, honor, position, power, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).

⇒ They showed a concern for the things of God, but they were really concerned with the things of this world.

⇒ They acted humble and helpful; but they were really full of pride, envy, possessiveness, selfishness, and covetousness.

⇒ They claimed to be ministers of God's religion; but they were really ministers of a man-made religion, a religion that honored man's ability to *be good* and to do enough good to become acceptable to God.

⇒ They professed God's Word, but they added to and took away from His Word.

What Christ had to say about hypocrites is very serious. His words are a warning to every pretender and deceiver.
- ⇒ Hypocrites shall receive the greater damnation (v.14).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are children of hell (v.15).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are fools and they are blind (v.17, 19).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are blind guides (v.24).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are full of extortion and excess (v.25).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are full of all uncleanness (v.27).
- ⇒ Hypocrites are serpents, a generation of vipers (v.33).
- ⇒ Hypocrites shall not escape the damnation of hell (v.33).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(23:13) **Kingdom of Heaven**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.

2 (23:14) **Widows—Religionists**: false religionists use the guise of religion for greed and covetousness, especially to steal from widows. This is a gross sin and it is common. There are some persons—preachers, leaders and professing hypocrites—who court the attention and favor of people, especially widows, for the purpose of securing or getting their money. They seek large donations, endowments, trusts, investments, and gifts *to promote themselves or their institution*. And the great tragedy is this: such false and hypocritical hearts use the guise of religion to promote themselves and their false ideas. Their call to people is to *institutional religion*, not to the honor of God. Of course, vain men are succeptible to such appeals, but widows in particular are exposed to those who seem to be so devoted to God.

Note: Christ said that the damnation of these shall be greater. There are some sins more horrible than others. Using religion for selfish ends is one of them. This sin will receive a greater damnation. Another fact should be noted here: widows hold a special place in God's heart. He has always instructed His people to care for widows in a very special way.

> **"He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Dt.10:18).**
>
> **"Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow" (Dt.27:19).**
>
> **"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation" (Ps.68:5).**
>
> **"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is.1:17).**
>
> **"And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Lk.18:3-7).**

Thought 1. Stealing from widows (and widowers) is one of the most serious sins that can be committed. It will receive "the greater damnation," yet it is done every day, even by religious persons. It happens like this: a man covets something—to have his ideas spread through the media, or his institution strengthened and enlarged, or his pockets filled. Therefore, the man begins to court people who have money, especially widows. He seeks either donations and investments or to become trustee of their estates. The sin is twofold.
1) The money sought is not for the honor of God but for the promotion of oneself or one's institution.
2) The guise of religion—being a religious person, organization, or institution—is used to secure the money.

Thought 2. There is one question that needs to be asked with an open heart by every man in every generation: Can the *godly concern* for the lost and starving masses of the world and the huge ornate buildings and homes and bank accounts of Christians be from the same God?

The point is this: a man's motives must be pure. He must seek only the honor of God and the salvation and strengthening of people. Two specific things must be done.
1) Whatever money a man seeks, especially from widows, must be carefully used for God and for people in need, not for oneself nor for institutional religion.
2) *Every single believer* must deny himself totally. He must give and give, and he must work in order to have enough to give to others (Eph.4:28). He must always be in a state and condition of sacrificing. He must never store up. Storing up can reap only one benefit: to be called *rich* and to feel *materially secure*. The fallacy of this is that true security can come only from God (Mt.6:25-34; 1 Jn.5:11-15).

3 (23:15) **Evangelism—Proselytes**: false religionists are missionaries who double the corruption of new followers. Note that Christ said two significant things.
1. False religionists seek converts.
2. False religionists are very zealous in evangelism; they brave the world to make a single convert.

But there were problems with the zeal of these false religionists, and the problems were serious.

1. They were missionaries of a false religion. They were not reaching people for God, but for a man-made religion (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.23:13). They were not bringing people to a personal relationship with God but to their own ideas of religion.

2. They were doubling the damnation of these converts. The primary people they went after were the God-fearing and devout people who had already shown interest in religion (Judaism). Some of these people were so pleased with what Judaism offered them that when one really became a convert, he became extremely zealous for Judaism. He was so indoc-

trinated that he was made into a fanatic, more devoted than many of the Jews themselves. Thus the false teachers caused these converts to heap damnation upon themselves.

Thought 1. One of the strongest lessons to be learned from the Scribes and Pharisees is zeal in evangelism.

1) They had a willingness to go. They who held to a false religion were so willing to go. Why are we, who know the truth, so unwilling to go? Where is our zeal to reach people?
2) They were willing to go anyplace. They travelled worldwide to reach just one convert. Where is our willingness to go as missionaries? As witnesses? Where is our willingness to go even around the corner?

> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**

Thought 2. The Pharisees should also cause us to search and evaluate our hearts and our religion. Are we teaching the truth? Are we adding to or taking away from God's revelation, that is, from His Word? Are we actually doing just what God has called us to do: to live and work as servants and messengers of God and not as lords of religion and saviors of the world?

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(23:15) **Proselyte** (proselutos): a stranger, a sojourner (Ex.12:48-49; 22:21; 23:9; Dt.10:19). It is a person who has actually approached and drawn near religion, that is, adopted the beliefs of religion.

There were many proselytes to Judaism. Two things in particular attracted Gentiles.

1. The concept of one God (monotheism). The idea of many gods ran rampant throughout the world. A thinking man often had difficulty with the idea of a multitude of gods (polytheism). The corrupt worship and divisive demands insisted upon by so many religious gods did not make sense. It left the human soul empty.

Judaism worshipped one God alone, and He was proclaimed to be moral in an absolute sense. God's commandments were consistent with that for which the human soul cried; therefore, many turned to Judaism.

2. The concept of morality. The ancient world ran rampant in injustice and immorality, all sorts of sexual perversion. Weak women and men were abused and used as the strong willed to use them. Judaism's idea of purity and justice appealed to many. Women, who were treated as nothing more than pieces of property for the pleasure of men, were especially attracted to Judaism and its doctrine of morality.

Something needs to be noted about these Gentile worshippers, however. Not all were full-fledged converts or proselytes. They did attend the synagogues throughout the world wherever Jews met, but they were not circumcised nor did they participate in all the ceremonies and observances. They were known as *devout* and *God-fearing* converts or proselytes (Acts 10:2; 17:4).

4 (23:16-22) **Religionists, False**: false religionists mislead others; they are blind guides in oaths and commitments.

Note: Christ said that they were blind guides; they misled people. How? They stressed the secondary over the primary. They took the least important and made it more meaningful than the essential. Christ gave two examples.

1. They stressed the gold of the temple over the temple itself. Anyone who swore by the temple did not have to keep his commitment nor was he held responsible for his oath. But if he swore by the gold of the temple, he was held responsible and did have to keep his commitment.
2. They stressed the gift over the altar upon which the gift lay. Making a commitment or swearing by the altar was not binding, whereas a commitment or swearing by the gift was binding.

Christ used strong words against the religionists at this point. They were "fools and blind." Christ meant two things by these words.

1. What they were doing and saying was absurd and irrational. Common sense should tell anyone that the temple is greater than what is within it and the altar is greater than the gift that is laid upon it.
2. What they were doing and saying was full of folly and sin. They were merely trying to evade commitments and responsibility for swearing. They wanted the right to make promises and to swear, but they also wanted the right to break their promises if it benefited them later.

Christ pointed out the raw facts about commitments and oaths.

1. All commitments and oaths are heard by God. There is no evading of commitments made or of things sworn to.
   - ⇒ God is the One to whom sacrifices are made upon the altar (implied) (v.20).
   - ⇒ God dwells in the temple (v.21).
   - ⇒ God sits upon His throne in heaven (v.22).
2. All commitments and oaths are binding and accountable to God.

> **"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Mt.5:33-37).**

Thought 1. There are at least four sins seen in what the religionists were saying and doing.
1) The sin of stressing the secondary over the primary.
2) The sin of evading commitments.
3) The sin of covetousness. By stressing the gold over the temple, they were centering the people's minds upon the gold, the wealth, and the gifts instead of upon the God who dwelt in the temple.
4) The sin of self-righteousness. By stressing man's gift over the altar, they were saying in essence that man's gift was more important than God's altar which sanctified the gift. The gift honored the altar instead of the altar's honoring the gift. Such, of course, was ridiculous; for symbolically God stood behind the altar. And no gift is ever greater than God.

Thought 2. The very same sins are committed today.
1) Ritual, ceremony, programs—commitment to practically every phase of church life is often stressed over God. Commitment to the various phases of church life is even said to be commitment to God.
2) The gift is stressed more than the altar. A commitment to give and to make sacrifice often takes precedence over the altar (commitment to God). Stewardship of money (the gift and the gold) is even said to be an equal part with the stewardship of life to God.
3) The motive is often to make the institution stronger instead of making people stronger by centering their lives upon God.

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(23:16-22) **Oath—Swearing—Cursing**: a discussion of oaths can be enlarged to include negative oaths and swearing or what is commonly called *cursing*. It can be broadened on the basis of its definition. An oath is an appeal that something is to be cursed or sworn. (Also see outline and notes—Mt.5:33-37 for more discussion.)

⇒ Sometimes the appeal is for God to do something (damn something); sometimes the appeal (damning) is just declared by the person.

⇒ Sometimes a man swears an oath to God (a commitment); sometimes he swears an oath against something (curses).

⇒ Sometimes a man curses by using words that are distasteful or base; sometimes he chooses words thought to be more socially acceptable such as *rats*, *doggone it*, *darn*, etc..

There are at least three things wrong with oaths, swearing, and cursing.

1. Oaths reveal a weak character and lack of trustworthiness. The reason an oath is needed is because a person's word and character are sometimes suspicious and questionable. Therefore, he feels he must enforce his word with an oath. A trustful and trustworthy person only needs to say "yes" or "no." He will stand behind his word (Mt.5:37).

2. All oaths, swearing, and cursing come from the same spirit of emotion and feelings. Just because some words may be more acceptable to society does not mean they are more acceptable to God. It is the heart of emotion and feeling that causes the mouth to speak the words. God judges the heart, not the softness or harshness, tastefulness or distastefulness of the words. It is what is within that God condemns: the untruthfulness, distrustfulness, or willingness to curse because of a self-centered desire to *fit in*.

3. All swearing and cursing makes a person his *own* god. It puts oneself in the place of God. It claims the *right*, the prerogative to act and to curse something. No man has such a right himself. Only God possesses the right and power to speak and act against, to curse and condemn a person.

5 (23:23-24) **Religionists, False**: false religionists stress the lighter commandments and omit the weightier ones. Christ said two things.

1. Religionists stress the lighter duties while omitting the greater duties. They pick and choose what they want and are willing to do and omit the rest. They stress *outward* duties such as tithing, observances, rituals, ceremonies, and works; they minimize the change and *inward* duties of the heart. Christ mentions three duties of the human heart that are omitted.

a. There is justice: treating our neighbor as we should; doing and saying nothing that would hurt another person; showing honor and respect to all men; never being guilty of injustice.

b. There is mercy: showing care, concern, kindness, and tenderness to all who are weak, bad, and needy; and not being hard, distant, demanding, or cruel.

c. There is faith: believing God and trusting Him to fulfill His promises.

Christ said that the weightier matters of the law are these: justice and mercy and faith. But the false religionists minimize and omit these matters. They talk about and stress the lighter or outward matters of religion such as tithing. Outward matters such as observances, rituals, and works just do not carry the weight that inward matters of the heart carry. Why? Because, if the heart is right, then outward behavior will follow. All outward behavior will be changed and not just certain areas that have been picked out to show that a person is religious. Note what Christ says: stress the weightier matters and do not leave the other undone. Do the lighter, yes, but major upon the weightier matters.

2. Religionists avoid the lesser sins but commit the greater sins. They strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. This was a humorous proverb in Christ's day. Wine was carefully strained through a piece of linen cloth to catch gnats and other impurities before drinking. This was to avoid violating the law of purity (Lev.11:20-23; 17:10-14).

The false religionists strained to keep the lighter matters of religion but failed to keep the weightier matters. They did not sin by straining to keep the lighter matters; they sinned by omitting the weightier matters.

"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart" (Zech.7:9-10).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Ro.13:8).

Thought 1. Many have a form of religion, but few pay much attention to the weightier matters of godliness. How many attend church regularly, give of their money, pray, and take part in church affairs; but they...

- do not give an honest day's work to an employer (justice)?
- do not humble themselves, showing mercy toward the weak and less disciplined?
- do not sacrifice, showing mercy toward the needy and less fortunate?
- do not act responsibly and lovingly toward others, even toward their own family (justice and mercy)?

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

Thought 2. Think about it. How easy it is to keep up an outward appearance of religion, but how difficult it is to be godly within. Yet inward godliness is what Christ demands. We are to treat all people with pure justice and mercy and to believe God in all things.

Thought 3. One of the great failures of false religionists is this: they emphasize and stress the wrong matters. They stress the lighter matters and omit the weightier matters. What they stress is important and should be done, but they are not the major matters.

Thought 4. The false religionist fails at both points of sin. He sins both by omission and commission. He *omits* the weightier duties, and he *commits* the greater sins.

Thought 5. Christ called false religionists "blind guides." Note three things.

1) Some are blind to what Christ was saying. They *do not know* they are stressing the lighter matters. The lighter matters are all they have ever known and been taught. Therefore, they are steeped in the lighter matters, knowing very little about the weightier matters of religion.
2) Some *do know* they are stressing the lighter matters; and they deliberately continue in their error, refusing to change lest they face ridicule, loss of position, security, and all they count dear in this world.
3) Religionists are guides, teaching the lighter matters of religion and omitting the weightier matters.

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(23:23) **Tithe—Mint—Anise—Cummin**: the tithe was always important to Jewish religion. The tithe was used to keep up the temple and to provide for the priests who served God and the people.

"Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always" (Dt.14:22-23).

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord" (Lev.27:30).

Note that the tithe was to be corn, wine, and oil. The Pharisees expanded the tithe to include all crops, including the smallest potted and garden plants, such as mint, anise, and cummin. Such plants were grown only in small patches for a family's use and never in large quantities. All three were used in cooking. Dill and cummin were also used as medicines. The religionists even included the leaves and stalks of the plants in their tithes. Imagine such strictness that would tithe a certain number of leaves and a small portion of stalk. But note something: Christ says such a spirit of strictness in tithing should be true of our lives. We should never fail to tithe (see note—Mt.23:23-24).

6 (23:25-26) **Religionists, False—Heart—Purity**: false religionists are blind to real cleanness. Christ used an illustration to show just how blind a religionist can be. Religionists are like cups and platters which have been washed on the outside but left dirty on the inside.

Christ made three points about the illustration.

1. The outside of the cup and platter of the religionists appeared clean. It was the outside that concerned them, for it was the outside that was seen. So they washed and cleaned the outside. The point is well taken. They guarded against scandalous sins, sins that would damage their image and reputation among neighbors and the public. Publicly they walked uprightly, just as the public thought they should. Their concern was what people thought, not what God thought.

2. The inside of the cup and platter of the religionists was dirty. The inside was not seen by men, so they paid little or no attention to it. They took what they wanted and lived as they wished. They were full of extortion and excess, that is, greed and selfishness, robbery and indulgence, lusting and consuming, taking and seldom sharing, getting and seldom giving. Such is what is on the inside of the religionists: a selfishness and greed for a following, for security, position, influence, attention, recognition, and acknowledgment. The religionists would never commit a gross visible sin, yet they would hold selfish greed and excessive desires within, living self-centered and indulgent lives.

3. The religionists needed to clean up the inside of their hearts. Once the inside was clean, then the outside would be automatically clean. If their spirits were clean, their outside behavior would be clean. A clean heart will lead to a clean life. Christ teaches that it is the inside of a man that determines his behavior. It is the heart that determines what a man does.

> **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Pr.4:23).**
>
> **"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Mt.12:35).**
>
> **"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man....but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Mt.15:19-20).**

Note: Christ called the false religionist *blind*. The false religionist does not know that the inside of a man can be cleansed. He does not know that it is a cleansed heart than changes behavior.

> **Thought 1.** The whole approach of man and society is to change the outside of a man in order to change him inside. Change his environment, situation, circumstances, education, housing, nourishment, job, beliefs, philosophy, and self-image, and he will become *good*.
>
> Christ's point is that all of the above are determined by man's heart. A bad environment is due to evil within men. A poor education is due to evil shortcomings within men. A man can have the very best environment and education yet still be evil. It is not the environment and education that changes the evil within men. It is God. Let God change the heart; then a man will be clean on the outside. He will live justly and mercifully toward all men, doing all he can to build the right environment and educational opportunities for all men.

7 (23:27-28) **Religionists, False—Spiritual Death**: false religionists disguise inner decay. Christ again used an illustration to make His point. He said that religionists are like tombs that have been washed white and freshly cleansed. Outwardly they appear clean and white, but within they are full of dead men's bones.

The picture of the freshly cleansed tombs was taken from the countryside of Jesus' day. Tombs dotting the roadways and countryside were a common sight. Jewish law said that anyone who touched a dead body became unclean (Num.19:16). Therefore, tombs had to be clearly marked and kept up, not only to show respect for the family and deceased but also to prevent travellers from becoming *religiously* unclean.

There was one particular time during the year when the danger of touching a tomb became a serious threat. That was during the Passover season when teeming thousands of pilgrims swarmed over the roads and countryside leading to Jerusalem. One of the preparations made for the feast was the cleansing or washing of the tombs in order to make them clearly visible. It was probably these newly whited tombs, sparkling in the sunlight as they dotted the countryside, that Jesus was picturing.

The great wrong with the false religionist is this: outwardly, he appears righteous; but inwardly, he is full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

The Lord's contrast between outward appearance and inward truth is thought-provoking.

⇒ Outwardly we may attend church regularly, but what is the inward truth during the week?

⇒ Outwardly we may profess religion, but what is the inward truth out in the market place?

⇒ Outwardly we may give thanks as a family at meals, but what is the inward truth toward the hungry of the world?

⇒ Outwardly we may agree with justice and mercy, but what is the inward truth in dealing with money?

⇒ Outwardly we may bow our heads in a prayer of thanksgiving, but what is the inward truth toward other sinners?

⇒ Outwardly we may walk humbly before our peers, but what is the inward truth toward the derelict and those down and out?

Something is often forgotten. Christ preached against the outward sins of passion which society often considers the gross sins, but He condemned much more strongly the inward sins of the spirit such as pride and greed. Sinners and harlots enter heaven much more quickly than *religionists* who do not surrender their lives to Jesus Christ. This is exactly what Jesus Christ said (Mt.21:31-32). The world's concept is that a person is acceptable to God if he does not commit a gross sin. What he is within his heart and what he is behind the scene and closed doors matter little. He is an acceptable member of the community if he is...

- respectable
- successful
- wealthy
- money-shrewd
- nice looking
- famous
- powerful
- gainfully employed

Note: Christ said the false religionist is "within full of dead men's bones." This is most likely referring to spiritual death. The false religionist goes through life *living acceptably* in the eyes of men, but he is spiritually dead to God. His acts are the acts of a man-made morality and religion, not the acts of true morality and religion as revealed by God in Christ.

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto me, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them" (Lk.11:44).

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:1-2).

"For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" (Eph.5:12).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

Thought 1. False religion is the most beautiful and deadly tomb among men. It leads to the eternal death of man's spirit. It makes him insensitive to the danger of eternal death by instilling a sense...

- of confidence in being religious.
- of security in being religious.
- of acceptability in being religious.
- of pride in being religious.
- of righteousness in being religious.

Thought 2. Others may not know the truth—the truth of the closed doors and the dark—the sinful secrets of the heart. We may appear respectable to men. The heart can be full of secrets and full of sin; the life can appear free of blame. But God knows all secrets, and God knows what fills the heart.

The point is clear: God shall judge the secrets of men. Then the sinful heart will be in hell, and it will find no comfort in remembering that it appeared respectable to men (Ro.2:16; Lk.16:23).

8 (23:29-33) **Religionists, False—Heritage—Roots**: false religionists pride themselves in a godly heritage. Christ said four significant things about this point.

1. False religionists honor the relics of the past. They show great respect for former prophets. They build, renovate, adorn and look after the tombs of the great men of the past. But note: Christ says they pay honor to their tombs and memory, not to their teaching and godly lives.
2. False religionists denounce former abuses. Their forefathers had rejected, abused, and killed many of the prophets. The false religionists denounced such evil behavior. They preached and taught against murder.
3. False religionists are prideful, claiming that they are better than the religious people of former years. They feel they are beyond such sins and would never have rejected and abused the prophets of God. They believe they would have gladly heard the preachers of the past and done exactly what they said.
4. False religionists witness against themselves. They reverence the prophets of old but reject the prophets who are living. They reverence Abraham, Moses, Jeremiah, and Zechariah; but they reject God's very own Son. In rejecting Him, they prove that they are just as their fathers were: murderers. They are children of their fathers, following in the very steps of their fathers, rejecting the messengers of God. Like father, like son.

Note what Christ said: they were filling up the measure or cup of murder which was begun by their fathers. Christ was probably saying that His death was the last drop. The cup was about to reach the *filled* point; the cup would not be able to take another drop. There would be no chance to turn to God after they killed *the Prophet*, Christ Himself (see outline and notes—Mt.22:1-14).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Ro.2:5-6).

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev.20:12; cp. Rev.22:12).

"Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work" (Ps.62:12).

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?" (Pr.24:12).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

Thought 1. It is easy to honor great men of the past. They are not present to speak the truth and demand that we follow the truth. A dead man cannot disturb us with his warnings.

Thought 2. Every generation has *this one* great deception: since they are more educated and technologically advanced, they think they are stronger and better off than the former generation. They think...

- if they had been given the opportunities of the past, they would have done more with them.
- if they had faced the temptations of the past, they would have withstood them better.

9 (23:34-36) **Religionists, False**: false religionists reject and abuse many of God's present-day prophets. Christ said He was going to send forth messengers with the message of God, but false religionists were going to beat (scourge), persecute, and kill them. They were going to be dogged in their persecution, following after God's messenger from city to city.

Note: Christ said something else, something of terrible consequence to false religionists. All the abuse and all the righteous blood shed throughout human history is to be laid to the account of false religionists. Why? Because they of all people had the greatest opportunity.

> **"[They had] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the...law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Ro.9:4).**

Thought 1. There is one question that every man needs to face: When I am gone, what will the verdict be? What kind of legacy will I leave behind? Did I hinder or help God?

> **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev.20:12).**

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(23:34) **Prophets**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.14:3; note—Eph.4:11.

DEEPER STUDY # 8
(23:34) **Wise men**: the wise servants of God who are especially gifted by the Holy Spirit with godly wisdom.

DEEPER STUDY # 9
(23:34) **Scribes**: not the Judaistic Scribe, but men who would be gifted by the Holy Spirit to teach the New Testament, the great Covenant of Christ Himself, of God's very own Son.

DEEPER STUDY # 10
(23:35) **Abel**: cp. Gen.4:8-10; Heb.12:24.

DEEPER STUDY # 11
(23:35) **Zacharias**: there is some doubt as to who this is. It is probably not Zacharias the prophet, but the Zachariah who was stoned and killed in the court of the Lord's house (2 Chron.24:20-21). His father, called Jehoiada in the Old Testament and Barachias in the New Testament, was probably known by both names. It was common for Jews to have two names. The main support for this explanation is based upon the Jewish Bible. The books of the Jewish Bible are arranged differently from the Christian Bible. Second Chronicles is the *last book* of the Jewish Bible. Jesus is simply saying (referring to the arrangement of the Jewish Scriptures) that the false religionists are guilty of all the righteous blood throughout history, from the first murder, Abel, to the last murder, Zacharias.

DEEPER STUDY # 12
(23:36) **Generation, This**: "all these things" will come in a terrible judgment upon the generation of Christ's day. They stand especially guilty because they had such a unique opportunity: they had the very presence of God's Son visibly among them (Jn.20:29).

However, does this mean they are to bear a special judgment in eternity because of their special privileges (Ro.9:1-5)? Or is the reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the nation under Titus in 70 A.D.? Both positions are held by various commentators.

		N. The Great Lament of Jesus: Jesus' Love Rejected, 23:37-39 (Lk.13:34-35)
1	**The past sin of Jerusalem: Persecuted God's messengers**	37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!
2	**The great love of Christ for Jerusalem**[DS1] a. Patient: "How often" b. Cared & protected: "Gathered"	
3	**The great sin of Jerusalem: Rejected the Messiah**	
4	**The terrifying judgment upon Jerusalem** a. Deserted & desolate[DS2] c. Blinded to the Messiah	38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
5	**The glorious prediction: Jerusalem & Israel will proclaim the Messiah**	

DIVISION XIV

THE MESSIAH'S LAST WEEK: HIS CLAIM CHALLENGED AND REJECTED, 21:1-23:39

N. The Great Lament of Jesus: Jesus' Love Rejected, 23:37-39

(23:37-39) **Introduction—Jerusalem—Israel**: God's great love for Jerusalem and for Israel is seen in this passage. This is Christ's great lament for Jerusalem, the city of God, and for Israel, the people of God. God's love, which was demonstrated perfectly by giving His only begotten Son, was rejected. Christ sighed from the depth of His heart and wept. He cried out with intense groanings:

> **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" (v.37).**

The depth of the Lord's emotion and broken heart can never be known by man. Why? Because Christ knew that God's loving appeal had been in vain. The people who were chosen to be God's witness upon earth, that is, Jerusalem, "[had] grievously sinned" (Lam.1:8). They had rejected the only begotten Son of God, their very own Messiah and Savior.

However, God's great love for Jerusalem is not all that is seen in the Lord's words. God's justice is seen upbraiding Jerusalem.

> **"Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee....Behold, your house is left unto you desolate....For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth" (v.37-39).**

The depth of the city's sin, being stored up over the centuries, could never be known by man (Ro.2:5). The measure of the cup had been filled. The time had now come...

> **"[God] will render to every man according to his deeds....Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness....indignation and wrath....tribulation and anguish....upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentiles" (Ro.2:6-9).**

The place of Jerusalem in God's heart is seen in this great passage, but the terrifying judgment of God's heart is also seen. All those who reject His Son shall be judged and condemned—no matter who they are, both Jew and Gentile. The passage is applicable to all of us (add vs. 10 and 11 to Ro.2:6-9 quoted above and see outline and notes—Ro.11:11-16; 11:17-24 for more discussion).

1. The past sin of Jerusalem: they persecuted God's messengers (v.37).
2. The great love of Christ for Jerusalem (v.37).
3. The great sin of Jerusalem: they rejected the Messiah (v.37).
4. The terrifying judgment upon Jerusalem (v.38-39).
5. The glorious prediction: Jerusalem and Israel will proclaim the Messiah (v.39).

1 (23:37) **Jews, Sins of**: the great sin of Jerusalem is that they persecuted God's messengers. They ridiculed, abused, and killed the messengers of God. Christ, of course, was speaking to all unbelieving Israelites; but He specified Jerusalem because it was the capital, the place where the Sanhedrin (the ruling court of the Jews) sat. Some examples of Israel's rejecting and abusing the messengers of God would be...

- the reaction against and imprisonment of Hanani (2 Chron.16:7-10, esp. 10).
- the stoning of Zacharias (2 Chron.24:20-21; Mt.23:35).

- the hatred and imprisonment of Micaiah (1 Ki.22:7-27, esp. 27).
- the casting of Jeremiah into a dungeon (Jer.38:6).
- the attempt to silence Amos (Amos 7:11-13).

Some examples of persecution by the Sanhedrin after Christ would be...

- the issuing of warrants for the arrest of early believers (Acts 9:2).
- the orders to round up and persecute early believers (Acts 8:1).
- the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:57-60).

The ridicule and persecution of God's messengers were so common down through the centuries that Christ was led to say on another occasion: "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Lk.13:33).

God holds His messengers very dear to His heart, and He is extremely protective of them. To ridicule and abuse one of His servants is a very serious offense. Jerusalem and the people of Israel were guilty of many sins, but it is this sin that is the *most condemning*. In conjunction with this thought is this fact: it was primarily the grumbling of Israel in the wilderness against God that caused God to judge that generation so severely.

Scripture says:

> **"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master [the Lord] he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).**

Thought 1. The true messenger of God is often ridiculed, abused and persecuted. Two facts need to be noted about this.

1) The reason for their persecution: God's concern is the correcting of an unjust world; the changing of a self-righteous heart; the purifying of a lustful mind; the sacrificing of a selfish life. Men oppose God's correction and His demand for change and purity. They oppose the sacrifice of oneself—oppose such restraint by nature. Therefore, men often oppose the messenger who *truly* proclaims God's Word.
2) The leaders of the persecution are often false religionists who are wrapped up in the world and its institutional religions. They feel threatened by a message that proclaims there is *truth* beyond man himself. Such a positive message endangers their own humanistic beliefs and threatens them with loss of security, livelihood, prestige, and all that this world offers.

2 (23:37) **Jesus Christ, Love**: the great love of Christ is strongly pictured in this passage (see note—Mt.23:37-39)—both His patience and His great desire to care for and protect people.

1. His patience is seen in the words, "How often I would have...." He personally would have saved the people. He would have saved them often. He desired their salvation, not their condemnation (cp. Jn.3:17). Jerusalem had abused and even killed many of His messengers, yet God had not turned away from them. He continued to send messengers, and finally, He sent His Son. Time and again He reached out to the people through men of God; and each time Jerusalem rejected, abused, and sometimes killed His servants. The patience of God endured and endured with man's sin in the knowledge that some would be saved (see outline—Ro.9:22-24; cp. 2 Pt.3:8-9).
2. His care and protection are seen in the word "gathered." The picture of a hen's gathering her chickens under her wings is the picture of care and protection. The very purpose of Christ is to gather and keep a person from wandering around and facing the dangers of the world all alone.

> **"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Ps.91:4).**

Thought 1. Christ longs to gather us to Himself *often*. Every time we hear the gospel and sense a pull within our hearts to draw near Him, He is reaching out to gather us unto Himself.

> **"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).**
>
> **"But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Ro.10:21).**
>
> **"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:20).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**
>
> **"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer.31:3).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(23:37) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the words "How often *would I have gathered* thy children together" point backward to all the history of Israel. Christ was saying He was One with God. He was the One who was overseeing Israel throughout its history, the One who would have gathered Israel under His care and protection.

3 (23:37) **Jews, Sins of**: the *great* sin of Jerusalem was this: the people rejected God's only begotten Son. Note the words "ye would not." He would have saved them, but they would not be saved. They heard Christ; they saw Christ; they were even able to touch Christ (1 Jn.1:1), but they rejected Him. And their rejection was *deliberate*.

⇒ They rejected the love of God which was demonstrated to them in Christ. God demonstrated His love by giving His only begotten Son.
⇒ They rejected the terms of God's demand. God demanded that they live for Him. How? By believing in God's Son and by living holy lives day by day. Then they were to go forth and proclaim the message of salvation in God's Son.
⇒ They rejected God's righteousness (faith in Christ) and trusted their own righteousness (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.4:22).

Thought 1. Men reject Christ for the very same reasons.
1) They reject the revelation of God to man.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**

2) They reject Christ's claim to be the revelation of God, to be the Son of God.

> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).**
> **"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn.10:33).**
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
> **"Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (Jn.12:44-45).**
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).**

3) They reject God's righteousness and trust their own righteousness.

> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Ro.10:3-4).**
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**

4 (23:38-39) **Judgment—Jesus, Judgment of**: the terrifying judgment upon Jerusalem was threefold.

1. Their house was to be deserted by God, "left in their own hands." The word "house" refers to their temple, their nation and their lives. They wanted control of all; to do as they willed with their lives and possessions. Christ said that God would grant their wish. God's presence was going to depart their temple, their nation, and their lives; and He was going to leave all in their hands (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.23:38).
2. Their house was to be desolated. It was to be destroyed. This would be a reference both to earthly judgment (the lack of God's presence) when Jerusalem was devastated by Titus in 70 A.D. and to eternal judgment (Heb.9:27). It should be noted, however, that many ancient manuscripts do not have the word "desolate" in their text.
3. They would thereafter be unable to see Christ. This meant two things.
   a. They would not be able to see Him soon. He was departing the world, dying, and ascending into God's presence. They would not see Him again until He returned.
   b. They would continue to be blind and obstinate in their unbelief. They would not submit to Christ as the Messiah, the very Son of God. Therefore, they would be blinded as part of the judgment of God (Ro.11:7-10, 25).

Thought 1. The same three judgments are applicable to every man and nation who walk in obstinate unbelief.
1) God shall desert them.

> **"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves" (Ro.1:24).**
> **"For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Ro.1:26-28).**

2) God shall destroy them.

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Lk.3:9).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Th.1:7-9).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pt.3:7).

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

3) They shall be unable to see Christ.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).

"For the wages of sin is death [separation]; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment [separation from God]" (Heb.9:27).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(23:38) **Desolate** (eremos): to lay waste and make into a wilderness; to desert. Without the presence of God a place and person are like a wilderness, deserted and left all alone. They are left to waste away.

5 (23:39) **Jews, Restoration**: Jesus shares the glorious prediction that Jerusalem and Israel will proclaim the Messiah. Israel will not be blinded to Jesus as the true Messiah forever; Israel will profess and proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah.

Note two things.

1. The words "till ye shall say" look to the future. Israel will not be blinded forever. Israel will profess Jesus to the Messiah. That day is coming.
2. The words "blessed is He *that cometh*" look to the return of Jesus. Israel is going to proclaim Jesus to be the Messiah when He returns in great glory "in the name of the Lord" (Jehovah) (cp. Ph.2:9-11). (See outline and notes—Ro.11:25-36. Cp. outline and notes—Ro.9:1-11:36.)

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Ro.11:25-27).

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days" (Hos.3:4-5).

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born" (Zech.12:10).

Thought 1. One of the most glorious moments of life is when a person turns to Christ and proclaims Him to be the Messiah. It is a *turning* that every person should experience. Israel will experience this one day.

	CHAPTER 24	my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.	
	XV. THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE,[DS1,2] **24:1-25:46**	6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.	**3 Sign 2: World violence**
		7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.	**4 Sign 3: Natural disasters**
	A. The Signs of the Last Days,[DS3] **24:1-14** (Mk.13:1-13; Lk.21:5-11)	8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.	(Note: These signs are the beginning of sorrows)[DS5]
1 Events that led to the great prophecies a. Disciples admired the temple's magnificence & showed it to Jesus b. Jesus used the occasion to arouse interest in prophecy: Predicted the temple's utter destruction[DS4] c. Disciples were aroused: Asked two questions 1) When would the temple be destroyed 2) What signs would precede Christ's return & the world's end d. Jesus warned: Must guard against deception	And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?	9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.	**5 Sign 4: Severe religious persecution** **6 Sign 4: Terrible apostasy—betrayal & division** **7 Sign 6: The rising of many false leaders—offering false hope** **8 Sign 7: A great falling away—sin's increasing & love's growing cold**[DS6,7] **9 Sign 8: Some's enduring & being saved** **10 Sign 9: World evangelism**
2 Sign 1: False messiahs	4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in		

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

A. The Signs of the Last Days, 24:1-14

(24:1-25:46) DIVISION OVERVIEW: End Time: these two chapters, Mt.24-25, deal with three great subjects. All three subjects lay out in the future as Christ discussed them.

1. The destruction of Jerusalem (v.3; cp. v.2).
2. The Lord's return (v.3).
3. The end of the world (v.3).

A quick glance at the first four verses will show the events that led Jesus to deal with the great prophecies covered by these chapters.

1. The disciples admire the temple's magnificence and draw Jesus' attention to its beauty (v.1). The temple was magnificent. It sat upon the towering summit of Mount Sion. It was built of white marble plated with gold. The temple was a massive structure that could hold thousands of people (cp. Acts 4:4 where five thousand men were saved among a crowd which probably numbered many thousands more). The temple had several porches such as Solomon's Porch and the Royal Porch. Each porch was supported with huge towering pillars, each one so large that it took three to four men reaching arm to arm to reach around it. The temple was a striking sight, one of the building wonders of the world. The disciples apparently stood some place where the temple in all its magnificent beauty struck them with awe, and they wanted Christ to see the beautiful sight.
2. Jesus uses the occasion to arouse the disciples' interest in coming events. He predicts the temple's utter destruction (v.2).
3. The disciples are aroused to ask two questions of the Lord. When will the temple be destroyed and what will be the sign of His return and of the end of the world (v.3) (see note—Lk.21:5-7).
4. Jesus warns His disciples. They must guard against being deceived (v.4). This can mean one or two things. A person can be easily deceived when dealing with end-time prophecies, or a person can be easily deceived when facing the

end time events. He can be deceived into thinking that certain cataclysmic events are infallible signs that the end is at hand (v.6, 14). Such too often results...

- in wild guesses about the end time
- in universal predictions
- in the deceiving of others
- in discouragement of one's faith when the end does not come

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(24:1-31) **End Time**: noting the exact words of Christ will help in understanding this passage.

1. Christ says, "All these are the beginning of sorrows" (v.8). The words "the beginning of sorrows" indicate that Christ is dealing with "the beginning" of a terrible period of trial for the believer ("you," v.9). He is not *just* referring to the normal trials that occur upon earth or the regular persecutions that are launched against believers over the centuries (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:1-31). World trouble and persecutions against God's people have always existed, even from the beginning of time. The great sorrow He now speaks about refers to some terrible period which is so terrible that it can be said to be the "*the beginning* of sorrows" or "woes," a time which is to be distinguished from all other trouble the world and believers have suffered throughout history.
2. Christ says, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place...then...flee...for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.15-16, 21). There is no question about this sign. It launches the worst period of tribulation the world has ever seen. This sign definitely points to a specific period of human history. As to what the period should be called, it is probably best to simply use the words of Scripture and title it "great tribulation" (v.21).
3. Now, note what Christ has said in the above verses.

> **"All these are the beginning of sorrows" (v.8).**
>
> **"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation...stand in the holy place...then...flee...for then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.15-16, 21).**

Christ seems to be giving a list of signs, *one of which* is "the abomination of desolation." In verses 5-14 He gives nine signs, the ninth's being world evangelism (v.14). He closes this ninth sign with the words, "Then shall the end come" (v.14). But note in verse 15 how He seems to pick up the signs again, giving what seems to be the most visible and terrible sign for which to watch. Note His words, reading verses 14, 15, and 21 together.

> **"...Then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation...stand in the holy place...then...flee...for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.14-16, 21).**

Christ is saying there is a difference between the signs that precede "the abomination" and the unparalleled trials that follow. When "the abomination of desolation" stands in the holy place, the trials that follow are much, much worse—unparalleled in human history.

"The abomination of desolation" is the sign that launches the worst tribulations the world has ever known. Just when this abomination will appear, Christ does not say. But His appearance is one of the ten signs Christ gives; and His appearance will signal the worst devastation ever known by the world.

A chart diagramming Christ's own words will perhaps help in understanding what He says.

1. His words are: "All these (signs) are the beginning of sorrows" (v.8).
2. "When ye therefore *shall see* the abomination of desolation...*then shall be great tribulation*" (v.15, 21).
3. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days...all...*shall see* the Son of Man coming" (v.29-31).

THE END OF THE WORLD

Seeing the Sign of the Abomination of Desolation *In the Middle of the Time or Years* (v.15)		Seeing the *Son of Man Coming* (v.29-30)
Signs which are "The beginning of sorrows" (v.8).	Unparalleled trials of "the great tribulation (v.21)	"His angels...gather together His elect" (v.31)

Another way to express what Christ is saying in these chapters, which may be of help as we seek to understand His words, is as follows.

1. Christ is asked two questions by the disciples: When shall the temple be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?
2. Christ answers by giving nine signs (v.5-14). When He gives the ninth sign, world evangelism, He says, "And then shall the end come" (v.14).

3. Christ then says in essence, "But there is a tenth sign, a sign that you should see and for which you should watch. And this tenth sign He discusses at some length. He says: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation..." (v.15-28).
   a. It shall launch the worst tribulations the world has ever seen (v.15-22).
   b. It shall cause a frantic search for the Messiah and false prophets, that is, for a great deliverer (v.23-26).
   c. But know this: the return of Christ will not be in an isolated place or done in secret (v.26). His return will be as lightning: it will be quick, stretching across the sky and visible to all (v.27-28).
4. Christ then says, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days" He shall return (v.29-31).

Many Biblical scholars point out great similarities between what Christ says about the end time and sections of Revelation (Mt.24; Mk.13; Lk.21. See notes—Rev.6:1-7:1; 7:1; 8:1; 11:15; 16:1-21.)

1. There seems to be a similarity between the structure of what Christ says and the book of Revelation in dealing with the end time (see notes given in paragraph above).

• The beginning of sorrows: preliminary sorrows, trouble and evil in society and nature; yet world evangelism continues (Mt.24:5-14).	....corresponds to	...The Seven Seals (Rev.6:1-17)
• "The Great Tribulation": unparalleled...trials (Mt.24:15-28).	....corresponds to	...The Seven Trumpets, the bowls, and the beast (Rev.8:1-18:24).
• "The Son of Man coming"	....corresponds to	...The Final Triumph of Christ (Rev.19:1-22:21).

2. There seems to be similarity between "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt.24:5-14) and the seals of Revelation (Rev.6:1-17). The end of the world *will not come all at once*. The future will be filled with wars, natural disasters, persecutions, and the claims of false deliverers (messiahs). And at the very end, there will be an increase and intensification of the signs. But this is not all. There is to be a terrible sign: the appearance of the rider on the white horse (see note—Rev.6:2); "the abomination of desolation" (AV), "the desolating sacrilege" (RSV), "the man of lawlessness" (2 Th.2:3); the "little horn" (Dan.7); the Antichrist. This person will afflict the people of God beyond imagination.(See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.11:7.)

3. There seems to be a similarity between "the great tribulation" spoken of by Christ and the seven trumpets, the seven bowl judgments, and the beast covered by Revelation.

4. Others point to a great similarity between "the beast" (Antichrist) pictured time and again in Revelation and "the abomination of desolation" spoken of by Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:1-31; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.11:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(24:1-31) **End Time**: three other things will help in understanding what Christ is doing in this passage.

1. It will help to remember that Jesus is preparing His disciples for His death and departure from this world and preparing them to carry on after He is gone. His immediate disciples were to face some terrible times, ranging all the way from personal trials brought on by their witness for Christ to national trials involving the utter destruction of their nation. And it would be generations stretching into centuries before He returned to earth. No one knew this at that time—But He did. So He needed to prepare His future disciples as well. They, too, were going to face all kinds of trials; and there was always the danger that His disciples might tire waiting for His return. They were to see and experience so much trouble in the world their faith might falter. They, along with many in the world, might begin to ask:

> **"Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt.3:4).**

What Christ does is use this occasion to reveal some of the events that are to take place upon the earth during "these last days," the days of the church (Acts 2:16-17; 1 Jn.2:18). By knowing some of the events, His disciples will be better prepared to endure and to keep alive their hope for His return.

⇒ They will know that God is not caught off guard. God is still on the throne and still in control of the events.
⇒ They will not be caught off guard themselves. They will know what to expect in this corruptible and sinful world. When the events happen, they will not be as likely to become discouraged.
⇒ They will be challenged to *keep themselves* ever so close to God in order to be as strong as possible in facing the trials coming upon earth.
⇒ They will be encouraged to place their hope in God and in the new heavens and earth and not in this corruptible world. They will be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13).

2. Remembering that Jesus is dealing with two questions will also help in understanding what is being said. He is answering the questions: When will the temple be destroyed and what shall be the sign of His return and of the end of the world?

Note something. Christ is dealing with the end of the temple and with the end of the world, the destruction of the temple and the destruction of the world. He is covering the signs, the events that both cause the judgment and occur during the judgment of the temple and the world. What is the point? Simply this. The Scripture teaches that the same signs and events cause the judgment of anything. That is, the events (sins) that cause judgment upon one thing are the same events that will

bring judgment upon everything else. Thus, the signs that surround the destruction of Jerusalem are much the same as the signs that shall surround the end of the world. Therefore, what Christ is saying has a double meaning and application (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.24:1-14; 24:15-28. Both notes will help to see the double application.)

The Lord's words apply both to the disciples of His day and to all disciples who were to follow in succeeding generations. As long as the earth stands, the disciples of "the last days" (or ages) will face many of the same signs faced by those who experienced the destruction of Jerusalem. But there is to be one difference. At the end of the world, the signs will increase and intensify. So terrible a day is coming that it can be called, "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt.24:8) and "the great tribulation" (Mt.24:21). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-28; note—24:15-28.)

3. A quick overview of the passages dealing with the signs also help in understanding the chapters.
   a. The nine signs of the last days (that is, the last days before both Jerusalem's destruction and the world's end) (Mt.24:1-14).
   b. The tenth and most terrible sign: "the abomination of desolation" and the Great Tribulation (Mt.24:15-28).
   c. The Coming of the Son of Man (Mt.24:29-31).

The rest of what Christ covers deals with the actual time of the Lord's return (Mt.24:32-41) and the believer's duty to watch and be prepared (Mt.24:42-25:46).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(24:1-14) **End Time:** in Mt.24:1-29 Christ gives at least ten signs of the last days. Several things need to be noted as this passage is studied.

1. Christ is answering two or three very specific questions. When will the temple be destroyed? And what shall be the sign of Christ's return and of the end of the world?

2. The signs given by Christ are to some extent present in every generation. A quick review of world history shows this. In light of this fact, a question has to be asked: why, then, is Christ spelling out every day happenings as signs of the last days? The next point, point three, answers this question.

3. There is to be an intensification of the signs right before the fall of Jerusalem and right before the end of the world. The intensification of the signs is clearly seen by the following.
   a. The emphasis upon the possibility of being deceived.

      "Take heed that no man deceive you" (v.5).
      "Many shall deceive many" (v.5).
      "False prophets...shall deceive many" (v.11).

   b. Christ uses both the word and the idea of "many" time and again, indicating an increase over what had been (the word is used in v.5, 10, 11, 12; and the idea is used in v.6, 7, 9).
   c. Christ makes three significant statements that definitely point toward an intensification of the signs.

      "All these are the beginning of sorrows" (v.8).
      "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (v.13).
      "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (v.14).

   d. Other Scriptures say there is to be an intensification of evil in the last days.

      "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim.3:1).
      "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts" (2 Pt.3:3).
      "How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 18).

4. The present age is considered by God to be "the age of the last days" or "the last time." According to God's timetable, the history of the church, its presence on earth, takes place in "the last days" or during "the last times."

   "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16-17).
   "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb.1:2).
   "Little children, it is the last time" (1 Jn.2:18).

5. Christ gives these signs for a very specific purpose. He is preparing His disciples to endure and to keep their hope for His return alive. He is strengthening their faith in God and in the world to come, the new heavens and earth (see note, pt. 1—Mt.24:1-31, the three things that help in understanding the passage).

(24:1-14) **Introduction:** in understanding this passage, we have to be very careful not to read into the passage more than Christ was saying, nor to miss what He was saying. Both mistakes were made by religionists concerning Christ's first coming (Mt.2:4-6).

A major fact to keep in mind is this. The disciples did think that all three events (Jerusalem's destruction, the Lord's return, and the world's end) would happen at about the same time. They did think in terms of the Messianic kingdom of God (Acts 1:6 compared with the Jewish concept of the Messiah shows this. See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). When Christ said that the temple would be destroyed, they assumed it would happen at the same time that He returned and ended the world, thereby restoring the kingdom to Israel.

Christ, however, gave no timetable. He did not say when the three events would occur. What He did was give signs that will occur before the events, signs that point toward His return, toward the end of Jerusalem, and the end of the world.

It is important to keep in mind that most of the signs happen all through history. But there is this difference: the signs increase and intensify right before the end of Jerusalem and of the world. There will be a period known as "the beginning of sorrows" (v.8), and a period launched by "the abomination of desolation" known as the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.21).

1. Events that lead to the great prophecies (v.1-4).
2. Sign 1: false messiahs (v.5).
3. Sign 2: world violence (v.6).
4. Sign 3: natural disasters (v.7).
5. Sign 4: severe religious persecution (v.9).
6. Sign 5: terrible apostasy—betrayal and division (v.10).
7. Sign 6: the rising of many false leaders—offering false hope (v.11).
8. Sign 7: a great falling away—sin's increasing and love's growing cold (v.12).
9. Sign 8: some's enduring and being saved (v.13).
10. Sign 9: world evangelism (v.14).

(24:1-14) Another Outline: Christ gives at least nine signs of the last days in these fourteen verses. But He divides them into three sections.

1. The beginning signs: the beginning of sorrows (v.5-8). Verse 8 makes this division. "All these (the signs just given in v.5-7) are the beginning of sorrows."
2. The succeeding signs: personal threats and sorrows (v.9-12). Note the word "then" in verse 9. After the beginning of sorrows, "then" these sorrows will happen. At this point, Luke says, "But before all these (the above signs) they shall...persecute you..." (Lk.21:12). The word "before" (pro) should probably be taken in the sense of "more important" than of time. That is, Luke is saying, "But before (more important than) all these...." (see note—Lk.21:12).
3. The promising signs: the result of faithfulness (v.13-14). The word "but" in verse thirteen points toward two signs that offer all the promise and hope a believer could ever desire. In fact, his salvation and witness are what he lives for. And the fulfillment of both is promised in the last days.

1 (24:1-4) **Prophecy**: The events that lead to the great prophecies (see note above—Mt.24:1-25:46 for discussion).

Thought 1. It is not the outward appearance that makes an object acceptable; it is what is within. The temple showed that this principle is even true with buildings. The glory of a building can be tarnished by what goes on within it. The corruption of the priests within the temple stained its glory, greatly so.

Thought 2. Man's perspective must be kept right. Being honest and remembering two things will help tremendously.

1) All the glory and magnificence of buildings will lie as dust not too many years hence. If they are not destroyed by war or catastrophe, they shall deteriorate and waste away.
2) Within a short, short time, the human body itself, even the most beautiful, will decay, becoming nothing more than dirt.

Thought 3. Note the words of Christ: "I say unto you" (v.2). What Christ said happens (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.24:2). Thus, all nine signs are bound to take place. But, note a critical point. The signs happen not because God destines them but because man sins. They come to pass because of the passion and evil within man.

Thought 4. The world and every single man should know by now what Jesus knew. The way of God is the only way. Every nation who walks its own way without God is doomed (Ps.9:17; Prov.14:34). And every politician and man who walks their own way without God is also doomed (Ro.6:23; Heb.9:27).

Thought 5. We must be very, very careful when looking into the secret things of God, into the prophecies of the end time. Christ gives us a special warning: "Take heed that *no man* deceive you" (v.4). Note 2 Th.2:3: "Let no man deceive you by any means" (cp. Mt.24:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(24:2) **Temple**: the prophecy of Jesus was graphically fulfilled. Just a few years after Jesus' words, Rome grew tried of the hard rebellious spirit of the Jews who refused to submit to Roman rule. In 70 A.D., Rome sent Titus to march against the city of Jerusalem. The city and temple were utterly destroyed, so much so that Josephus, the great Jewish historian of that day, said that a passerby would not have known the place was ever inhabited. Not a stone was left upon another.

2 (24:5) **Messiah, False**: the first sign of the last days is that of false messiahs. Note what Christ said.

1. "Many shall come." There will not be a few but *many* false messiahs.
2. The false messiahs actually claim, "I am Christ," the Messiah. They will not be the false prophets and teachers mentioned later. They will be persons who claim to be *the Messiah*, the Messenger of God to the world. They will be "pseudo-Christs" or "anti-Christs."
3. The false messiahs "shall deceive many." Not a few, but many will believe and follow the false messiahs, believing they are the way, the truth, and the life of God (cp. Jn.14:6).

Right after Jesus' death, several men arose who claimed to be the Messiah. Josephus, the Jewish historian, said many were led astray by them. Scripture also mentions two who apparently claimed to be the Messiah or at least the deliverer of the Jews: Theudas and Judas of Galilee (Acts 5:36-37). Simon Magus claimed to "the great power of God" (Acts 8:9-10). Every generation has its false messiahs, each one claiming to be the special messenger of God, the deliverer of the human race. Every false religion and sect of every generation has its false messiahs, but there shall be *many* as the last days approach.

> **Thought 1.** Men seek utopia, inward peace and outward security. Unfortunately, too many churches and believers do not demonstrate enough trust in Christ to show that peace and security are found in Him alone. Therefore, they turn to other messiahs.

3 (24:6-7) **World Violence—War:** the second sign of the end time is world violence. Note several things.

1. Believers "*shall hear*" of so much violence it will sound as though the world is coming apart. Believers can be troubled, extremely troubled over the news.
2. Christ said, "Be not troubled" (me throeithe), disturbed, frightened, confused. Be not put into confusion or commotion. World violence can disturb and frighten. It can lead us into confusion and commotion. But Christ says such is not to be the case of His disciples. Our hearts are to be fixed upon God, trusting His presence, care, and security eternally (Mt.10:28; Lk.12:4).
3. World violence "must come to pass." Violence does not happen because God wills or destines it to be but because of the passions and evil of men's hearts (Mt.18:7; cp. Jas.4:1-3).
4. World violence can so dominate the news that man is led to believe the end is at hand. But Christ warned, "The end is not yet." He had just said, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (v.4).

Now note something. All the violence mentioned thus far deals with the violence that men hear about. The fact of the violence is given in verse 7: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom."

A descriptive picture of the violence that gripped the world during the days immediately following our Lord is given by Tacitus, the Roman historian (55? - after 117). In the opening statements of his *Histories* of the Roman empire, he says:

> *"I enter upon a work fertile in vicissitudes, stained with the blood of battles, embroiled with dissensions, horrible even in the intervals of peace. Four princes slain by the sword; three civil wars, more with foreign enemies, and sometimes both at once; prosperity in the East; disasters in the West; Illyricum disturbed; the Gauls ready to revolt; Britain conquered, and again lost; Sarmatians and Suevians conspiring against us; the Dacians renowned for defeats given and sustained; the Parthians almost aroused to arms by a counterfeit Nero. Italy afflicted with calamities unheard of, or recurring only after a long interval; cities overwhelmed or swallowed up in the fertile region of Campania; Rome itself laid waste by fire, the most ancient temples destroyed, the very capital burned by its own citizens: etc."* ('Hist.,' 1.2).

Remember however, despite the bleakness of world events within a particular generation, the words of our Lord stretch over the centuries covering all of history and point toward an intensification of violence toward the end of the world. (Cp. 2 Chron.15:6-7; Lk.21:34; Ph.4:6; 1 Pt.5:7.)

> **Thought 1.** A critical point. God does not cause violence. It is the passion and evil of men that causes violence.

> **Thought 2.** The believer's hope is not in this world; neither is his real citizenship. His hope and his life are in God and in heaven (Ph.3:21). Therefore, we are not to fear men and world events. Men and world events can only take our lives, not our souls. Our lives are in God's hands, even to the end of the world (Mt.28:20; Heb.13:5).

4 (24:7) **Nature—Famine—Earthquake—Pestilence:** the third sign of the last days is natural disasters. Three disasters of nature are mentioned in particular.

1. Famines. Scripture speaks of a "great famine" throughout all the world "which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (Acts 11:28-30). Josephus described the famine as being so terrible that when flour "was brought into the temple...not one of the priests was so hardy as to eat one crumb of it...while so great a distress was upon the land" (Josephus, *Ant.* 3. 15:3). He said in another place, "A famine did oppress them (Jerusalem)...and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food" (*Ibid.* 20. 2:5).

In the very last days before Jerusalem's fall, Josephus spoke of another terrible famine:

> *"It was now a miserable case, and a sight that would justly bring tears into our eyes, how men stood to their food, while the more powerful had more than enough, and the weaker were lamenting (for want of it)"(Josephus, Wars. 5. 10:3).*

"Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine; and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the marketplaces like shadows, all swelled with famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them" (*Ibid.* 5. 12:3).

There is evidently to be terrible famine in the last days. The black horse of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse indicates terrible famine (see note—Rev.6:5-6). The unbearable pain and terrible evil that hunger can cause is graphically described by Scripture.

"They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden [boiled] their own children: they were their meat [food] in the destruction of the daughter of my people" (Lam.4:9-10).

2. Pestilence. Whereas the rich can sometimes escape famine by purchasing food at any price, they are helpless against pestilences or plagues. Death by disease and other natural causes shows no partiality.

Josephus' record of a great pestilence that struck during the days of Herod is evidence of the fact.

"When he [Herod] was in the way, there arose a pestilential disease, and carried off the greatest part of the multitude, and of his best and most esteemed friends [the wealthy]" (Josephus, *Ant.* 15. 7:7).

Pestilence will also be one of the terrible sufferings at the end time. Part of the suffering caused by the pale horse of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse includes pestilences.

"Power was given unto them (Death and Hell) over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword [war], and with hunger [famine],and with death [pestilence resulting from war and famine]" (see note—Rev.6:8).

3. Earthquakes. Unbelievable destruction and death are sometimes caused by earthquakes. Again, Josephus recorded the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. He even hinted that the natural disasters which happened were a sign of coming destruction.

"...there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, and continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth, that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders foreshowed some grand calamities that were coming" (Josephus, *Wars.* 4. 4:5).

Earthquakes will occur in many places during the last days of the earth (Rev.6:12; 11:12-13, 19; 16:17-19).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(24:8) **Sorrows** (odinon): birth-pains; labor-pains; travailings; intolerable anguish. Quick, sharp, violent travailing pain.

5 (24:9) **Persecution:** the fourth sign of the end time is that of severe religious persecution. Christ says two things.

1. What the persecution will be:
   a. Affliction (Acts 4:3; 8:1; 12:4; 13:50; 14:19; 2 Cor.11:23-25).
   b. Killing (Acts 7:59; 12:2).
   c. Hatred by all nations.

"Concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts 28:22). (See outline and notes—Mt.10:16-23. Cp. Jn.15:20; 16:2.)

2. Why believers are persecuted: "For my sake" (cp. Mt.10:22). "For my sake" means at least three things. Or to say it another way, there are at least three reasons why the world often tries to silence and stamp out the believer.
   a. The world opposes the believer's standard of true godliness. The believer sets before the world a different standard. Neither the world nor its standard are godly. Therefore, any man who lives for the world and does not wish to change his behavior opposes believers. He opposes believers by his very nature (1 Jn.2:14-15).
   b. The world opposes the believer's life of purity and justice. The genuine believer lives such a life. He controls his mind, dresses modestly, converses respectfully, and behaves justly. The world lives to fulfill the lust of the flesh and to have what one wishes. Thus, the believer is opposed by any person who does not wish to live a pure and just life (Gal.5:19-21).
   c. The world opposes the believer's message of repentance and self-denial. The genuine believer proclaims the message of Christ which is repentance and self-denial. Few men are willing to change (repent) to the degree that self is totally denied. Most, even the religious, oppose the idea of giving all one is and has, even if it does mean saving a starving and dying world. (See outline and notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23-26.)

Note the words "hated of all nations." This definitely points to persecution all around the world. Christ is again looking well beyond the last days before Jerusalem's fall. He is looking to the persecution that shall be launched against His followers across the centuries and be intensified in the end time. He had even foretold such persecution before.

> **"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles" (Mt.10:17-18).**
>
> **"All thy commandments *are* faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me" (Ps.119:86).**
>
> **"For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead" (Ps.143:3).**

6 (24:10) **Apostasy:** The fifth sign is terrible apostasy—betrayal and division. Christ says three things about the apostasy.

1. "Many shall be offended (fall away)." Persecution shall cause droves to turn from professing Christ. They do not know Him: not really, not personally, not inwardly. They have only professed Him with their lips. They have neither trusted Him with their hearts nor denied self, nor lived sacrificially, nor given, nor served to meet the needs of a needy and dying world. They know only the comfort and benefits that rub off from being in the church and associating with genuine believers. They know nothing about the call of God to share in the sufferings of Christ (Ph.1:29; 2 Cor.4:11).

Consequently, when the fiery trial comes, they have no idea what denying self and dying daily for Christ is all about. They have no inward desire or strength, actually no real reason, to stand firm. They are offended; therefore, they fall away (cp. Mt.13:21).

Note something. Every generation has some apostasy. Some who have professed Christ do turn away (2 Tim.4:10; 1 Jn.2:18-19). What Christ is saying is that apostasy is to increase, be intensified in the end time. Many will be offended by the persecution to come, and they will fall away.

2. "(Many) shall betray one another." Again, informing on others, betraying them is to intensify in the end time. Neighbor will turn against neighbor, friend against friend, family against family.

A reading of *The war of the Jews* by Josephus graphically pictures just how inhuman man can become when his survival is threatened. And, of course, the Gospels show rather graphically how greed and power and selfishness can cause men to mistreat, abuse, threaten, plot and kill others (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).

Both survival and selfishness are seen in the last days of Jerusalem when Titus besieged the city: the wealthy saw to their needs and neglected the poor, and the powerful took what they wanted. As the siege wore on, famine and pestilence struck. The strong took from the weak and the weak informed on his neighbor's hidden supplies, no matter how little, in order to receive a morsel from the strong. Within the city walls, betrayal and murder ran rampant in order to survive. Others just outrightly betrayed their nation and went over to the side of the Romans in order to save their lives.

> *"The people, they had a great inclination to desert to the Romans...the main reasons why they were so ready to desert were these: that now they should be freed from those miseries which they had endured in that city...the robbers came running into, and searched men's private houses; and if they found none [food], they tormented them worse, because they supposed they had more carefully concealed it. The indication they made use of whether they had any or not, was taken from the bodies of these miserable wretches; which, if they were in good case, they supposed they were in no want at all of food; but if they were wasted away, they walked off without searching any further...children pulled the very morsels that their fathers were eating, out of their very mouths, and what was still more to be pitied, so did the mothers do as to their infants: and when those that were most dear were perishing under their hands, they were not ashamed to take from them the very last drops that might preserve their lives...the seditious everywhere came upon them immediately, and snatched away from them what they had gotten from others; for when they saw any house shut up, this was to them a signal that the people within had gotten some food; whereupon they broke upon the doors, and ran in, and took pieces of what they were eating, almost up out of their very throats and this by force; the old men, who held their food fast, were beaten; and if the women hid what they had within their hands, their hair was torn for so doing; nor was there any commiseration shown either to the aged or to infants, but they lifted up children from the ground as they hung upon the morsels they had gotten, and shook them down upon the floor; but still were they more barbarously cruel to those that had prevented their coming in, and had actually swallowed down what they were going to seize upon, as if they had been unjustly defrauded of their right. They also invented terrible methods of torment to discover where any food was"* (Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 10:1).

Tacitus, the great Roman historian, summarizes the betrayal of some in the early church.

> "*First those were seized who confessed that they were Christians; and then on their information a vast multitude was convicted*" (Tacitus, *Annuals*. 15:44).

Christ had already warned His followers of terrible persecution and even betrayal by one's own family (see outline and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.10:21). The difference in what He is saying now is His stress upon the end time. The persecution and betrayal will increase and intensify in the end time.

> **"This now also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...traitors" (1 Tim.3:1-43).**

Several things cause a person to betray others. All will evidently be involved in the end time, as they were in the last days of Jerusalem.

⇒ to escape persecution
⇒ to save life
⇒ to secure some favor
⇒ to get what one wants
⇒ to get back at someone (vengeance)
⇒ to escape embarrassment
⇒ to escape fear
⇒ to preserve selfish honor

3. "(Many) shall hate one another." So few will be kind, tender, and loving. Dissension and division will prevail in the last days. Most will begrudge what another has or is doing or is not doing. Such has been the case down through the centuries. Too often the church has experienced one person's disliking and opposing another person. Envy, greed, concern for security and recognition—all the sins of selfishness—have caused too many to stand against another's position, beliefs, abilities, leadership, and on and on. Unfortunately, criticism and judging, dissension and division among believers has been and is one of the most visible traits of the church, both locally and universally. Christ says that such hatred will increase and intensify in the end times.

Thought 1. Why are professing Christians sometimes "offended" by Christ? Some of the reasons would be...

- fear of ridicule
- fear of abuse
- fear of being ignored
- fear of not fitting in
- fear of persecution
- fear of not having
- fear of losing position, security, wealth, and power

All these, and many other reasons, will be taking their toll in the last days.

Thought 2. The two things that God and Christ desire above all others from the believer are love and unity.

1) Love is basic.

> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23; cp. Jn.13:34-35; 15:12; 15:17).**

2) Unity is basic.

> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).**
>
> **"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:20-23).**

7 (24:11) **Leaders, False—Teachers, False:** The sixth sign is the rise of false leaders offering false hope. Christ makes two points.

1. "Many false prophets shall rise." They will be prophets; that is, they will claim to preach and teach the message of God. Jerusalem, facing the crises of its last days, experienced a great number of false prophets arising; and each had his own message about how the people could be saved.

> *"Now, there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose upon the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. Now, a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises; for when such a seducer makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such deliverance"* (Josephus, *Wars*. 6. 5:2).

A false teacher is one who develops his own way, truth, and life for people to follow rather than follow Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life. The church has always had its false teachers: teachers who presented what they wished instead of what Christ said; teachers who taught their own ideas instead of the truth of Christ; teachers who attached people to themselves instead of attaching them to Christ.

2. "Many shall be deceived." There are several reasons why a person is deceived.
   ⇒ A person's frantic hope for deliverance causes him to search for a savior and to grasp at almost anyone who appears on the scene.
   ⇒ The humanistic desire to better and strengthen oneself and to impose and control one's destiny causes a person to look to leaders who offer hope and a better world.
   ⇒ The evidence of signs, wonders, power, reasonableness, logic, knowledge, and help causes a person to follow leaders who demonstrate unusual abilities.

False teachers are both within and without the church, and they shall increase as the last days of the world approach (cp. 2 Cor.11:13; 2 Th.2:1f; 1 Tim.6:3).

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:18-19).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:1-3).

Thought 1. The genuine believer knows how to pray and commune with God. He knows how to receive strength from God, to conquer and live above the most difficult circumstances (Ph.4:4, 6-7, 11-14, 19. Cp. 1 Cor.10:13; Acts 16:25f.)

Thought 2. Discouragement is a terrible thing. It defeats life. However, there is one sure way to live above discouragement: learn to live and walk in an unbroken communion with God every day. Study His Word and pray without ceasing, learning and claiming His promises (Is.26:3; Ph.4:6-9).

8 (24:12) **Apostasy**: the seventh sign is a great falling away. Sin shall increase and love shall grow cold.

1. "Iniquity shall abound." Lawlessness [sin and wickedness] is always present, but there are times when it seems to multiply and overflow (see note—*Iniquity*—Mt.24:12). It ran rampant in the last days of Jerusalem as the quotations from Josephus clearly show. It shall also run wild in the last days of world history (2 Tim.3:1-5; 2 Th.2:1-12).
2. "The love of many shall grow cold." At least four things can dampen one's love for God. Each of these shall be greatly intensified toward the end of the world.
   a. Self-seeking and worldliness. Men will seek what they want and what the world offers instead of sacrificing and serving. They just choose to satisfy their own desires and worldly urges instead of seeking diligently after God.
   b. Dissension and division. Both discourage, dishearten, and cause confusion and the desire to flee. Many just cool off and back away, desiring to have no part of anything that is divisive. Even if the truth is under attack, some will withdraw rather than take a stand for the truth.
   c. Persecution. Unless a person truly believes and trusts in Christ, whatever affection he has is soon dampened when he is questioned and opposed. Only a *real belief and conviction* will stand up under ridicule and the threat of death.
   d. Ignorance and weak faith. Some go through a dampening of spirit and affection simply because they cannot understand why God would let such trials happen. There is no true understanding of man's sin and death, of the world's corruption and destined end, of God's righteousness and promise of life. Therefore, there is little within to stir a fervent love for God when things are going bad and the world seems to be caving in.
   e. Lawlessness and immorality. Being around a crowd that lives lawless and immoral lives causes many to lose their love for Christ and turn away.

Christ warns the believer who lets his love grow cold.

"Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev.3:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(24:12) **Iniquity** (anomia): lawlessness, wickedness, unrighteousness; transgression of the law. It is taking license with the law and righteousness, with morality and discipline.

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(24:12) **Abound** (plethunthenai): to increase, to multiply, to abound.

9 (24:13) **Endurance—Salvation**: the eighth sign is that of some's enduring and being saved. It must be remembered Christ is talking to His disciples. His promise, "Being saved," is bound to mean the soul's salvation in the last days. It could not mean the safety of human life. He had already said some shall be killed (v.9). Thus, the believer who stands firm through persecution and hatred, betrayal and division, false teaching and deception, lawlessness and immorality, and keeps fervent love shall be saved.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, [they shall receive] eternal life....But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, [they shall receive] indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" (Ro.2:7-9).

Thought 1. The believer can find great encouragement to endure in such passages as the following. (Scan quickly some of the books that deal heavily with suffering, such as First Peter. See General Subject Index, related subjects.)

> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).**
>
> **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Pt.4:11-12).**

10 (24:14) **Evangelism—Witnessing**: the ninth sign is world evangelism. Christ says five very significant things.

1. His gospel is of the Kingdom. What Kingdom? The Kingdom of God that is spiritual and eternal (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; note—Eph.1:3. Cp. 2 Cor.5:19.)

2. His gospel is unstoppable: "This gospel of the kingdom *shall* be preached." No amount of trouble and failure can stop it from being preached: neither severe persecution (v.9), nor terrible apostasy (v.10), nor many false teachers (v.11), nor multiplied lawlessness (v.12), nor the love of many growing cold (v.12). God's glorious Word of grace shall force its way over land and sea, no matter the strength of the storms and bodies that oppose it.

3. His gospel shall be triumphant: "This gospel...shall be preached in all the world." Amazingly, in just a brief span of time during the first century, the gospel was evidently carried to all parts of the known world.

> **"But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" (Ro.10:18).**
>
> **"(The gospel) which is come unto you, as it is in all the world" (Col.1:6).**
>
> **"The gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven" (Col.1:23).**

The very tone of Christ's words point to the same sign of world evangelism toward the end of the world. The uttermost part of the earth shall be privileged to hear the gospel before the final appearance of Christ (Acts 1:8; cp. Mt.28:19-20. Cp. Mt.24:3, 14 with Mt.28:19 noting the word "age." Then see Acts 8:12; 28:23, 28, 30-31 for examples of preaching the Kingdom.)

4. His gospel is a witness: "This gospel...shall be preached...for a *witness* unto all nations." The gospel as a *witness* means at least two things.

   a. The gospel is a witness, proclaiming the truth and the will of God for man. It reveals the truth about man and his world. It tells man where he has come from, why he is here, and where he is going. It tells man what he has done, what he is doing, and what he should do. It tells man why he is as he is, why he does what he does, and why he should do as God says.

   b. The gospel is a witness, bearing record either for man or against man.

      ⇒ The gospel is called a "record."

      > **"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).**

      ⇒ The gospel witnesses for a man, that he believes and is saved; or it witnesses against a man, that he does not believe and is damned.

      > **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk.16:16).**

5. His gospel shall be preached in all the world before the end comes. The term "the end" refers to both the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world. As Scripture states, the gospel had been preached to all the known world right before the fall of Jerusalem (Ro.10:18; Col.1:6, 23) and shall be preached to the uttermost part of the earth before the end time (Acts 1:8; cp. Mt.28:19-20).

However, something needs to be noted that is sometimes overlooked. Christ does not say the gospel shall *convert* the world, but rather the gospel shall be *preached* to the world before the end comes. All the world will not respond to the gospel, but all the world shall hear the gospel. Christ does, however, give some indication of the results to expect from preaching the gospel.

> **"Many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.20:16; 22:14).**
>
> **"Strive to enter in at the stait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Lk.13:24).**
>
> **"I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth" (Lk.18:8)?**

	B. The Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation & The Great Tribulation, 24:15-28 (Mk.13:14-27; Lk.21:20-28)	since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.	**in history**
		22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.	**4 There is the promise: The days shall be shortened for the elect's sake**
1 There is the appearance of the abomination of desolation[DS1] a. Shall be seen b. Prophesied by Daniel c. Stands in Holy Place d. To read & understand	15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)	23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.	**5 There is the frantic search for a deliverer, for an earthly messiah (one who is false)** a. They will arise b. They will show great signs & wonders c. They will be convincing, threatening to deceive even the elect
2 There is the warning to flee immediately a. To forget all comfort of home[DS2]	16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:	24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before.	**6 There is the truth about deliverance, about Messiah's coming** a. Comes not from the desert: An unknown or remote spot
b. To forget all personal possessions	18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.	26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.	b. Comes not in secret: Unseen, quietly
c. To grieve for those who cannot flee rapidly	19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!	27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.	c. Comes as lightning 1) From heaven 2) Sudden—surprising 3) Visible—seen east to west
d. To pray for good conditions in fleeing	20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:	28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.	d. Comes to execute judgment
3 There is the great tribulation: Unparalleled	21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not		

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

B. The Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation and The Great Tribulation, 24:15-28

(24:15-28) **Introduction—End Time—The Great Tribulation**: the disciples had asked two questions. First, when was Jerusalem to be destroyed; and second, what was to be the sign of His coming and of the end of the world (Mt.24:3). This passage evidently has a double meaning. It refers both to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. and to the end time when Christ will return. The passage has to be severely strained to make it refer to only one of these events. It should be remembered that Christ was experiencing the most severe emotions during these days. Death was only hours away, and He was the only One aware of it. He had just gone through the triumphal entry (Mt.21), the cleansing of the temple (Mt.21), the savage attacks by the religionists (Mt.21-22), His severe denunciation of the religionists (Mt.23), and His lament over Jerusalem (Mt.23). No ordinary man could possibly bear so many pressuring and diverse emotions in so short a time. Jesus loved Jerusalem; He had just wept and wept bitterly over the city. They had been a people of sin and were to commit the most heinous sin of human history—killing the Messiah, the Son of God Himself. They were to experience two judgments for their sinful rejection. They were to be immediately judged in 70 A.D. Then at the end of the world, they, along with the rest of the world, were to be finally judged.

Simply stated the situation was this: Jesus, filled with so wide a range of emotions, began to answer the two questions the disciples had asked. He gave the signs of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and of the end of the world. He said, in essence, that the fall of Jerusalem was judgment upon sin, and the fall of the world would be judgment upon sin. The questions asked refer to similar conditions that bring about judgment. Thus, the signs of both the fall of Jerusalem and of the end of the world are similar. (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.24:1-14; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.13:14; note—Lk.21:5-38.)

As a person studies this passage, two things need to be kept in mind.

1. The overall outline of *Christ's answer*, His actual words (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-31).
2. The fact that Christ *was answering* two questions dealing with the end of Jerusalem and with the end of the world, and that the end of both is due to judgment upon sin. Thus, the signs that point to the end of both Jerusalem and of the world are bound to be similar, for both are *ending* and being judged because of sin. The only difference is that in the end of the world there is to be an increase and intensification of the signs. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-31.)

A quick glance at the overall outline of Matthew 24-25 will show the following:
1. The Nine Signs of the Last Days, Mt.24:1-14.
2. The Tenth and Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation and The Great Tribulation, Mt.24:15-28.
3. The Coming of Messiah, the Son of Man, Mt.24:29-31.
4. The Time of the Lord's Return, Mt.24:32-41.
5. The Lord's Return & The Believer's Duty: Watch—Be Ready—Be Faithful, Mt.24:42-51.
6. The Warning to Watch & Be Wise, Not Foolish, Mt.25:1-13.
7. The Believer's Duty to Work Anticipating the Lord's Return, Mt.25:14-30.
8. The Final Judgment of the Nations, Mt.25:31-46.

Note the Lord's words: "the *abomination of desolation*" and "*great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world." It is for this reason that the title given to this tenth sign is, "The Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation & The Great Tribulation."
1. There is the appearance of the abomination of desolation (v.15).
2. There is the warning to flee immediately (v.16-20).
3. There is the great tribulation: unparalleled in history (v.21).
4. There is the promise: the days shall be shortened for the elect's sake (v.22).
5. There is the frantic search for a deliverer, for an earthly Messiah (v.23-24).
6. There is the truth about deliverance, about Messiah's coming (v.25-28).

1 (24:15) **Abomination of Desolation—Antichrist—End Times**: there is the appearance of the abomination of desolation. Christ said four things about this sign.

1. It (He) will be seen. Believers can see it take place and prepare for the terrible trials which will follow it (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt. 24:1-31).
2. It (He) was also prophesied by Daniel (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt. 24:15).
3. It (He) will stand in the Holy Place. The sign will take place and be seen in the temple. Some hold that the sign will be repeated in the end time and literally fulfilled within the temple, just as it was literally fulfilled twice in the past when Antiochus and Titus stood within the temple. Others hold the words "the temple" to be representative of all religion. They believe the abomination will be the desolation of all religion, in particular genuine Christianity.
4. Whosoever reads about the sign, as revealed by Christ, is to understand it. Daniel had said, "Know therefore and understand" (Dan. 9:25; cp. Dan.12:10). Believers are to study the sign and gain an understanding of it, so that they can be better prepared to "endure to the end... [and] be saved" (Mt.24:13). There is the idea that a person is to know and understand the *times*, to watch and observe the happenings of the times in which he lives.

Thought 1. The terrible desolation that took place upon Jerusalem and that is to take place at the end of the world is due to sin. Jerusalem *cut off the Messiah*, that is, killed Him. They committed the most heinous of sins: they rejected God for centuries and eventually killed God's very own Son. Therefore, Jerusalem was desolated. There is a critical warning here for believers: sin results in desolation.

Thought 2. Note two significant facts.
1) Christ predicted the terrible desolation of Jerusalem. His words were spoken somewhere around 30 A.D. The desolation occurred just forty years later in 70 A.D.
2) Christ has predicted the "abomination of desolation" at the end of the world (cp. the questions of the disciples, v.3 and v.15). The sign *will occur* at the appointed time.

Thought 3. Something is of critical importance.
1) If we interpret "the abomination of desolation" only as historical and Christ meant it to be future as well as historical, we are more likely to miss the sign.
2) If we interpret the sign only as future and Christ meant it to be historical as well as future, we will have already missed a significant part of the sign and will not be looking at the past to help us understand the future.

Making sure we are accurate in our understanding of the sign is important. It involves the Lord's words and the Lord's people and their testimony. There may be different interpretations, but each one must humbly secure his understanding bowed in prayer before the Lord.

Thought 4. God's Word is not a secret; it is a revelation. It is to be searched out and understood.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(24:15) **End Times—Antichrist—Abomination of Desolation** (To Bdelugma Tes eremoseos): the abomination that makes desolate. Note Christ's words, "the abomination of desolation, *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*." There are three passages in Daniel that speak of "the abomination of desolation."

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city...Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations

are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Dan.9:24-27).

"And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan. 11:31).

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (Dan.12:11).

In Daniel 9:27, the term is *Bdelugma ton eremoseon*. The Hebrew says, "Upon the wing [or pinnacle] of abominations [shall come] the desolater" or "upon wings as a desolater [shall come] abomination."

In Daniel 11:31 the Hebrew says, "they shall put [place] the abomination that desolates."

In Daniel 12:11 the Hebrew says, "and from the time the daily [sacrifice] shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, [shall be]...."

Several matters need to be discussed about the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Christ and Daniel.

1. When was Daniel's prophecy fulfilled?

   a. There was a past fulfillment; that is, there was a fulfillment before the time of Christ about 170 B.C. This is clear. Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of Syria, conquered Jerusalem and tried to force Grecian society upon the Jews. He wanted the Jews to become full-fledged Greeks both in custom and religion. He knew that to be successful he had to destroy the Jewish religion. He therefore did three of the most horrible things that could ever be done in the mind of the Jewish people. He desecrated the temple (1) by taking the great altar of the burnt offering and turning it into an altar for the Greek Olympian god Zeus, (2) by sacrificing swines' flesh upon it, and (3) by setting up a trade of prostitution in the temple chambers (cp. 1 Maccabees 1:20-62; cp. also Josephus, *Ant.* 12. 5:3-4; *Wars*. 1. 1:2).

   b. Christ said there is a future fulfillment: "When ye therefore *shall see* the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet...." There are primarily four views of the future fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy.

      ⇒ One view says there is no future fulfillment; all the signs were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by Titus.

      ⇒ Others see Christ's referring to the church age and to the trials which the church has to go through before Christ returns.

      ⇒ Still others view the prophecy as referring exclusively to the end time, having nothing to do with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

      ⇒ Others believe Christ is answering the very questions the disciples asked. He predicts both the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

In looking at what Christ was saying, it is best to let Him speak for Himself without *adding to* or *taking away* from His words. An attempt to let Him speak for Himself has been made in the former notes (see all notes—Mt.24:1-25:46; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—24:1-31; 24:1-14; 24:15-28). The conclusion of the notes is that the prophecy is *fulfilled* in both Jerusalem's destruction and the end of the world. The Lord is answering the disciples' questions.

Christ was saying this: the same thing that happened under Antiochus Epiphanes will happen again to the Holy Place. In fact, Christ was saying that the temple would be so destroyed that not one stone would be left upon another. This destruction did happen: what Christ said took place in a most literal sense under Titus in 70 A.D. (See outline and notes—Mt. 24:1-14, especially the notes that quote Josephus, the Jewish historian. Reading Josephus' record of Jerusalem's desolation reveals just how terrible the temple, the city, and the people were devastated.)

However, as discussed in the former notes, Christ was not only answering the disciples' question about when the destruction of Jerusalem would take place, He was *also answering* their question about His return and the end of the world. Daniel's prophecy and the Lord's elaboration on Daniel's prophecy are to have a double fulfillment. The signs that point toward one who had sinned so terribly (Jerusalem) are much the same as the signs that point toward another who is guilty of terrible sin (the world in the end time). The sin of Jerusalem was the most heinous sin that could be committed: the killing of God's own Son. And the sin of the world at the end of time will be just as terrible by following "the abomination of desolation." Therefore, the world will witness an increase, an intensification of the signs at the end of time. As a result, there will be *great trial* such as the world has never seen (v.21). (Again, see the outline and notes—Mt. 24:1f.)

2. A second matter that needs to be discussed about "the abomination of desolation" is the division of time that Christ and Daniel both seem to give. Christ says that the abomination of desolation launches the worst tribulation the world has ever known (Mt. 24:15, 21). In His own words, the signs that occur up until the abomination of desolation are called "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt. 24:8); and the trials that take place after the abomination of desolation are called "great tribulations," tribulations so great that they are unparalleled in history (Mt.24:21). Daniel also gives a division of time just as Christ does.

"And he [the prince] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause...the overspreading of abominations" (Dan.9:27).

"In the midst of the week" (Daniel's seventieth week) definitely points to a period of time (one week) that is divided into two parts. Now note these factors.

   a. Daniel was dealing with the "seventieth week," the *end* of his prophecy. Two facts tell us that Daniel was also dealing with the *end time* just as Christ was: (1) the fact that Christ was dealing with the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world and, (2) the fact that Christ said He was elaborating on Daniel's prophecy.

b. Daniel said that what begins the second half of his seventieth week is "the abomination of desolation" or the prince who causes "abominable idols" (H.C. Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1969, p.434).

The words of Christ should be carefully noted: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet...." (Mt.24:15). Christ was about to explain in more detail what Daniel had prophesied. Thus Christ explained that the first half of Daniel's week would consist of signs which were "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt.24:8; cp. Mt.24:5-14), and the last half of Daniel's week would consist of unparalleled trials of "great tribulations." The second half of the week would be launched by "the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place" (Mt. 24:15, 21).

3. A third matter that needs to be looked at is the time frame of the end time (the seventieth week) as predicted by Christ and Daniel.

Scripture does refer to the length in these words (see notes—Rev.11:2; 12:6).

"Time, times, and half a time" (Dan.7:25; 12:7).
"1260 days" (Rev.12:6).
"42 months" (Rev.11:2; 13:5-6).

Based upon the days and months given in the *Book of Revelation*, if Daniel's time equals one year, then his words, "Time [1 year], times [2 years], and half a time [1/2 year]" are equal to 3 1/2 years. Daniel stated that the abomination of desolation shall be executed "in the midst of the week," that is, after three and one-half years. It is assumed that Christ's words "the beginning of sorrows" (that is, the first half of the week) are also three and one-half years. Thus in combining the two periods of time (3 1/2 years each), the length of the last days or end time is said to be a literal seven years. Based upon the words of Revelation the prophecy of Christ can be charted as follows.

THE END OF THE WORLD

Seeing the Sign of the Abomination of Desolation *In the Middle of the Time or Years* (v.15)		Seeing the *Son of Man Coming* (v.29-30)
3 1/2 years Signs which are "The beginning of sorrows" (v.8)	3 1/2 years Unparalleled trials of "the great tribulation (v.21)	"His angels...gather together His elect" (v.31)

However, it should be noted that many Biblical scholars say that the words "times" in Daniel and "days" and "months" in Revelation (in fact, throughout all Scripture) are often used to refer to blocks of time, that is, to longer periods or indefinite periods of time.

4. A fourth matter that needs to be looked at is this: What or who is meant by "the abomination of desolation"? As has already been discussed, many excellent commentators hold that the prophecy refers to the destruction of Jerusalem under both Antiochus Epiphenes (170 B.C.) and under Titus (70 A.D.). There is strong historical evidence, as well as the fact that Christ was answering a specific question of the disciples (Mt. 24:3), to support a past fulfillment of the prophecy. But, what about the future fulfillment? What or who is meant by "the abomination of desolation" at the end of the world? (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.11:7; cp. 2 Th.2:3-4; Rev.13:1; 13:3 13:5-6. See Master Subject Index.)

a. Some indication is perhaps given by the phrase itself. In the Old Testament the word *abomination* is connected with idolatry or sacrilege. *Of desolation* means the same as *causes desolation*. In this case, it is *the abomination* that causes *desolation*. That is, the abomination acts upon the Holy Place and personally causes the desolation. This, of course, points toward a person's fulfilling the prophecy in the future just as there were two literal persons who fulfilled it in the past, Antiochus and Titus.

b. Mark 13:14 actually uses the *masculine* participle which indicates strongly that the abomination of desolation is a person.

c. Daniel 9:27 speaks of a prince who causes the desolation. Leupold, the great Lutheran theologian, translates the prince as *the destroyer*. (Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*, p.433. Because of his extraordinary scholarship and simplicity of writing, Leupold should be referred to in studying Daniel.)

d. Second Thessalonians and Revelation identify an *antichrist* who is to arise in the last days and cause unparalleled havoc upon the world and God's people.

> **"That man of sin [shall] be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2 Th.2:3-5). (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.13:14; notes—2 Th.2:4-9; Rev.6:2-7; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:7; notes—13:1-10; 13:11-18; 17:7-14. Cp. Dan.9:20-27; 11:31; 12:11.)**

2 (24:16-20) **Antichrist—Abomination of Desolation**: there is the warning to flee "the abomination of desolation"—immediately. No believer will be able to stand up against the abomination, not even the strongest. The imminent dan-

ger and urgency is stressed by Christ in four statements.

1. A person is to forget all comfort of home: pictured by arising from his roof and immediately fleeing (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:17).
2. A person is to forget all personal possessions: pictured by not returning from his work to get his clothes (or possessions).
3. A person is to grieve for those who cannot flee rapidly: pictured by pregnant women who are responsible for small children.
4. A person is to pray for good conditions in fleeing: pictured by both winter and the sabbath day. The sabbath day represented certain religious rules that would forbid fleeing (travel) for the religiously strong.

> **"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:7-8).**

Thought 1. The danger is so imminent that Christ said, "Remember Lot's wife" (Lk.17:32).

Thought 2. There is a great stress here: when life is threatened, our minds need to be focused upon doing what we can to save our lives. As we walk day by day, what we should really be thankful for is our lives and not things.

Thought 3. Note to whom Christ speaks, who are the ones to forget worldly possessions and comforts of home: His disciples, His followers. Was He thinking of the materialistic comforts that characterize so many of His followers?

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(24:17) **House—Rooftop**: in ancient days, the rooftops of houses were flat; they were used for rest, meditation, and neighborly visits. Most houses had steps both inside and outside that led up to the roof. When the abomination is seen, the danger is so imminent that a person should flee from his roof immediately, using the outside stairs.

3 (24:21) **Great Tribulation**: there is the great tribulation that will be unparalleled in history.

1. In 66-70 A.D., Jerusalem experienced one of the most terrible sieges in all of history. In 66 A.D. the Jews revolted, and the Roman army was swift to attack. However, the city was difficult to take, primarily for two reasons. It sat upon a hill, well protected by the terrain, and the leaders of the revolt were religious fanatics. Well over a million people had fled into the city behind its protective walls.

As the siege wore on, the predictions of Christ were literally fulfilled. Outside the walls was the Roman army and all the maiming and killing of war. Inside the walls, neighbor after neighbor faced famine, pestilence, false deliverers (messiahs), betrayal, murder, revolt, rebellion, and hatred. And all took their toll. Josephus says over 1,000,000 people died and 97,000 were taken captive. The horrors of the siege are well described by him (see notes—Mt.24:7; 24:10; 24:11. See Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 12:3; 6. 3:4; 6. 8:5.)

> "*It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were*" (Josephus, *Wars*. Preface 4).

2. In the end time, the world will experience great tribulations unparalleled in history. Note that Christ does not describe the great trials beyond what He has already said in v.5-12. A quick glance at the great tribulation period covered in Revelation will give some idea of the trials (see outlines and notes—all of the following. Cp. Dan.12:1-2.)

⇒ Thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake (Rev.8:5; cp. Rev.8:1-5).
⇒ Natural catastrophes (Rev.8:6-12).
⇒ Demonic-like locusts or plagues (Rev.8:13-9:11).
⇒ Demonic-like army (Rev.9:12-21).
⇒ Angry nations who destroy the earth (Rev.11:18; cp. Rev.11:14-19).
⇒ An evil political ruler (Rev.13:1-10).
⇒ A false and evil religious ruler (Rev.13:11-18).
⇒ Terrible destruction and suffering, both upon nature and men (Rev.16:1-21).
⇒ An evil, deceptive world power (Rev.17:1-18:24).

4 (24:22) **End Time—Great Tribulation**: there is the promise that the days shall be shortened for the elect's sake. Note that Christ said two things.

1. The days of "the great tribulation" shall be shortened. What is meant by shortened?
   ⇒ Shorter than what God would usually allow for such great sinfulness.
   ⇒ Shorter than what the enemy expected.
   ⇒ Shorter than what others would expect of a ruling government against such revolting fanatics.

In dealing with Jerusalem, God in His providence used His power to shorten the days for Israel's sake. In the midst of judgment, He was merciful—Israel was not totally annihilated. The siege was shorter than expected. Many have listed *the natural causes* that led to the shorter siege.

⇒ Division and factions. The Jewish leaders were divided from the first. They never could form a cohesive policy.

⇒ A disastrous fire. The fire destroyed too many weapons and provisions for the city to continue fighting.
⇒ Rampaging gangs. These were set on self-preservation by any means: stealing, assaulting and killing. They are well documented by Josephus.
⇒ Treason and betrayal. Some even surrendered their fortifications without a fight.
⇒ The quick attack by Rome. Rome sent the armed force under Titus much quicker than expected.
⇒ Weak fortifications. Herod Agrippa had intended to strengthen the walls of Jerusalem, but he never did.

The believer, of course, sees God's hand in these natural causes. God *worked all things out for good* in order to shorten the days and to fulfill His Word. Despite *the terrible tribulation*, some lives were saved—saved because God was compassionate (2 Pt.3:9).

In dealing with the end time, the tribulations upon the earth and its inhabitants will also be shortened.

> **"Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath...[but note]... because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:12).**
>
> **"When he [antichrist] cometh, he must continue [but note] a short time" (Rev.17:10).**
>
> **"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Th.2:8).**

2. God will shorten the days of the great tribulation for the elect's sake. From the historical perspective, some of the Christians remembered the Lord's warning and fled Jerusalem before the attack, sometime around 66 A.D. They fled to a smaller town called Pella in the district of Decapolis. These believers prayed for their neighbors and their beloved city, and God heard their intercessions. He shortened the days of terrible trials—shortened them because of the prayers of the elect.

God's mercy toward the lost—even toward civilizations and cities—and His willingness to save the lost in answer to the believers' intercessory prayer are clearly illustrated in Scripture. Abraham's prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah is an example. If just ten righteous people could have been found, the cities would have been spared despite their terrible sin (Gen.18:23f). Lot's prayer for Zoar is another example (Gen.19:20-22).

> **"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas.5:16).**
>
> **"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it" (Jer.5:1).**
>
> **"For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee....And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls....But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land" (Acts 27:23-24, 37, 43-44).**

Thought 1. God will honor the prayers of His *true followers*, even to the point of overriding natural disasters. How much change could occur in the evil of the world, both natural and human, if God's people really believed in intercessory prayer and became real intercessors for this corruptible world?

Thought 2. Too many of us are complainers, not intercessors. Too many of us complain over our affliction or else the length of our affliction. It is beyond us how God could ever allow such suffering. Three things are needed.

1) We must realize that God does not cause evil and suffering. God does not afflict; He delivers.
2) We must realize that we never suffer as much as we deserve. We are ever so sinful and have so polluted the earth with evil that we deserve the worst.
3) We must realize that God is merciful. What is needed is not complaining, but prayer—intercessory prayer. We need to pray, thanking God that the evil is not worse. Then in unceasing prayer, we need to ask Him to correct and shorten the evil.

5 (24:23-24) **False Messiahs—End Times**: there is the frantic search for a deliverer, for an earthly Messiah. Christ says three things.

1. False messiahs and prophets will arise. When men are oppressed and oppressed, witnessing scene after scene of death by hunger, pestilence, murder, and war, they cry for deliverance. They are ever so open to *a deliverer's* arising on the scene, and some are always ready to assume the power and leadership for which men cry. In the siege of Jerusalem, such men (deliverers) arose who promised deliverance from both the Romans and the natural disasters. Apparently there had been the constant belief and rumors that the Messiah had returned, and He was either out in the desert or in some secret room within the city. He was just awaiting the hour to strike. The scene in Jerusalem was somewhat like Jeremiah's day.

> **"Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name:I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart" (Jer.14:13-14).**

The same kind of scene will repeat itself in the last days. The antichrist, the false deliverer of the earth, shall arise to deceive the whole earth (see outlines and note—Rev.13:1-18 and related passages). Note that Christ simply says, "Believe it not"—believe neither the rumors nor the false deliverer.

2. False deliverers will show great signs and wonders. Deliverers, local and national, always claim to be destined. They point to signs and wonders. This has always been true—and always will be true—through all times. The end time will witness an increase and intensification of signs and wonders that will stretch across the whole world.

> **"Then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him....and with all deceivableness" (2 Th.2:8-10).**
>
> **"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live" (Rev.13:13-14).**

3. False deliverers will be so convincing they will even threaten the elect. The elect, of course, are genuine believers who stick with Christ regardless of the temptation, trials, threat and danger. An excellent passage that describes much of the same picture is seen in 2 Th.2:1-17. The way the elect are able to stand is clearly stated.

> **"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (2 Th.15-17).**

6 (24:25-28) **Jesus Christ, Return**: there is the truth about deliverance and about the Messiah's coming. Christ said four things about His return.

1. He shall not come from the desert, that is, from some unknown and remote spot. When people proclaim that the great deliverer has appeared in a certain place, the message or rumor is not to be believed: "go not forth."
2. He shall not come from a secret chamber, that is, in secret, unseen, quietly. Again, when such a message or rumor is proclaimed, "believe it not."
3. He shall come "as lightning."
   a. His coming shall be out of heaven (out of the spiritual world and dimension)—just as lightning.
   b. His coming shall be sudden and surprising—just as lightning.
   c. His coming shall be visible to all, seen from east to west—just as lightning (cp. Rev.1:7).

> **"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall *all the tribes* of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt.24:30).**
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> **"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11).**
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> **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Th.4:16-18).**
>
> **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev.1:7; cp. Rev.19:11-19).**

4. He shall come to execute judgment (v.28. Cp. Is.30:30; Rev.19:20-21.) The eagles, birds of prey, always gather where the carcase is. There are at least two meanings to this verse.
   a. The carcase is the Jewish people, and the eagles are the Roman armies under Titus who gathered around Jerusalem to consume the prey.
   b. The carcase is the world, the spiritually dead, and the eagles are Christ and His holy angels and saints. They come to gather around the dead world, executing judgment.

      The point of this passage is that the coming of Christ shall be to execute universal judgment. He shall come for the carcase, for all the spiritually dead in order to execute judgment upon them. Christ shall execute judgment upon the whole world.

> **"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great" (Rev.19:17-18).**

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:31-32).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pt.3:7).

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

	C. The Coming of the Son of Man: Five Events, 24:29-31	the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.	**Christ shall appear** **4 Event 3: All the tribes shall see Christ's coming in the clouds** **5 Event 4: All the tribes of the earth shall mourn**
1 Immediately after the tribulation **2 Event 1: There shall be astronomical happenings** **3 Event 2: The sign of**	29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear	31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.	**6 Event 5: The angels shall be sent forth to gather the elect**

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

C. The Coming of the Son of Man: Five Events, 24:29-31

(24:29-31) **Jesus Christ, Return—Tribulation—Israel**: Christ revealed exactly when He was to return—"immediately after the tribulation of those days." The great tribulation occurs, then our Lord returns—"immediately." (See outline and notes—Mt.24:1-28 for background to this passage.)

1. Now note: Christ did not return immediately after the downfall of Jerusalem; therefore, what did He mean? Luke explains:

> **"But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Lk.21:23-24).**

Very simply, Christ said that the fall of Jerusalem was only the beginning of the tribulation of the Jews. Their tribulation continues until "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The accuracy of the Lord's words is clearly seen by simply breaking down the verses of Luke and thinking through world history since Christ.

⇒ There is still "great distress in the land" of Israel.
⇒ There is still "great wrath upon this people."
⇒ Many Jews still "fall by the sword."
⇒ Many are still "captive [dispersed] in all nations."
⇒ Jerusalem is still "trodden down of the Gentiles."

No people have ever gone through such great tribulation as the Jews. They are still suffering at the hands of the Gentiles (for example, World War II, where over 5,000,000 were slaughtered in less than eight years); and they shall suffer great tribulation "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." It is *immediately after the great tribulation of the Jews* and after *the great tribulation* coming at the end of the world that the coming of Christ shall take place.

Note a very significant fact: Luke's prophecy definitely points toward the double meaning of Christ's words. Since the *great tribulation* of the Jews in 70 A.D. (cp. v.20), they have continued to suffer *great tribulation* through the present age, and they shall suffer right on through the great tribulation that is to occur at the end of the world.

2. Also note it is immediately after the "*great tribulation*" of the world (v.21) that Christ returns (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt. 24:1-31; notes—24:1-14; 24:15-28).

1. Immediately after the tribulation (v.29).
2. Event 1: there shall be astronomical happenings (v.29).
3. Event 2: the sign of Christ shall appear (v.30).
4. Event 3: all the tribes shall see Christ coming in the clouds (v.30).
5. Event 4: all the tribes of the earth shall mourn (v.30).
6. Event 5: the angels shall be sent forth to gather the elect (v.31).

1 (24:29) **Jesus Christ, Return—Tribulation**: the scene is immediately after the tribulation (see note—Mt. 24:29-31 for discussion).

Thought 1. There are several lessons in the words "after the tribulation"—lessons for us as well as for those who will follow Christ through the tribulation.

1) God is in control. He can, does, and will end the trials. Note the word "*after* the tribulation." There *shall* be an end to all the trials of the tribulation.
2) God's people are to look to Him and hope in Him. The end of all trials is coming.
3) God's people are always to be waiting and watching for the Lord's return.

2 (24:29) **Jesus Christ, Return—End Times—Astronomical Bodies—Outer Space**: the very first event to occur when Christ returns in glory will be astronomical happenings. The heavenly bodies—the sun, moon, stars, and "the powers of the heavens"—will be affected.

Note the exact words of the astronomical happenings.

⇒ "The sun shall be darkened."
⇒ "The moon shall not give her light."
⇒ "The stars shall fall from heaven."
⇒ "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

Very practically, such astronomical happenings occur now. The earth is sometimes darkened by dust from earthly catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, wind storms, and smoke from huge fires. Of course, whatever darkens the sun hides the light of the moon from earth. Stars or meteorites of varying sizes fall throughout space often. "The powers of the heavens" being shaken could be the heavenly bodies outside our solar system that are called by the Bible "the host of heaven" (Dt.4:19).

Is this what Christ meant? There is no way to know for sure; however, it is likely that this is the meaning. *But note*: His coming is going to trigger astronomical happenings worldwide and universally. The whole universe is going to be affected, or to word it in a much more meaningful way: the whole universe is going to open up and receive Him, including the astronomical bodies; and every man is going to know beyond any doubt that He is coming in all the power and the glory of God Himself. Christ says He is coming "with power and great glory." He is coming that "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:10-11).

He is coming, and "all the tribes of the earth shall [know it] and mourn [for] they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." The words "power and great glory" convey the idea that He is coming to subject all men, to rule and reign over all the tribes or nations of the earth.

Scripture definitely reveals that astronomical happenings will precede and accompany the coming of the Lord.

> **"For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger" (Is.13:10-13).**
>
> **"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison...." (Is.24:17-22).**
>
> **"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30-31).**
>
> **"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:15-16).**
>
> **"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken" (Mk.13:24-25).**
>
> **"But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk.17:29-30).**
>
> **"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Lk.21:25-26).**
>
> **"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and capor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:19-20).**
>
> **"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:12-17). (See outline and notes—Rev.6:12-17.)**

Note the exact words of the verses in Revelation above, for they are referring to the same event as Christ (v.30; cp. Rev.6:17). Christ triggers a great earthquake on earth and astronomical happenings in the heavens above (v.12-14). Men, great and small, are terrified and hide themselves (v.15) and cry for immediate death instead of having to face Christ (v.16). Why? Because they know something: "The great day of God's wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (v.17).

The disciples had asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And Christ is answering them. Terrifying astronomical happenings will be a sign.

> **Thought 1.** Happenings in nature should cause us to turn our attention toward God. They are reminders of the *stressful* events that are to occur in the end time. As Christ said: "Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Lk.21:28). If we look up and trust Him *now*, catastrophes and circumstances can be borne much better. His presence with us assures us of strength and endurance and victory (Heb.12:3; cp. 1 Cor.10:13; Mt.28:20; cp. Heb.13:5-6).

3 (24:30) **Jesus Christ, Return—End Times**: when Christ returns, there will be a second event to occur—there will be *the* sign of Christ's appearing in the heavens. What is the sign? Christ does not specifically say. There are four different thoughts.

⇒ Some say the sign will be a star, just like the star that proclaimed His birth.

⇒ Others say it will be the Shekinah glory, His glory shining forth in all the splendor and brightness of God Himself. His glory will, of course, shine forth as described; but again, Christ does not say specifically that this is the sign.

⇒ Some, including many of the early church fathers, believe the sign will be the cross of Christ. There is no question that seeing the cross appear in the sky universally would attract attention and signal that something is about to happen. The cross is the symbol of Christianity and points toward the purpose of God in the world more than any other single thing.

⇒ Many believe the sign to be simply the appearance of the Son of Man Himself (Mt.26:64; Dan.7:13-14).

Note four points.

1. When the sign appears, "all the tribes of the earth mourn." They know exactly what the sign is and what it means: the judgment and rule and reign of Christ. The tribes (people) do not have to guess and interpret what it means.
2. When the sign appears, "all the tribes of the earth mourn...and see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven."
3. The Lord says that His coming will be as lightning, quick and sudden (v.27). Will there be time for a sign other than His personal appearance?
4. The disciples had asked about the *sign*: "What shall be the sign of thy coming...?" (v.3). Christ gives them a number of signs. Perhaps He is simply saying, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man [Himself]...." This would, of course, be a fulfillment of Daniel's well-known sign of the Son of Man and His coming (Dan.7:13-14).

Whatever the sign, there is one important thing to note: everyone knows exactly what it means. God's Son is coming to judge and to rule and reign over all the earth.

> **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:31-32).**
>
> **"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).**
>
> **"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Pt.3:7).**
>
> **"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).**
>
> **"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:11-15).**

> **Thought 1.** There shall be a sign that triggers the coming of the Son of Man. Whatever the sign is, four things are certain.
>
> 1) *Now* the stars point toward the eternal power and Godhead and love of God in a beautiful creation. *Then* the stars shall point toward the wrath of God.
> 2) *Now* the Shekinah glory, the glory of God, shines before men calling them to righteousness. *Then* the Shekinah glory shall shine before men consuming them for their unrighteousness.
> 3) *Now* the cross stands before the world attracting the world to God. *Then* the cross shall stand before the world condemning the world.
> 4) *Now* Christ stands before the world as its Savior. *Then* Christ shall stand before the world as its Judge.

Thought 2. There are sign(s) of Christ's presence *now*. There are also signs that His return is ever so near. How much better to *mourn* and repent now than to be left with nothing but *mourning* then. The day is coming when it will be too late to turn to Christ.

Thought 3. Today, every man is without excuse. There are sign(s) and evidence(s) that He is the Savior of the world, God's very own Son. Much better to have the Son of Man appear now, in a person's heart and life by faith, than to have Him appear in the skies as a person's Judge (Heb.9:27; cp. Jn.3:18).

4 (24:30) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the third event of the Lord's return is that it will be visible to all—all the tribes of the earth will see Christ's coming in the clouds with power and great glory. There are four things said in this brief prophecy.

1. It is the Son of Man who shall come. Christ claims He is the Son of Man, God's very own Son, the Ideal Man, the Perfect Man, the Son of God incarnate in human flesh (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). In that day, there will be no doubt about who He is (cp. Mk.14:61-62). Right now He is recognized only by believers, but then He will be recognized by all men. It will be unmistakable: He is the Son of Man.
2. All the tribes of the earth will see His coming—visibly. How will everyone on earth, a round planet, see Him all at once? It is useless to speculate how God's power *works* (effects) any miracle. The point Christ is making is that His return will be visible and that every man on earth will see Him and acknowledge Him to be the Son of Man (cp. Rev.1:7). (Note: the light—the great splendor and brightness—of the Lord's glory can easily be manifested throughout the universe and surround the earth when He returns.)
3. Christ will come in the clouds of heaven. In Scripture, clouds are often associated with God.

> **"And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire" (Ps.18:10-12).**
>
> **"Who maketh the clouds His chariot" (Ps.104:3).**
>
> **"Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud" (Is.19:1).**
>
> **"I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him" (Dan.7:13).**

When Jesus departed this earth after His resurrection, He departed in a cloud, and it was foretold that He would return in a cloud (Acts 1:9-11). Christ clearly says that He is going to return in a cloud and every eye will see Him come in the clouds of heaven. There is a strong claim here, a claim to be the God of the clouds.

4. Christ will come with power and great glory. There are at least two points being stressed in this fact.
   a. Christ will come in the full dignity of His person. He will not come as a babe in a manger who lives through the stages of life to secure salvation for man. He will come with power and great glory. He will come in all the omnipotence and glory of God, revealing just who He is.
   b. Christ will come as a Judge to execute justice upon the earth. He will come to rule and reign in His rightful position as Sovereign Lord over the earth.

Thought 1. Every man will acknowledge Christ to be the Son of Man. There will not be a single exception.
⇒ Now, there is *voluntary* acknowledgement; then, there will be *involuntary* acknowledgement.
⇒ Now, there is *wilful* confession; then, there will be *enforced* confession.
⇒ Now, there is a *loving* appeal; then, there will be the *condemning* judgment.

> **"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).**
>
> **"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).**
>
> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).**

5 (24:30) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the fourth event is that all the tribes of the earth will mourn when Christ returns in power and great glory. Why? Because they will see beyond any question that Christ is the Son of Man. They will realize that they ignored, neglected, rejected, abused, and cursed Him. They will know that they have missed His salvation and that they are now to be judged. There is a picture of this great mourning in Revelation where "all the kindreds of the earth...wail because of Him" (Rev.1:7). They wail and mourn because of the terrible judgment which is to be inflicted upon them.

Very simply, Christ is going to return and every eye will see Him and know beyond any question that He is the Son of Man. The worldly will mourn because He comes as Judge; the elect will rejoice because they are to be gathered together with Him.

Thought 1. Every man has a choice. He mourns now, or he shall mourn when Christ returns. A man experiences a godly sorrow that leads to repentance *now*, or he shall experience a worldly sorrow that leads to eternal sorrow when Christ returns (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).**
>
> **"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).**

6 (24:31) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the fifth event of the Lord's coming is that the angels will be sent forth to gather the elect. There are four points made in this verse.

1. Christ will send forth *His* angels. He is God, the Lord of the angels. They are His; He is over them. They are at His beck and call to carry out His sovereign will. This again is a claim to deity.
2. Christ will send forth His angels with the "great sound of a trumpet." The trumpet was used to call an assembly of the people together. This is probably the meaning here. (Cp. 1 Cor.15:52; 1 Th.4:16.)
3. The angels will gather together the Lord's elect. Only the elect will be gathered at this point. The elect may be but a few when compared to the mass of humanity. But there will be a remnant of genuine believers scattered all over the earth, a remnant who will have endured to the end. They will be saved (v.13. Cp. Mt.20:16; 22:14.)

As Christ said:

> **"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; and one shall be taken, and the other left" (Lk.17:34-36; cp. Mt.24:40-41).**

4. The elect will be gathered from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. The meaning is this: the elect will be scattered all over the world; they will be everywhere, in all nations of the world (cp. Dt.4:32; Rev.7:9). As Christ had just said:

> **"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mt.24:14).**

Thought 1. There is one glorious hope for every believer, whatever his generation and the trials of it:

> **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:13-14).**

Thought 2. The angels are subject to Christ; we, too, should be subject to Him. The angels do His sovereign will; we, too, should do His sovereign will. If we administer His will now, we shall be in that select company in that glorious day.

Thought 3. Not a single believer will be missed when Jesus returns. No matter where we are or how isolated and lonely and forgotten we may feel, He is coming for us.

	D. The Time of the Lord's Return, 24:32-41 (Mk.13:28-34; Lk.21:29-35)	knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.	**are known only by God**
		37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.	**3 The day shall come suddenly—unexpectedly—shattering to the world of unbelievers**[DS2]
1 The time can be generally discerned	32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:	38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,	a. Its counterpart is Noah's day: A day of sensuality & of refusing to heed the message of coming judgment[DS3,4]
a. Its events are compared to a fig tree[DS1]	33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.	39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.	b. Its shock: "Knew not"—were unbelieving, close-minded, ignorant
b. Its events will be witnessed by one generation	34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.	40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.	c. Its certainity: "So shall...be"
c. Its events are certain	35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.	41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.	**4 The day shall be a time of separation & judgment**
2 The actual day & hour	36 But of that day and hour		

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

D. The Time of the Lord's Return, 24:32-41

(24:32-41) **Introduction—End Time**: the disciples had asked, "When shall these things be?" At this point of His discussion, Christ said, "*Now* learn a parable of the fig tree, *when*...." Note the word *when*. He was beginning to discuss the end time and His return. It should be noted that the first part of His discussion can apply to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. as well as to the end time (v.32-35). However, Christ definitely said this passage had to do with the end time only, with the coming of the Son of Man (v.37, 39). When will Christ return? He revealed four significant points.

1. The time can be generally discerned (v.32-35).
2. The actual day and hour are known only by God (v.36).
3. The day shall come suddenly—unexpectedly—shattering to the world of unbelievers (v.37-39).
4 The day will be a time of separation and judgment (v.40-41).

1 (24:32-35) **Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ said that the time of His return can be generally discerned.

1. The events (signs) that point to His return are compared to a fig tree. When the fig tree begins to put forth its leaves, it is known that summer is near. So when we see "all these things," the signs He has been sharing, "know that it [His coming] is near, *even* at the doors." His coming is at the very threshold; He is about to enter into the world again (cp. Jas.5:9).

Note what Christ said:

a. When the leaves on a fig tree are seen, summer is not yet. But we *know* summer is near, at hand.
b. "So likewise ye, when *ye shall see* all these things, *know* that it [His coming, His kingdom] is near." He definitely says we can "know that it is near."

2. The events (signs) will be witnessed by one generation. The disciples had asked two questions—one about Jerusalem's destruction and one about the end of the world. In answering their questions, Christ nowhere drew a definite line between the two questions. The signs and events that precede one shall precede the other. The implication is clear: just as the signs and destruction of Jerusalem took place within a generation, the signs and destruction of the world will also occur within a generation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, pt.2—Mt.24:1-31.)

3. The events (signs) are certain. Christ was definite about what He had said. "Heaven and earth *shall* pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Note two things.

a. Heaven and earth will pass away. Christ was saying they are actually going to be done away with (2 Pt.3:10-11).
b. All that He had said about the great tribulation and His return will happen. The great tribulation and His return are more sure than heaven and earth.

Thought 1. *Expectation* is a key word when dealing with the Lord's return. When we see a fig tree's putting forth its leaves, we *expect* summer to be near. "So likewise" we should expect two things.

1) We should expect the signs, "all these things" that Christ has been mentioning (v.33a).
2) We should expect and "know that it [His coming] is near" (v.33b).

Thought 2. In the eyes of men, it has been a long time since Christ spoke these words, and an innumerable list of events have happened. Therefore, men assume that the second coming is a fable, the figment of hopeful imagination. God knew this would happen.

> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to this promise, look for new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-13).**

Thought 3. Three things are certain to happen in human history: "the beginning of sorrows" (v.8); "the great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.21); and "the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (v.30). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not the words He spoke, not what He said would happen. What He said would happen will happen. These three events are certain.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(24:33-34) **Jesus Christ, Return**: note the time involved in these two verses—they agree. "When ye shall see all these things...it is near" (v.33). All will happen in "one generation" (v.34).

2 (24:36) **End Time**: the actual day and hour that Christ will return are known only by God. Note two things.

1. The return of Christ is a real event that is yet to happen. There is "that day and hour." There is *a fixed day and a fixed hour* when Christ will return. It is an actual event.
2. The return of Christ is secret. "No man knoweth...my Father only." Some have thought they knew, but Christ is explicit: "No man knoweth, not the angels of heaven, but my Father *only*." (See note—2 Th.2:1-2.)

> **"And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon" (Rev.5:3).**
>
> **"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Dt.29:29).**

Thought 1. Some things are to be left entirely in God's hands. The exact day and hour of the Lord's return is one of these things. *Watchful* believers will be sensitive to the season (fig tree, v.32-33) and know the generation (v.34), but the exact hour and day are hid from men, even from the wisest and most spiritual men. *Only* God Himself knows when Christ shall return. If a man claims to know the hour and day, he is the man from which we should flee. That man's word conflicts with the Lord's Word.

3 (24:37-39) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the coming of the Lord will be sudden—unexpected—shattering to the world of unbelievers. Christ says three things.

1. When will Christ return? His coming finds its counterpart in Noah's day. He will come when the world is living just as it was living in Noah's day:
   - ⇒ Living sensual lives, eating, drinking, marrying, divorcing, and remarrying time after time (see *Deeper Study* 3,4—Mt.24:38; cp. Lk.17:26-30).
   - ⇒ Refusing to heed Noah's message of righteousness and coming judgment (2 Pt.2:5).

   a. Note that eating, drinking (water), and marriage are all necessary to maintain life. It is the excessiveness, the lust for more and more, the extravagance that is sinful. It is setting one's mind upon the pleasure of the flesh and of the world and lusting for more and more. (See note—Jas.4:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:1-3; note—4:2. Cp. Ro.1:24.)
   b. Note another point: What is it that Christ says will characterize the age? Not stealing and murder and immorality, but eating and drinking and marrying time after time. When the earth was destroyed the first time, it was because "the earth was corrupt...and...filled with violence" (Gen.6:11). However, the sins that bring the second destruction of the earth seem to be eating and drinking and marrying time after time. These are the sins stressed by Christ.
   c. Note the words "*until the day* that Noah entered into the ark." While Noah was building the ark, he preached the righteousness of God and the coming judgment. The people had the testimony of Noah's life and his belief in God's Word as a warning, a warning that man was responsible to live righteously and that judgment was coming. They saw Noah's building the ark. They saw the ark sitting there, yet they rejected Noah's message and testimony. They went on living in worldliness, in their eating and drinking and in

pursuing their own lustful desires, and they did so right up until the very day that "Noah entered into the ark." Then suddenly, unexpectedly, their world was shattered.

2. When will Christ come? He will come just as He came in Noah's day: at a shocking time. Just as they "knew not" that the end was coming, so He will come again when the world *knows not*.

a. They "knew not" means this: they did not expect the coming judgment. They *did not believe* the fact, the word, the message. They *were close-minded*; they did not bother too much about listening and studying the matter. Therefore, they *were ignorant* about the truth. They did not know the Word of God.

b. "They knew not" means this: they felt secure in themselves and in their world. As Scripture says in another place:

> **"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Th.5:3).**

c. They "knew not" means this: they were living worldly and materialistic lives, eating and drinking when they should have been sensible and clear-minded, listening and turning to God.

d. They "knew not" means this: their concern was "Let us eat and drink: for tomorrow we shall die" (Is.22:13); whereas their concern should have been *righteousness* (2 Cor.5:21).

3. When will Christ come? He will come when people are living just as they were living in the days of Noah: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be" (v.37, 39). His coming is certain and assured.

> **"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:38-39).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).**
>
> **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

Thought 1. Note the words "knew not." They *knew not* because they were steeped in sensual living. A person can eat, drink, and be immoral until he is gripped and enslaved (see notes—Ro.1:24; Jas.4:1-6).

⇒ *Conscience* becomes dull, hardened, and insensitive to right.
⇒ *Will* becomes more craving.
⇒ *Spirit* becomes more selfish.
⇒ *Life* becomes more worldly.
⇒ *Hope* becomes more materialistic.
⇒ *Death* becomes more final.

Thought 2. Christ's return will shatter the world of the person...

- who eats and eats
- who drinks and drinks
- who marries and marries
- who "knows not"
- who does not believe
- who is close-minded
- who is ignorant

Thought 3. There are many genuine believers in the world. The testimony of righteousness should be right before the face of most people just as it was before the face of the people in Noah's day. We are without excuse. We should be prepared for His coming. His *sudden* coming should not catch us unexpectedly; it should not shock or shatter our world.

Thought 4. A man must not allow himself to be so immersed in worldliness that he forgets eternity (1 Jn.2:15-16; Ro.12:1-2; 2 Cor.6:17-18).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(24:37) **Jesus Christ, Return**: it must be remembered that the righteous, that is, the only believers of Noah's day, were Noah himself and his family. They were not caught unaware. It was to the unbelieving world that the day came unexpectedly and with shattering suddenness. This is understandable: the true believer is ever "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13). When that day begins to approach, believers will see and discern the times through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will be preparing the believer's

heart for that day. But the unbelieving world will be mocking what it considers foolish belief. It will be going about its merry way and wantonness, paying no attention whatever to an event that it considers foolish. (Cp. Dan.12:10.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(24:38) **Eating** (trogontes): to gnaw; to chew. It has the idea of grabbing and gnawing greedily like a hungry dog. Here it means the habitual practice of eating with a gluttonous appetite, eating excessively.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(24:38) **Drinking** (pinontes): to drink; to participate in the partying spirit of drink; to participate in the abomination of drinking. The idea is a habitual practice, drinking to excess (cp. Gal.5:21; cp. Eph.5:18).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:10).

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!" (Hab.2:15).

4 (24:40-41) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the coming of the Lord will be a time of separation and judgment. Several things are seen in these two verses.

1. On the day when Jesus comes, no one knows He is coming, not even believers. All go about their affairs, their occupations as usual.
2. On the day when Jesus comes, while people are going about their affairs, all of a sudden one shall be taken and the other left.
3. On the day when Jesus comes, there will be separation from those nearest us—from those right by our side. The believer will be caught up to be with the Lord; the unbeliever will be left behind to face judgment (v.30-31, 50-51; cp. 2 Th.1:7-10).

"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).

"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (Mt.13:49).

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).

"And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk.16:26).

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left" (Lk.17:34).

Thought 1. The basis of separation and judgment is belief. In Noah's day no one believed the message of righteousness. Only the man who believes the message of righteousness and adheres to it will be taken (2 Cor.5:21 cp. Jn.3:16; Mt.24:13).

	E. The Lord's Return and the Believer's Duty: Watch—Be Ready—Be Faithful & Wise, 24:42-51 (Mk.13:35-37; Lk.21:36)	lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?	**believer)** a. His responsibility: To oversee & feed b. His accountability: Is faithful
		46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.	
		47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.	c. His reward: Made a ruler
1 The believer's duty: Watch a. The Lord does return b. Exact time unknown	42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.	48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;	**4 Parable 3: An evil servant** a. His attitude: Plenty of time
2 Parable 1: The owner of the house (a professing believer) a. He had a house to look after b. He lived without watchfulness c. He suffered disaster d. The point: Readiness is essential, for Christ comes unexpectedly	43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.	49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;	b. His behavior: Acts unjustly & worldly c. His judgment: He is doomed
	44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.	50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,	1) The Lord catches him unexpectedly
3 Parable 2: A faithful & wise servant (a genuine	45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his	51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.	2) The Lord condemns him to death—with the hypocrites

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

E. The Lord's Return and The Believer's Duty: Watch—Be Ready—Be Faithful and Wise, 24:42-51

(24:42-51) **Introduction**: it is most important to remember that this was Christ's last week on earth. This was His last chance to teach the disciples. All that He said was of critical importance and, out of necessity, must be clear and pointed. He had led the disciples to ask two intriguing questions: "When shall the temple [or Jerusalem] be destroyed? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" (v.3). (See note—Mt.24:1-25:46.)

Christ had just answered the disciples' questions. Now He came to the all important point of application. Since He would be returning to earth and God wanted the hour to be kept secret, what was the believer to do? How was the believer to live? What was the believer's duty? Christ answered these questions in one forceful word: "Watch!" Then He shared three parables to explain what He meant by the strong exhortation, "Watch."

1. The believer's duty: watch (v.42).
2. Parable 1: the owner of the house (a professing believer) (v.43-44).
3. Parable 2: a faithful and wise servant (a genuine believer) (v.45-47).
4. Parable 3: an evil servant (v.48-51).

1 (24:42) **Watch** (gregoreo): to keep awake; to stay alert; to be watchful and sleepless; to be vigilent. It also includes the idea of being motivated, of keeping one's attention (mind) upon a thing. Watching also has the idea of being alert at the *right time*. It is at night that a person really needs to stay awake to watch for the thief (cp. 1 Th.5:4-9).

The Lord said, "Watch." What does it mean for a believer to *watch*? (Mt. 26:41; Mk.13:33, 34, 36; 14:38; cp. 1 Cor.16:13; 1 Th.5:6; 2 Tim.4:5; 1 Pt.4:7).

1. The believer *watches* and stays *ready* for the Lord's return. He does not know the exact hour of the Lord's return; therefore, he is to watch and stay ready at all times (v.42-44). He should be so ready that his eyes are open and watching for the signs of Christ's return.
2. The believer *watches* his ministry and his duty to God. He sees to it that he serves faithfully and wisely (v.45).
3. The believer *watches* his *attitude and behavior* (v.48-49). He stays his mind upon the Lord's return and walks soberly and godly among others.

> **"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:3-5).**
>
> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).**

4. The believer *watches* by being ready to die and to meet the Lord through death (Heb.9:27). Christ does not mention this point, but its truth is ever so clear to the maturing believer.

2 (24:43-44) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the first parable Christ shared concerned the owner of a house. He represents the professing believer. Christ shared four things.

1. The owner had a house to look after. He was blessed, for he owned a house, and it was full of possessions. The belongings were valuable enough to attract a thief.
2. The owner lived without watchfulness.
   a. The owner knew the thief was coming, and he knew he was coming that night. He just did not know in what watch he was coming. (Every watch was divided into three hours, for example, 12-3 a.m., 3-6 a.m.)
   b. The owner began to watch. He had tried to protect his house; he had bolted the doors and closed the windows. He was staying up listening to every noise and was ready to try to protect his house.
   c. The owner failed to protect his house, and he failed in an area least expected. He simply did not watch *long enough*. As the hours wore on and on, he grew more and more drowsy and nodded more and more. The owner simply failed...
      - to stay awake long enough.
      - to keep his mind alert long enough.
      - to look and listen to the noises (signs) long enough.
      - to keep active long enough.
      - to stand guard long enough.
3. The owner suffered disaster. The thief came while the owner was asleep. The owner ceased watching, and the thief broke into his home, taking his most prized valuables.
4. Christ's point made is clear: readiness is essential. By *readiness*, Christ meant diligence. We are to be diligently living a life of righteousness, looking for His return.

> **"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness....Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:11, 13).**

Christ gave two reasons why we are to be ready: (a) He is definitely coming, and (b) He is coming in a hour when the unprepared will not expect Him (v.44, 50).

> **"And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through" (Lk.12:39).**
>
> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).**
>
> **"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night....But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Th.5:2, 4).**
>
> **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pt.3:10).**
>
> **"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev.3:3).**
>
> **"And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus" (Rev.16:5).**

Thought 1. The Lord's return is imminent. This is the point. We must stay alert and be diligent in looking for His return—today!

Thought 2. The owner's house can represent a man's life. Every man is responsible for taking care of his life. Christ says we keep our house (life) by "watching" and being ready for His return, for He may return at any moment.

3 (24:45-47) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the second parable Christ shared concerned the faithful and wise servant. He represents a genuine believer, a person who not only professes Christ but lives for Christ. The genuine believer may be a minister, a teacher, or a young learner in Christ. But note: the point is not the believer's position but his being faithful and wise. The simplest believer is to be faithful and wise, no matter who he is or what his calling is.

Christ put this parable in the form of a question: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant?" He does this to stir more thought about the issue at hand and to force a much more personal application. Christ covers three points about the faithful and wise servant.

1. His responsibility is twofold. He is *to oversee* the Master's household and he is *to feed* the Master's family.
   a. He is to oversee the Master's household. Note: it is the Master who sets him over His household. The servant does not appoint himself, nor is he appointed by other servants (or churches) of the household. The Master alone sets him over His family.

      He is given the responsibility to rule, to oversee, to look after the household and family of the Master. But he is under his Lord and he is to oversee primarily by example.

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; nor for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pt.5:2-3).

"Obey them that have the rule [ownership] over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb.13:17).

b. He is to provide food for the Master's family, and he is to do it in due season. His family has to be fed. It is the servant's duty to provide food for them. Note that he gives; it is his duty to give, not to take (cp. Ezk.34:8; Acts 20:35). He gives food for their nourishment, and He gives the food "in due season," at the right time.

"Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pt.5:2).
"Feed my lambs...my sheep" (Jn.21:15-17).

2. His accountability is clearly stated. The Lord is coming, and when He comes, He will judge what the faithful servant is doing. The servant will be looked at and observed to see if he is managing the household and feeding the family *faithfully and wisely*.

"Blessed is that servant [who is] so doing" (Mt.24:46).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim.4:16).

3. His reward will be unbelievable. The Master will make the faithful servant ruler over all His goods. The idea is that he will be placed first: looked upon, loved, and considered first, as though he were the only one. He had been managing, looking after only a small portion for the Master. Now he will be given a much greater responsibility to oversee for his Lord.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk.16:10).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).

"As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor.2:9; cp. Rev.2:26; 3:21).

Thought 1. Who is faithful and wise? The believer who is found "so doing." This means he is enduring (v.13) and watching over the task the Lord has given him (v.42). (See note—Mt.24:42.)

Thought 2. This is a precious thought: to picture Christ's renting the skies above and returning, and to know that His first sight of us will be that of our laboring for Him. May the Lord grant just this: when He returns, may His first sight be to see us working for Him. Blessed is that servant "whom his Lord...shall find so *doing*." Note the word "doing" is continuous action.

This is a frightful thought: to picture Christ's appearing and His first sight of us is that of...

- sleeping late
- working half-heartedly
- mistreating someone
- arguing
- being engaged in an immoral act
- overeating

4 (24:48-51) **Servant, Unfaithful; Evil; Untrustworthy**: the third parable Christ shared concerns the evil servant. He represents a professing believer. Some say he is even a professing minister. If so, he is not a genuine believer, despite his profession and ministerial position. He is *unfaithful* and *untrustworthy* (1 Tim.1:12). His life is tragic. Christ covers his attitude, his behavior, and his end or judgment.

1. His attitude. Note the word *heart*. The attitude of his heart is, "My Lord delayeth His coming; there is plenty of time." Several things can cause such an attitude.

⇒ Doubting the Lord's Word, that He is ever coming.
⇒ Misinterpreting the Lord's coming as being only symbolic, instead of accepting it as literal; symbolizing it to mean some spiritual truth such as the Lord's meeting a person when the person dies.
⇒ Ignoring the Lord's coming in order to allow the person to live as he wishes.
⇒ Thinking the Lord's coming is so far away that it has little meaning for today.

2. His behavior. Note that it is after the evil servant says there is plenty of time that he begins to live as he wishes. *His attitude* (his heart) *determines his behavior.*
   a. He acts unjustly. He begins to "smite his fellowservants." He seeks more and more materially, both power and things. He strikes and mistreats anyone who stands in his way. He seeks "filthy lucre" (acceptance, esteem, gain, property, money), and he seeks to *lord it over people* (1 Pt.5:2-3).
   b. He lives carnally. He begins "to eat and drink with the worldly [drunken]." He walks with them, sits with them, lies with them. He is their companion in sin. He is indulgent, living to please the flesh.
3. His end and his judgment are certain. There is no escape.
   a. The Lord will catch the evil servant unexpectedly. Some deny that the Lord is coming to judge them; others ignore His coming; and still others put the thought out of their minds. But nothing will keep the Lord from coming: "the Lord of that [evil] servant shall come." And He will come when the evil man is not looking for Him. To the evil person, the Lord's coming will be the most frightful experience of human history (cp. v.21-22; Rev.6:15-17).

      In talking about meeting the Lord, it must be remembered that every man meets the Lord at death: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27). The point Christ makes is that the evil man will face eternal doom at the end of the world. As other Scriptures point out, the Great White Throne of judgment is to take place at the end of the world.
   b. The Lord will condemn the evil servant to death—with the hypocrites. He will be "cut asunder," cut off from among the living and from among believers; and most tragic, he will be "cut asunder" from God's presence. His position and place will be with hypocrites. Where are the hypocrites? Christ says "[Where] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (see note—Mt.8:12).

The sin of the evil servant, of a person who makes a false profession, does several terrible things.

1. He deceives himself and others. He deceives people into thinking that they will not have to face the judgment of the Lord's return, or if they do, it will be minimal.
2. He minimizes the truth of eternity, of heaven, of life with God, and of the judgment which every man must face.
3. He takes away from the message and effectiveness of the gospel.
4. He keeps people from the truth. He keeps them from watching and preparing, from protecting and guarding, from living and walking with their eyes upon the Lord's coming.

> **"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Lk.21:28).**
>
> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).**

Thought 1. Note that Christ still speaks of a servant. The difference is onefold: this is an evil servant. He may be a minister, a teacher, or a layman. Christ says that he is an evil servant and spells out what it is that makes him evil.

Thought 2. The worst of all men is the man who professes, and while he professes, he is living in sin. As Christ says, "his portion [is] with the *hypocrite*" (v.51). His only hope is to confess his evil and repent, turning back to God, ever trusting His wonderful mercy and grace.

> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**

Thought 3. The man who walks ignoring, twisting, misinterpreting, or denying the Lord's return is walking by his *senses*—what he knows about the physical universe. He is walking as he *senses* things to be, not as God has revealed them to be.

	CHAPTER 25		
	F. The Parable of the Ten Virgins: The Warning to Watch,[DS1,2] **25:1-13** (cp. Lk.12:35-37)		
1 Describes the Kingdom of Heaven **2 There are wise & foolish virgins (believers) who attend a wedding** a. Five are wise; five are foolish b. The foolish take no oil for their lamps: Provision & supply c. The wise take oil for their lamps: Provision & supply **3 There is a long delay waiting for the bridegroom: All slumber & sleep**[DS3,4] **4 There is a great summons when He comes** a. A surprise: Midnight	Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. 2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: 4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. 6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. 7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. 9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. 11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. 13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.	b. A cry: "Go—meet Him" c. All arise: Prepare their lamps[DS5] d. The foolish discover their lamps are out: Frantic—beg for oil e. The wise scarcely have enough for themselves **5 There is the bridegroom's return & the gathering of the wise** **6 There is a shut door to the foolish** a. The door was shut b. The foolish cry for entry c. The foolish will be rejected **7 The point: We must watch & expect the Lord's return at any moment**

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

F. The Parable of the Ten Virgins: The Warning to Watch, 25:1-13

(25:1-13) **Introduction**: the believer must *watch* for the Lord's return, and he must be wise and not foolish in watching (see note—Mt.24:42). This is the point of Jesus' parable in this passage (v.13): the parable of the ten virgins, five foolish and five wise.

⇒ The *bridegroom*, of course, is Christ Himself.

⇒ The *virgins* are believers, all professors of religion. The *five wise virgins* are genuine believers; the *five foolish virgins* are false believers, those who have a false profession.

⇒ The *lamps* represent the lives, that is, the testimony, the witness, the heart, and the profession of the virgins (professing believers).

⇒ The *oil* is the provision of righteousness, the supply of the Holy Spirit that is to fill the lamps (lives) of the professing believers.

The parable is a dramatic picture of just what will happen to all professing believers, both the wise and the foolish, when the Lord returns.

1. The parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (v.1).
2. There are wise and foolish virgins (believers) who attend a wedding (v.1-4).
3. There is a long delay waiting for the bridegroom: all slumber and sleep (v.5).
4. There is a great summons when the bridegroom comes (v.6-9).
5. There is the bridegroom's return and the gathering of the wise (v.10).
6. There is a shut door to the foolish (v.10-12).
7. The point: we must watch and expect the Lord's return at any moment (v.13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(25:1-13) **Wedding, Jewish:** this event, so unlike what occurs in most countries, was a common custom among Jews. The wedding festivities, which lasted for a whole week, were centered in the home where the couple was to live. The bridegroom was allowed to show up at any moment and enter the house; but when he chose to come, he always sent a man ahead crying out, "Behold, the bridegroom comes." This enabled everyone to prepare for his arrival. The bride had ten young ladies (virgins) who were always to be prepared to rush out and meet the bridegroom. In the event that he came at night, they were to have lamps ready so they could go out to light his path along the streets. This is the picture Christ was painting of His return.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(25:1-13) **Jesus Christ, Bridegroom—Great Marriage Feast**: throughout Scripture the symbolism lying behind this parable involves three pictures.

1. Christ is pictured as the bridegroom.

"For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Is.62:5).

"And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast" (Mt.9:15).

"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled" (Jn.3:29).

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets....And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up: and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey" (Rev.10:7, 9).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev.21:2).

2. Believers and the church are pictured as the bride of Christ.

"For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (Is.62:5).

"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies" (Hos.2:19).

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Ro.7:4).

"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Eph.5:30).

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor.11:2).

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev.19:7).

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev.21:2).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

3. The return of the Lord is pictured as a great marriage feast.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready....And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Rev.19:7, 9).

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev.21:9; see outline and notes—Mt.22:1-14).

1 (25:1) **Kingdom of Heaven—Jesus Christ, Return**: the word *then* refers back to the Lord's return discussed in Chapter 24. He was saying, "Then [when the Lord returns] the kingdom of heaven shall be like ten virgins [believers]." Five are foolish and five are wise, and there is going to be a separation of the wise from the foolish. Note *the kingdom of heaven* does not refer only to the perfect state of being in the future; it also refers to the present imperfect state of religion in the church (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; cp. Mt.13:1-58).

When Christ returns, something will be clearly seen—the foolish within the kingdom, those who have a false profession within the church and religion, shall be separated from the wise, "Watch therefore" (v.13).

2 (25:1-4) **Parable**: there are wise and foolish virgins or believers who attend a wedding. Christ says three things about them.

1. The ten virgins (all professing believers) take their lamps (lives or testimonies) and go forth to meet the bridegroom. All believers take their lives and go forth, professing a testimony that they live for Christ and look to Christ. All professing believers (whether genuine or just religionists and church people) go forth to meet the Lord. However, as they "go forth" some (five) are wise and some (five) are foolish.
2. The *foolish* virgins (believers) take no oil *except what they already have in their lamps (lives)*. They have *no provision of righteousness* beyond themselves, beyond their own righteousness. They have no supply of the Holy Spirit.

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders" (Mk.7:21).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Ro.3:10).

3. The *wise* virgins (believers) take oil; they do not depend upon what they have in their lamps (lives). As they go forth through life to meet the bridegroom (Christ), they lay hold of additional oil, the provision of righteousness, the supply of God's Spirit.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor.11:2).

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev.14:4).

Thought 1. The main duty of the virgins (believers) is to meet and light the path for the bridegroom.

Thought 2. Note: there was no visible difference between the virgins. They all had lamps, and they were all called to participate in the marriage feast. The lack of provision by the foolish could not be seen until the Bridegroom actually came.

Thought 3. How foolish! To depend only on the oil in one's lamp or life. No one has enough oil, enough righteousness, to make himself perfect, that is, to make himself acceptable to God.

Thought 4. When Christ comes, He must find righteousness in a person if that person is to be allowed in God's presence. A man must be a "partaker of the Divine nature" by faith (2 Pt.1:4). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; 5:1.)

3 (25:5) **Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ said an interesting thing. There is a long delay before the bridegroom came and *all* the virgins slumbered and slept—not just the foolish virgins, but *all* the virgins slumbered and slept.

1. The idea is that this bridegroom waited much longer than was expected. The virgins had lit their lamps expecting him any moment, but he never came. As they waited and waited, the night wore on and on.

In the eyes of many, the Lord's return *has* lingered and lingered, well beyond what many have thought and taught (cp. 2 Pt.3:3-4, 9-10).

2. All the virgins slumbered and slept. Not just the foolish slept, but the wise slept as well (see DEEPER STUDY # 3,4—Mt.25:5). This is true throughout life. Even the wise grow weary and find it difficult to stay awake and alert, to stay at peak performance all the time. No believer, whoever he is, walks anywhere as close as he should. The world is too dark and the darkness too heavy for the believer to see enough light so that he can always be victorious over the pull of heavy eyelids.

⇒ His body is too weak to be *always laboring*.
⇒ His mind is too undeveloped to be *always concentrating*.
⇒ His energy is too limited to be *always driving*.
⇒ His spirit is too young to be *always sacrificing*.
⇒ His motives are too self-centered to be *always walking unselfishly*.

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mk.13:35-37).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Ro.13:11).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col.3:23).

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:6).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).

Thought 1. Christ has delayed His coming longer than many thought He would. Why? Only God really knows, but Scripture does give some indication.

1) God's purposes have to be completely fulfilled.

2) "The time of the Gentiles" has to be completely fulfilled.
3) God's love must be fully demonstrated, apparently to a certain number of people. A certain number of people apparently have to be saved before Christ returns.
4) The gospel must first be preached "in *all* the world for a witness to *all* nations" (Mt.24:14).
5) The harvest must *be ripened* and then *fully gathered*.
6) The sufferings of Christ must be completely filled up (see note—Col.1:24).
7) God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish (2 Pt.3:9).

Thought 2. A pointed question needs to be answered. Remember the fervent zeal we had when we were first saved? Why does it die out as time passses by?

⇒ We have not lost all love for Christ, but we have left our first love (Rev.2:4).
⇒ We have not stopped all worship of God, but we have lost our first duty to worship.
⇒ We have not ceased all witness for Christ, but we have cooled our first passion.
⇒ We have not turned from all righteousness, but we have been diverted from our first attention.

Thought 3. Note that the virgins allowed themselves to slumber, then the slumber led to sleep. We must guard against slumbering, against cooling off. A little slumber and a little cooling of ferver for just a little while may not seem too serious; but the first step, as small as it may seem, leads to heavy eyelids.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(25:5) **Slumbered** (enustazan): to nod; to nap.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(25:5) **Slept - Sleep** (katheudo): to go to sleep. This is a natural sleep of a person at night.

4 (25:6-9) **Jesus Christ, Return**: there is to be a great summons. Christ said several things.

1. The summons will be a great surprise, totally unexpected. It will come at a surprising hour: at midnight, the most surprising hour, the hour when sleep is most desired and unlikely to be disturbed. It is an hour when all are asleep. Christ is coming as a thief in the night.

2. The summons will be a cry, a shout: "Go ye out to meet Him: (cp. Mt.24:31; 1 Th.4:16). The word "cometh" is not in the oldest and best Greek manuscripts. The cry is simply, "Behold, the bridegroom!" which makes the shout much more forceful. Note two things.
   a. What the shout is: "Go out to meet Him."
   b. What the shout does: it awakens; it shocks; it disturbs. It is totally unexpected. The shout awakens the sleeping and demands, "Go out to meet Him."

3. All arise and prepare their lamps. All the virgins (professing believers) arise, for the shout pierces the air and shocks the virgins, demanding immediate arousal. *Not one remains asleep*. Each leaps up. The voice demands obedience, for the bridegroom comes. And all begin immediately to prepare their lamps (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt. 25:7).

4. All the foolish discover a shocking fact: their lamps are burned out. The bridegroom had not come while their lamps were burning, and now their lamps had used up all the oil they had. They became frantic, for they saw that they were not prepared. They did not have the oil (righteousness) necessary to burn their lamps (lives) for the bridegroom's coming.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Lk.21:34-35).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor" (Mic.4:12).

5. All the wise scarcely have enough for themselves. Note two things.
   ⇒ They had prepared. They had the oil (righteousness) necessary to burn the lamps (lives) for the bridegroom's coming
   ⇒ They had only enough, and barely enough, for their own lamps. They were not able to give any of their own oil to those who had none.

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Lk.12:35-36).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:5-6).

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev.16:15).

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev.19:7).

Thought 1. Death is usually a surprise, yet it comes to every one of us. The same fact is true with the Lord's return. His return is as certain as death, and it will be as surprising as most deaths are.

Thought 2. When the summons comes, all will arise. Not a person—whether in the grave, in the sea, or scattered all over the world—shall remain. Shockingly, surprisingly, all will arise when the shout comes. Both the dead and the living will arise to meet the Lord in the air (1 Th.4:14f).

Thought 3. When Christ first came to earth, no announcement to the world was made. Only a few knew when He came as a babe in Bethlehem. But when He returns, the world—all men—will know. A universal shout, the voice of the archangel, will summon all to arise and to prepare for the coming of the Bridegroom.

Thought 4. *The righteousness of Christ* is the only oil that lights the lamp of life. *The righteousness of Christ* is the only oil that is acceptable to God. A person who depends only upon the oil in his lamp or life, who does not secure additional oil, is foolish—as foolish as the foolish virgins—for the bridegroom shall come. It will be at midnight, yes, but midnight is coming. In fact, our watches tell us it is almost midnight now.

Thought 5. *Wise* is the correct word to call the man who secures additional oil (righteousness), for he does prepare for the inevitable.

Thought 6. Some things cannot be borrowed. Righteousness is one of those things (2 Cor.5:21; Eph.4:24).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(25:7) **Lamps**: trimming a lamp simply means that the burned top of the wick, the charred top, had to be trimmed or cleaned. Of course, the lamp had to be refilled with oil from the additional supply.

5 (25:10) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the Lord will return and gather the wise. Christ shared two major points.

1. "The bridegroom came": three simple but powerful words. So Christ shall come. The day will come when it will be said, "The bridegroom, Christ Himself, came."

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Mt.25:31).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Th.4:16).

2. Only they who were *ready* went in with the bridegroom to the marriage. This was their purpose, the reason they were ready. They had looked for His coming; therefore, they were ready. When the summons came, they were able to join in the processional of the Bridegroom and to enter the great marriage feast. The joy of the marriage was theirs (Jn.17:24. See DEEPER STUDY # 2 *Great Marriage Feast*—Mt.25:1-13.)

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Mt.24:31).

Thought 1. "The fulness of time" is to come again: the time for the great marriage feast of the Lamb and His church.

Thought 2. The "ready" shall enter the marriage feast. Only those who are *ready* will be allowed to enter. It is God who makes us ready (2 Cor.5:5).

6 (25:10-12) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the door is to be shut to the foolish.

1. The door was shut. This was a custom in the East. When all the guests had arrived, the doors were closed. They were closed in order to *secure* the marriage party and to *exclude* intruders. Only the guests belonged; others were to be kept out. When Christ comes, the door to heaven will be closed. Only the *ready*, the genuine guests will be *secured* in the joys of the great marriage feast. The unprepared will find the door shut *in order to exclude them.*
2. The foolish cry for entrance. Very simply, the foolish were *too late*. They were too late to join in the procession and too late to enter the door. Note the Lord's emphasis upon their desperation: they cry out, "*Lord, Lord.*" They now

know something they had not paid much attention to before: *preparation was essential*. The door has now been closed, and they are excluded. They are shut out from the Bridegroom's great wedding feast. It is too late for them.

3. The foolish will be rejected. The reason is simple: the Bridegroom does not know them. They were not ready when He arrived nor were they in the processional; therefore, He does not recognize them. He has to say, "I know you not." He can say nothing else, for...

- they had not *prepared* themselves: they were not ready when He came.
- they had not *participated* in His journey to the marriage feast: He did not recognize them; He did not know them.

Christ taught time and again that the day is coming when the door will be shut (cp. Jn.10:9).

> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in they name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:21-23).**
>
> **"When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:25-27).**

Note the words, "I know you not." The importance of Christ's *knowing us* is also stressed time and again in Scripture. Of course, the way Christ gets to know us is by our participating in His journey, simply walking with Him day by day.

> **"I never knew you: depart from me" (Mt.7:23).**
> **"I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep" (Jn.10:14).**
> **"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God" (Gal.4:9).**
> **"I know Him" (Gen.18:19. God said this of Abraham.)**
> **"I know thee by name" (Ex.33:12. God said this of Moses.)**
> **"I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine" (Is.43:1).**

Thought 1. The idea of the shut door is twofold.

1) To *secure* the wise (believer). The wise person is brought and welcomed into the great marriage feast of the Lord, and he participates in all the joy of the festive occasion. Whatever goes on within the great banqueting hall is his to enjoy. Other Scriptures point out that love, joy, and peace will be perfected and will be the unbroken experience of the believer. He will never again have to go out into an unjoyful, unhappy, corruptible, or painful world.

> **"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar...of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev.3:12).**

2) To *exclude* the foolish (who profess only). There has been plenty of time and plenty of signs and warnings to prepare, but the foolish have refused to prepare for the Lord's return (see outline—Ro.1:18-23; 2:11-15).

Thought 2. The foolish believer is a person who fails at two points.

1) Preparation: he does not provide any oil (righteousness) for his lamp *except* what oil is already there. He sees no need for additional oil or righteousness. Therefore, he does not prepare.
2) Participation: he is unable to join the Bridegroom on His journey to the great marriage feast. He has no additional oil (righteousness), so his lamp (life) is no good to the bridegroom. His lamp (life) is not able to provide light for the bridegroom.

7 (25:13) **Watch—Jesus Christ, Return**: the point is that we must *watch* and expect the Lord's return at any moment.

1. The exhortation is strong: "Watch therefore." The believer must prepare and participate in the journey to the great marriage feast. He must walk with the Lord, the bridegroom. (See note, *Watch*—Mt.24:42.)
2. The reason for watching is strong: "Ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh." Unbroken preparation is essential, for He can come at any moment.

> **"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Mt.25:13).**
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> **"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Lk.12:37).**
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> **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:5-6).**
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> **"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).**
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> **"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev.16:15).**

	G. The Parable of the Talents: The Believer's Duty to Work,[DS1] **25:14-30**		
1 The Lord went to a far country **2 The Lord entrusted His goods to His servants**[DS2] a. Called His own servants b. Gave each servant a different portion c. Gave each servant according to his ability	14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.	Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.	gifts & grace 2) Labored 100% for the Lord 3) Was commended & given a great reward: Rulership & joy
3 The servants treated the Lord's goods differently a. Two were responsible: Immediately worked 1) Were faithful & diligent 2) Were successful b. One was irresponsible: Did not try	16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. 17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.	24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.	**6 The punishment for work not done: Stripping & separation** a. The servant's reasons for not working 1) He misunderstood God: Thought God was too demanding 2) He feared loss while on earth
4 The day of reckoning came a. After a long time b. The Lord returned	19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.	26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strowed:	b. God's reasons for condemning the servant 1) He was wicked & slothful 2) He was inconsistent
5 The reward for work well done: More work to do a. The first servant 1) Acknowledged God's gifts & grace 2) Labored 100% for the Lord 3) Was commended & given a great reward: Rulership & joy	20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.	27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.	3) He failed to use his gift c. The judgment 1) He was stripped of what he had[DS3]
b. The second servant 1) Acknowledged God's	22 He also that had received two talents came and said,	30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.	2) He was cast into outer darkness[DS4]

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

G. The Parable of the Talents: The Believer's Duty to Work, 25:14-30

(25:14-30) **Introduction**: Jesus said that the point of this parable was twofold.
First, while Jesus is away, the believer is to do something: work—work faithfully and diligently.
Second, while Jesus is away, the believer is to know something: his work will be greatly rewarded or severely judged.

Again, Christ was dealing with His return. He went "into a far country" (v.14), and "after a long time, the Lord" returned (v.19). Christ was teaching a much needed lesson: we must be faithful and diligent, for if we are not, when He returns there will be severe judgment. (See outline and notes—Eph.4:7-16; 1 Cor.12:1-14:40.)

1. The Lord went to a far country (v.14).
2. The Lord entrusted His goods to His servants (v.14-15).
3. The servants treated the Lord's goods differently (v.16-18).
4. The day of reckoning came (v.19).
5. The reward for work well done: more work to do (v.20-23).
6. The punishment for work not done: stripping and separation (v.24-30).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(25:14-30) **Talents—Gifts**: the talent spoken of is a weight not a coin. The value of a talent varied as to whether it was gold, silver, or copper. Christ is probably using money to describe what He is talking about because money is one of the most understood commodities anywhere on earth.

Christ was teaching that His followers are to be faithful and diligent in whatever He gives them, whether a gift, ability, responsibility, or blessing.

1 (25:14) **Jesus Christ, Ascension—Exaltation**: Christ foretold that He was like a man who was travelling to a far country, and what He foretold happened. He travelled away from the earth and ascended into heaven for a specific purpose: to sit at the right hand of God. He is to sit there until His servants complete the work He has given them to do. When He returns, it will be the time for reward and for judgment.

> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).**
>
> **"Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted....The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool" (Acts 2:33-35).**
>
> **"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).**

2 (25:14-15) **Gifts**: the Lord has entrusted His *goods* (gifts, abilities, responsibilities) to His servants. There is a verse that says it all: "Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive [a host of vanquished foes], and gave gifts unto men" (Eph.4:8).

In this particular point Christ says three things.

1. The Lord called His *own* servants. The word for *servant* is bond-slave. He called those who were supposedly His own (a precious thought) and who were *supposedly* faithful and responsible to His service. He had bought them. They were to be His own and to serve Him (see note—Ro.1:1). Note why He called them: to put His *goods* (gifts) into their hands while He was away. His property had to be looked after and increased and bettered while He was away. The property of the Lord means the world and the souls of men. The servants are given the very same mission and work that Christ had: to minister to the souls of men and to the desperate of the world.
2. The Lord gave each servant a different portion of His goods to look after. The point is that each person was given a special talent (gift or responsibility). No one was left out (Eph.4:7). Each servant was therefore expected to work and serve.
3. The Lord gave to each servant according to his ability. Four factors are important here.
   a. No two servants have the same ability: environment, opportunity, genes, heritage, training, mind, heart, discipline, initiative. Each is different.

      > **"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" (Mt.25:15).**
      >
      > **"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor.4:7).**

   b. God endows His *goods* (gifts) as He wills, knowing each servant perfectly.

      > **"But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally [exactly] as he will" (1 Cor.12:11).**

   c. Each servant receives all the gifts he needs and can use.

      > **"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness (Ro.12:4-8).**
      >
      > **"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (1 Cor.12:4-7).**

d. Each servant has equal opportunity to be faithful in using what God has given him. We are to be judged on our faithfulness, not on the number of gifts or the size of the work we are assigned (cp. v.21 and v.23).

> **"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).**
>
> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).**

Thought 1. There are three precious and wonderful facts here.

1) We are "His own." We are God's, His possession (Eph.1:14). Note: God also says, "I am their possession."

> **"And it shall be unto them for an inheritance: I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel: I am their possession" (Ezk.44:28).**
>
> **"I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine" (Is.43:1).**

2) We are taken care of by Christ. Each one is given "His goods," very special gifts, abilities, and responsibilities to look after for God. God gives us exactly what we need to fulfill our lives and to give us purpose, meaning, and significance in life—to conform us to the very image of Christ Himself.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk.11:13).**
>
> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:28).**
>
> **"And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (Jer.24:7).**

3) The church is taken care of by Christ. During His absence, He has provided all that is necessary to care for and to advance the church.

> **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:11-13).**

Thought 2. Note: every believer has at least one gift.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(25:14-15) **Gifts**: the Lord's *goods* are the gifts, talents, and responsibilities He gives to men. The Lord endows His gifts as He pleases (1 Cor.12:11). Each servant receives all the gifts he needs and can use (Ro.12:4-9; 1 Cor.12:4-30). Note the gifts are the Lord's; they are merely entrusted to His servants. Different men have different capacities for different ministries (v.15).

3 (25:16-18) **Gifts—Faithfulness—Unfaithfulness**: the servants treated the Lord's *goods* differently.

1. Two servants were responsible, very responsible. They went to work *immediately*. They *lost no time* and began to serve *quickly*.

a. They were faithful and diligent. They used their abilities and energy immediately. They exerted themselves, expended their energy and effort to use what the Lord had given them.

Note: the less gifted servant worked and labored as much as the more gifted servant. He did not have as many gifts, but he exerted the same initiative, energy, and effort (cp. Lk.12:48).

Again, the picture is that of a business transaction, but the point is that the two servants used what the Lord had given them; and they used their gifts faithfully and diligently.

b. They were successful. Each one gained and doubled what the Lord had given him. Each servant's gifts bore fruit *in proportion* to his gifts. The one given more (five talents) bore more (ten talents). The one given less (two talents) bore less (four talents). But both were *equally successful*, *doubling* what the Lord had given them.

> **"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Ro.12:11).**
>
> **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).**

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:14).

2. One servant was irresponsible. He simply did not use the Lord's gift. But note: he was somewhat active. He spent time and energy to go out and bury the Lord's gift—he hid it. His days, his time, and his energy were to be the Lord's; but he took his life and days into his own hands. What was he doing? We are not told, but his efforts were not spent in the Lord's cause. He served only himself. He was worldly, lusting after the flesh and possessions of this world. He was out to serve himself instead of God

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Lk.21:34-35).

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas.5:5).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

Thought 1. Note four lessons.

1) Immediate work—immediate action—immediate use of God's gifts are expected. Each hesitation—each hour—each day where maximum energy and effort are not given is a lost opportunity. Each lost opportunity equals unfaithfulness and slothfulness. What a strong example the two faithful servants were!
2) The efforts of the faithful and diligent will bear interest (fruit). The servant who uses his gifts faithfully and diligently will witness a manifold increase in the *goods* of his Lord.
3) A striking point: the person with one talent is as responsible to use his gift as the person with many talents.
4) Too often, a person who is gifted with little feels his service matters little, that it is not really worth the time and effort it takes. This attitude forgets something: the gift is not ours; the gift is the Lord's. It is to be used, and full energy and effort are to be exerted in its use. The use of a single gift is to occupy what days and hours we have on earth. We are to be faithful, even in the single gifts—always faithful and always using what we have for the Lord, even if it is a single gift.

4 (25:19) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the day of reckoning came, but it was only "after a long time." By the time Christ returns, it will have been a long time in the eyes of men. However, it will have been only a short time to Christ: "Lo, I come quickly" (Rev.3:11; cp. 2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-11).

Note a second fact: Christ says the Lord did return, and He returned to reckon with His servants, not with the world. Christ is talking about His servants in this passage—professing believers and church members, some genuine believers and some only professing believers, who are making a false profession (v.30).

"Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants" (Mt.18:23).

"And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it" (Mt.21:34).

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" (Mt.25:19).

"And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading" (Lk.19:15).

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (1 Pt.4:4).

Thought 1. We must always remember this: the Lord is not slack concerning His promise to return. He is *ready* to judge the living and the dead (1 Pt.4:5). He is ready now, but He is *longsuffering*, wanting more and more to come to repentance (2 Pt.3:9).

5 (25:20-23) **Reward**: the reward for work well done will be more work to do. Note that the experience was the same for the first and second servants.

1. They both acknowledged God's gifts and graces: "Lord, thou delivered unto me." All that the servant had was given to him by Christ. There is *appreciation*, *thankfulness*, *privilege*, and a sense of responsibility expressed. The two servants had counted it a privilege to serve their Lord. He had given them purpose and meaning in life and the greatest privilege in all the world: the privilege of serving the Lord Himself. They were appreciative and thankful.
2. Therefore, they were bold in approaching the Lord: "Behold, I have gained." Their boldness was not in a boastful spirit, but in a spirit that knew it had been faithful in what the Lord had said to do.

> **"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment" (1 Jn.4:17).**

3. The Lord commended the two servants and gave them great rewards: rulership and joy, the joy of the Lord. The Lord commended them for being *good* men (kind, gracious, moral, disciplined) and faithful in the trust (gifts) He had given them. They had worked and worked hard. They had been the kind of men He had wanted them to be and they had done the work He had wanted them to do. They were both *good and faithful* servants. The point is this: the first two servants worked at full capacity, exerting 100 percent energy and effort. Both increased the Lord's goods 100 percent. Note the reward: both received responsibility over many things in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Lord rewarded both servants greatly. He gave them a twofold reward.

First, they were given rulership: the responsibility and rule over many things in the Kingdom of Heaven *after the Lord returned* (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28; 19:29; Lk.19:15-23).

Second, they were given entrance into the joy of the Lord. The servants were to be ushered into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, where there is nothing but joy. The joy is the joy "of the Lord" Himself—a joy which He Himself possesses within His very being. Joy is the state of the Lord's being because He is perfect; His perfection gives rise to a *fulness of joy*. Believers also experience this joy because of heaven, for heaven is perfect; and where perfection is, there are no tears, pain, or sorrow. There is only joy.

> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt.25:34).**
>
> **"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Lk.6:35).**
>
> **"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me" (Lk.22:28-29).**
>
> **"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:17).**
>
> **"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge [reign over, hold authority over] the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor.6:2-3).**
>
> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (Rev.1:5-6).**
>
> **"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Rev.2:26).**
>
> **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).**
>
> **"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.22:5).**

Thought 1. Two things are highly commendable among God's servants:

1) To acknowledge that their gifts are of God.
2) To be so faithful and diligent that they can be bold in the day of judgment.

Thought 2. Just how *wise* we are is shown by how much work we do for God and how well we use our gifts.

> **"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation [behavior] his works with meekness of wisdom" (Jas.3:13).**

Our *works* will follow us.

> **"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Rev.14:13).**

Thought 3. A precious, precious truth: God will be accepting both our person ("thou *good*...servant") and our labor ("thou...*faithful* servant"). Amen!

6 (25:24-30) **Minister—Servant**: the punishment for work not done will be stripping and separation. Christ covers three points in discussing this unprofitable servant. Remember: Christ is speaking of a person who professes and is in the church (see note, *Kingdom of Heaven*—Mt.25:1).

1. Note the servant's reasons for not using the gifts the Lord had entrusted into his care.
   a. He misunderstood God. The unprofitable servant said that the Lord was too demanding, exacting, stern, and unsympathetic. He was a Lord who demanded too much and was too strict. He did not allow man the right to enjoy this world and its pleasures enough. The servant felt that if he spent his time in the service of the Lord, he would miss out on life. The demands of the Lord upon his time and affairs were just too burdensome. The servant was too involved in the world and its affairs to give that much time and effort to labor for the Lord and to concentrate upon His demands.
   b. He added that he feared—feared using and putting his talent to work for the Lord. Therefore, he hid the Lord's talent and did not use it to increase the Lord's kingdom.
2. Note God's reasons for condemning the servant; note the vast difference between what the Lord said and what the servant had to say.
   a. The unprofitable servant was wicked and slothful. He was *wicked* because he went about doing exactly what he wished to do, spending his time and energy on his own thing. He transgressed God's command and will. He was *slothful* because he did nothing with God's gift. He buried and hid it.
   b. The unprofitable servant was inconsistent, or perhaps a better description would be deceptive, double-minded, and self-contradictory. If he really believed the Lord was harsh and stern, he would have labored and worked his fingers to the bone. The servant was either lying or terribly deceived and self-contradictory—all in an attempt to justify his behavior.
   c. The unprofitable servant failed to use his gift. Christ was direct: the servant should have used the gift and served (v.27). He was without excuse.
3. Note the judgment of the unprofitable servant (v.28-30). Christ pronounced a twofold judgment upon him.
   a. The unprofitable servant was stripped of what he had. All that he had was taken from him. The servant's responsibility—*the glorious privilege of* working for and serving the Lord—was not to be his any more. *He was to have nothing else to do with the Lord. His responsibility* was taken from him and given to the one who proven most faithful.
   b. The unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness. He was cast out of the Lord's presence and banished forever. And there was no joy there, nothing but outer darkness and weeping and gnashing of teeth (see notes—Mt.8:12 and DEEPER STUDY # 4—25:30 for discussion and verses).

Thought 1. There are two gross errors in the thinking of the world.
1) Many persons think God is hard, stern, demanding, and unsympathetic. They are unwilling to follow such a hard, narrow way. So they bury, hide their God-given gifts and travel along the easy, broad way.
2) Others think that what they have is their own, and they can use it to live as they please. They think that what they do is no one's affair except their own, not even God's.

Thought 2. Few persons feel any responsibility to God for what they have, and even fewer feel the necessity to serve God faithfully and diligently.

Thought 3. Slothfulness, doing nothing for God, is one of the great sins of professing Christians (Ro.12:11; 2 Th.3:11; Heb.6:12; Pr.18:9; cp. 1 Cor.15:58).

Thought 4. Sins of omission are as serious as sins of commission. Being idle and slothful, being complacent and doing nothing, being lethargic and self-satisfied—all are condemning sins: sins that condemn a person to outer darkness where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Thought 5. Men deceive themselves. They rationalize their comfort, ease, and slothfulness by minimizing their gift. They think that they will be excused by *downing* or denying their gift.
- ⇒ Inactive righteousness is as condemning as active wickedness.
- ⇒ Idle service is as condemning as a busy sin.
- ⇒ Sleepy concern is as condemning as stimulating flesh.
- ⇒ Indulging comfort is as condemning as assault and robbery.
- ⇒ Being *unprofitable* is as condemning as being evil (cp. Mt.25:42-46).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(25:28-29) **Judgment**: see note—Lk.8:18 for discussion.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(25:30) **Outer Darkness**: a darkness outside some realm or space of light. The rewards have to do with the assignment of responsibility. Therefore, it is probably accurate to say that the judgment is a darkness outside the joy (light) of the Lord's presence and outside the joy of responsibility. What a darkness! To be cast into outer darkness away from the Lord's presence and to be stripped of responsibility—to be responsible for nothing throughout all eternity.

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:42).

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13).

"And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.24:51).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" (2 Pt.2:17).

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

"Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine" (Job 18:5).

"The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish" (Ps.112:10).

"Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness" (Pr.20:20).

	G. The Parable of the Sheep and Goats: The Final Judgment of Nations, 25:31-46	stranger, and took thee in?or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?	
1 The Son of Man is coming to judge a. Coming in glory b. Coming with angels[DS1] c. Coming to be enthroned d. Coming to gather all nations e. Coming to separate the nations, both sheep & goats 1) Sheep—favored seat 2) Goats—unfavored seat	31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.	40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:	2) A ministry to the Lord's "brethren"[DS2]
2 The judgment of sheep will occur a. The Judge: The King b. The invitation: Come c. The reward: The Kingdom d. The basis of judgment: Ministering to Christ	34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.	42 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.	**3 The judgment of goats will occur** a. The judgment 1) Cut off from God 2) Everlasting fire[DS3] b. The basis of judgment 1) A failure to minister 2) A selfish life 3) A spiritual blindness
e. The ministry defined 1) A humble, instinctive ministry: No thought of reward, only of helping people in need	37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a	46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.	**4 The judgment is for eternity**

DIVISION XV

THE MESSIAH'S PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END OF THE AGE: THE OLIVET DISCOURSE, 24:1-25:46

G. The Parable of the Sheep and Goats: The Final Judgment of Nations, 25:31-46

(25:31-46) **Introduction—The Final Judgment**: a person must guard against confusing the judgment of a nation's works with the judgment of individuals (sheep and goats). Judging nations is really judging individuals within them. Christ was painting a picture of the final judgment of all men. The final judgment will include *all nations* of men; it shall be the judgment of the *whole world*.

It is important to see that Jesus was judging two types of beings, sheep and goats, not the same type of being of whom some behaved in one way and some another. Note the sheep (truly born again believers) serve with Christ's heart of love *because they are sheep*. The ministry they rendered came from within. It was a natural ministry performed by sheep. It arose from a selfless, God-centered nature. Goats do not serve with Christ's heart of love *because they are goats*. The acts of kindness identified the sheep as sheep. The neglect of the goats identified them as goats. The sheep acted like sheep; that is, they served because they were sheep. And the goats acted like goats because they were goats. This is the very point of the picture. When Christ sets them at His hand, they are already sheep and goats. Judgment is passed upon the goats because they did not serve Christ, and blessing is bestowed upon the sheep because they served Christ. Scripture says, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith with my works" (Jas.2:18). The only faith that God knows and accepts is the faith that serves Christ by ministering to people. A man who says he has faith and does not minister to people is *only professing* faith in Christ. The true believer is "God's workmanship [creation], created in Christ Jesus unto [to do] good works" (Eph.2:10). God knows no faith apart from good works, that is, apart from ministering to the needs of people.

1. The Son of Man is coming to judge (v.31-33).
2. The judgment of sheep will occur (v.34-40).
3. The judgment of goats will occur (v.41-45).
4. The judgment is for eternity (v.46).

1 (25:31-33) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the Son of Man is coming to judge. Christ said five things about His coming in these three verses.

1. When He comes, He is coming in glory. This means at least two things. First, He is coming in His glorified body, that is, His transfigured body (Mt.17:2); in a body full of light and splendor; in a body shining as the sun in all the brilliance of God's glory. Second, He is not coming in the humiliation which He suffered as a man, but He is coming as the Son of Man and as the King of the universe.
2. When He comes, He is coming with His holy angels. An innumberable number of glorious beings will accompany Him, demonstrating the glory and honor of His person as God. The holy angels will be the attendants and ministers of His justice.
3. When He comes, He is coming to be enthroned. When He sits upon "the throne of His glory," He sits in judgment. He will become the One before whom every knee shall bow (Ph.2:9-11). He will become the Judge of the whole universe, the Judge who is exalted above all (Rev.20:11f).
4. When He comes, He is coming to gather all nations. All men will be gathered by the angels and brought before Him. The word *nations* stresses that every single country, place, nationality, race, creed, color, language—every living citizen will be gathered before Him in judgment.
5. When He comes, He is coming to separate the nations.
   a. Throughout history, there has been a mixture of sheep and goats, of good and evil. The tares and the wheat have grown together. The sinner and the godly have lived together...
      - in the same world
      - in the same nations
      - in the same cities
      - in the same employments
      - in the same churches
      - in the same families

      When Christ comes, however, there is going to be a separation—a separation of the good from the bad, of the sheep from the goats (cp. Mt.13:49; Ezk. 34:17).
   b. The sheep will be placed on His right hand and the goats on His left hand. The sheep represent genuine believers. They are...
      - the ones who believe in God's "only begotten Son" (Jn.3:16).
      - the ones who are truly "born again" (Jn.3:3, 7).
      - the "good and faithful" servants (Mt.25:21, 23).
      - the "righteous" (Mt.25:37).
      - the ones who are "patient" and "continue in well doing" (Ro.2:7).
      - the ones who "seek for glory and honor and immortality" (Ro.2:7).
      - the ones who "work good" (Ro.2:10).

      Note that God sets the sheep at His right hand, the position of honor, glory, acceptance, and favor.

      The goats represent *all* unbelievers, those who never professed Christ and those who professed Christ but were not genuine believers. They are...
      - the "unprofitable servants" (Mt.25:30).
      - the "wicked and slothful servants" (Mt.25:26).
      - the "cursed" (Mt.25:41).
      - the ones who "are contentious" (Ro.2:8).
      - the ones who "do not obey the truth" (Ro.2:8).
      - the ones who "obey unrighteousness" (Ro.2:8).
      - the ones who "do evil" (Ro.2:9).

Thought 1. Judgment is coming. It is inevitable; it cannot be avoided nor evaded. No person can escape the coming judgment of God. God is going to judge the world by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

> **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn.5:22).**
>
> **"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick [the living] and dead" (Acts 10:42).**
>
> **"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).**
>
> **"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).**
>
> **"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).**
>
> **"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim.4:1).**
>
> **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev.20:12).**

Thought 2. Very simply put, the day is coming when every citizen of every nation and tribe on earth will stand before Christ—stand either in His *favor* or in His *disfavor*.

Thought 3. Note the two claims to deity that Christ makes.
1) He calls Himself "the Son of Man": He is the Ideal Man. As the Ideal Man, He is to judge the sons of men.
2) He says that "the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory." He said this three days before He was killed.

Thought 4. Note a significant fact: Christ is *now* sitting on the throne at the right hand of God. There is a difference between the throne of grace and the throne of judgment pictured in this passage. We can now come to the throne of grace for help (Heb.4:16). But when Christ returns in glory, it will be too late to receive help. His throne will be a *throne of judgment* to which there will be no approach apart from judgment.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(25:31) **Angels—Jesus Christ, Return**: when Christ returns, He will be accompanied by angels who will serve as His ministers throughout the judgment.
⇒ They shall gather the tares, the children of the wicked one (Mt.13:38-40).
⇒ They shall gather the elect (Mt.24:31).
⇒ They shall witness the believers' glory (Lk.12:8).
⇒ They shall call believers together to meet the Lord in the air (Mt.24:31; 1 Th.4:16).
⇒ They shall witness the torment of the wicked (Rev.14:10).

2 (25:34-40) **Judgment**: the judgment of sheep will occur.

1. The Judge is the King. Christ sits upon His *throne of glory* and reigns as "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords" (Rev.19:16).
2. The invitation is "come, ye blessed of my Father." The sheep are the blessed, the beloved of God (see note—Eph.1:3). The word *come* is the picture of entering the very presence of God Himself and being privileged to remain there forever.
3. The reward is an inheritance—the inheritance of the Kingdom of God.
   a. *An inheritance* is a gift. It is given because the giver cares enough to give it, and it becomes one's own possession as much as it was the former owner's.
   b. The inheritance is a *kingdom*. It is a place of responsibility and duty, of ruling and reigning, of honor and joy, of wealth and glory.
   c. The inheritance or the kingdom had been *prepared* for the sheep (cp. Jn.14:2-3). It was built to suit them and designed for their habitation. "All things are [prepared] for their sakes" (2 Cor.4:15).
   d. The kingdom had been prepared from *the foundation of the world*. It was in the eternal plan and will of God (Eph.1:4-5, 11-12).
4. The basis of judgment—the reason the sheep are given the kingdom—is because they ministered to Christ. Several important facts need to be noted.
   a. The sheep ministered *to Christ*; that is, what they did was done "for Christ's sake." They ministered "as believers" in Him.
   b. The sheep ministered because they loved their brothers (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt. 25:40; cp. 1 Jn.4:7-8, 12, 20-21).
   c. Christ is not disregarding or minimizing the part of faith in salvation. We shall be judged for both our confession of faith and our works (Mt.10:32; Lk.12:8; Ro.10:9-10; 2 Cor.5:10).
   d. Note that the works are simple works, some of which anyone can do. They are expressions of care and love that *can* serve as the basis of judgment, as the basis for judging anyone.
5. The ministry is defined by Christ; He shares just what He means by ministering. Note it is the righteous who ask Him what He means.
   a. The ministry is a humble, instinctive ministry. It has no thought of reward, only of helping people in need. The true believer serves Christ because Christ has done so much for him. It is "the love of Christ" which constrains him (2 Cor.5:14). *Even while he is serving, a humble servant knows something...*
      - He is not even worthy to be serving.
      - He has done, is doing, and will do so little.
      - He deserves nothing.

      He is serving simply because he loves Jesus and the people of the earth. All he knows and wishes to know is Jesus. To serve Jesus and to help all those for whom Jesus died is within him instinctively.
   b. The ministry is a ministry to the Lord's brothers (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.25:40). The thought here is of critical importance. It determines a man's destiny.

      Christ has so *identified* Himself with men in their pain and suffering that He counts men as one with Himself. Christ clearly said that if we minister to men, we are ministering to Him personally. He is identified as one with His people (Mt.8:17; cp. Is.53:4). He accused Saul of actually persecuting Him when Saul was threatening and slaughtering Christians (Acts 9:4).

> **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).**
>
> **"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk.10:43-44).**
>
> **"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk.10:36-37).**
>
> **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).**
>
> **"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:16).**

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ....As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:2, 10).

"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).

Thought 1. Several points are clearly pictured in these verses.
1) The rightful position of Christ before the world: He is the King.
2) The glorious inheritance of the believer.
3) The initial importance of ministry.

Thought 2. Think how many *lonely* of this world become His. How many of the hungry, the thirsty, the strangers, the naked, the sick, the prisoners become His? (Cp. Mt.1:26-27.)

Thought 3. No ministry and no amount of suffering on this earth are so lowly that the ministry and suffering will not be worth the glory which shall be revealed in us (Ro.8:18).

Thought 4. There are those who will give huge sums of money and help enormously if they can be recognized. But such is rooted in selfishness; it is pandering to our egos and desires for recognition and esteem.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(25:40) **Brethren**: without exception, Christ is consistent in His use of the word brothers. His brothers are His disciples (cp. Mt.23:8; 12:46-50; 28:10; Mk.3:31-35; Lk.8:21; Jn.20:17-18). Jesus is saying that the nations (the leaders and citizens of the nations) are to be judged for their actions toward His followers and their message. If they have received His people and their message with open arms and with righteous and brotherly behavior, then they will show that they have definitely received Him.

3 (25:41-45) **Judgment**: the judgment of goats will occur.

1. The judgment will be twofold.
   a. The goats will be cut off and separated from God. Christ will say, "Depart from me"—words that mean a world of misery, a world of outer darkness, a world of weeping and gnashing of teeth, a world of everlasting punishment, a world without God and hope (cp. Mt.25:30, 46). The goats rejected Christ and refused to be identified with Him while on earth. When they stand before Him, they will never have been associated with Him. Therefore, they will not be allowed to associate with Him.

      Note what Christ calls the goats: "Ye cursed." They did not choose to be called "brothers" (v.40), nor did they choose to inherit the kingdom. They will, therefore, be called "cursed;" and they will inherit the curse (Gal.3:10). As Scripture says "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb.10:31).
   b. The goats will be placed into "everlasting fire" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; note—Rev.9:2. Cp. Rev.20:2.) Note three things. It is a place of anguish, torment, and punishment (cp. Mt.25:30, 46 with notes listed above). It is everlasting, having no end. It is prepared for the devil and his angels, not for man.
2. The basis of judgment and the reasons why the goats will be separated from God are revealing.
   a. The goats failed to minister. Very simply, the goats are persons who fail to help the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the prisoner. They are persons who do not become *involved* in meeting the needs of people. They are persons who do not dedicate themselves to meeting the desperate needs of a corruptible world (cp. Mt.20:28. Cp. Jn.20:21; Lk.9:23.)
   b. The goats lived a selfish life. The goats are people who live a life of comfort and ease, a life of no concern and care, a life of materialism and things, a life of pleasure and indulgence, a life of money and plenty. They live selfishly while the world around them is suffering with hunger and sickness and death.
   c. The goats were spiritually blind. The goats are people who refuse to see the truth about Christ, that He *identifies Himself* with the suffering masses, with the pain and need of individuals. The goats refuse to open their eyes to see those lying all around, those desperately in need: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, the prisoner. They refuse to see the *stamp* of God, His glorious love for every man. They refuse to see that they are failing to help Christ when they fail to help the needy.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:43).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores" (Lk.16:20-21).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother" (Dt.15:7).

"[Woe to them] that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall" (Amos 6:4).

Thought 1. Christ says to the goats, "Depart from me." Where are the goats sent?

⇒ It is not a place of comfort and pleasure. It is a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

⇒ It is not a place of light and justice. It is outer darkness.

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13; cp. Mt.25:30).

⇒ It is not a place of short duration. It is everlasting.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

⇒ It is not a place of good friends and fellowship. It is the company of the devil.

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:10-15; cp. Mt.25:41).

Thought 2. Note the *striking* difference between the sheep and the goats.

⇒ The sheep heard "come"; the goats heard "depart."
⇒ The sheep are called "blessed"; the goats are called "cursed."
⇒ The sheep are invited to "inherit"; the goats are "cursed."
⇒ The sheep receive a kingdom; the goats receive "everlasting fire."
⇒ The sheep dwell in a place *prepared* for God's people; the goats dwell in a place prepared for the devil and his angels.
⇒ The sheep spend eternity with God and their Christian brothers; the goats spend eternity with the devil and his angels.

Thought 3. Note a critical point. Goats are not condemned for what they did, but for what they did not do. Their sin was the sin of omission, not commission. But note how terrible the sin is, how many destitute people were left suffering all through life because a goat did not help them.

Thought 4. Selfishness, indulgence, extravagance, hoarding—all that leads to and indicates the neglect of others—will visibly condemn a man when he stands before Christ. (For a clear study of this point see outline and notes—Mt.19:16-22; 19:23-26; 19:27-30.)

Thought 5. Note that the unprofitable servant's sin is the same as the goats: the sin of neglect and omission. Each neglected to do what they should have done. (See outline and notes—Mt.25:14-30.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(25:41) **Everlasting fire** (to pur to aionion): this literally reads, "fire which is everlasting." It is a fire that lasts forever, burns on and on. Note the fire is not prepared for men, but for the devil and his angels. God never intended men to spend eternity in everlasting fire. Men who choose to follow the devil in his evil ways are choosing to be with the devil wherever he is. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Hell*—Mt.5:22 for more discussion.)

4 (25:46) **Judgment**: it is critical to note the words of Christ: "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment." The judgment is for eternity. There is no second chance; judgment is unchangeable.

"The righteous [shall go] into life *eternal*." Life eternal is also permanent and unchangeable. Note: it is *life* that is eternal, not some dreamy, unconscious, or semiconscious state of being. The sheep will live, and their life will be eternal, never ending.

	CHAPTER 26	2 Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.	a. Was tied to the Passover[DS1] b. Was Son of Man dying c. Was caused by betrayal d. To be by crucifixion
	XVI. THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66	3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,	**2 Jesus' death was plotted by the religionists[DS2]** a. Was planned by all the leaders
	A. The Messiah's Death Explained & Plotted, 26:1-5 (Mk.14:1-2; Lk.22:1-2)	4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.	b. Was to be by deception 1) To arrest on false charges & kill 2) To arrest quietly, after the pilgrims had left the feast[DS3]
1 Jesus' death was explained to His disciples	And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,	5 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.	

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

A. The Messiah's Death Explained and Plotted, 26:1-5

(26:1-5) **Introduction**: it was apparently Wednesday of Jesus' last week (see notes—Mt.21:1-11; 21:12-16; 21:17-22; 21:23-27). He was to be killed on Friday, just two days away. In these few verses, Matthew gives a glimpse into the drama that was rapidly building. Two scenes are pictured: Jesus was intensely preparing His disciples for His death, and the religionists were behind closed doors demonically plotting His death.

What Jesus explained about His death is explicit: He was to be betrayed and crucified. What the religionists plotted was explicit: they were going to kill Jesus.

1. Jesus' death was explained to His disciples (v.1-2).
   a. His death was tied to the Passover.
   b. His death was the Son of Man dying.
   c. His death was caused by betrayal.
   d. His death was to be by crucifixion.
2. Jesus' death was plotted by the religionists (v.3-5).
   a. His death was planned by all the leaders.
   b. His death was to be by deception
      1) He was to be arrested on false charges and killed.
      2) He was to be arrested quietly after the pilgrims had left the feast.

1 (26:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus' death was explained to His disciples. In just two days, He was to be crucified. The disciples had to be strengthened for the hour of trial lest their dreams become dashed upon the rocks of despair and they loose faith. Remember, their thoughts were focused on the Messiah's restoring the kingdom of David to Israel. They were thinking that He, the Messiah, was going to deliver Israel from Roman bondage. The Messiah would free the nation and establish it as the greatest nation on earth under the rule of God Himself (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). There was the very live possibility that the apostles could lose faith when they saw His being put to death by the hands of mere men. It could appear as though He were being forsaken by God! Christ had to do everything He could to prepare them. There were four basic facts about His death that would help and help tremendously.

1. Christ's death was tied to the Passover (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:7; DEEPER STUDY # 2—22:19-20). He was foretelling the disciples the exact day He was to be killed, and it was to be the very same day the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed. And note, He was tying His death to the sacrifice of the lamb. As John the Baptist had proclaimed earlier, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn.1:29, 36).

> **"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:54-58).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:19).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

2. Christ's death was the Son of Man Himself dying (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). "Son of Man" means that He perfectly identified with man in human flesh. But it means more, much more: it means that He is the Ideal Man, the Man who lived a perfect and sinless life. By living without sin, He has become the Ideal and Perfect Man, the Pattern Man for all men. It is the Son of Man who knows our trials and hurts, pain and suffering. It was the Son of Man who lived a perfect life and who secured a perfect righteousness—the Son of Man who died for us. And because He died, His Ideal righteousness and Ideal death can *stand* for our righteousness and death.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3).

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (1 Jn.3:5).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev.5:9).

He is our Ideal righteousness and life. When we seek for a Savior, it is He for whom we must seek. It was the Son of Man Himself who was to die, the only Man who could die as the Ideal Man; and because He was the Ideal Man, His death can cover all men. His death is the Ideal death, the Pattern death which covers any man who calls upon Him.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

3. Christ's death was caused by betrayal. One of the disciples was going to betray Him (see notes—Mt.26:20-25; 27:3-5; Mk.14:10-11; Lk.22:4-6; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.13:18; note—13:21-26). Note that Christ used the present tense, "is betrayed." The betrayal was certain, immediate, staring Him right in the face.

4. Christ's death was to be by crucifixion. (Death by crucifixion is graphically described in the outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44; notes—Mk.15:16-41; Lk.23:26-49; Jn.19:16-37.)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:8-10).

Thought 1. The Passover clearly shows *the glorious preparation* of God for salvation, for taking away the sins of the world. The Paschal lamb was given by God as a picture of the giving of His Son for the sins of the world.

Thought 2. Jesus died for us. He has taken away the sins of the world.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18. See note—Mt.17:22-23; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—20:18.)

Thought 3. Jesus did all He could to prepare His disciples for the great trial they were to face in witnessing His death. He does all He can to prepare us for whatever lies ahead. Just think of the things He has told us that lie out in the future. How well He has prepared us—lest we be caught off guard (see outlines and notes—Mt.24:1-25:46).

Thought 4. Jesus' death not only saves us, but it encourages us to bear the trials of life.

> **"For consider Him that endured such contradiction (hostility) of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(26:2) **Passover—Jesus Christ, Death**: note Jesus' words "ye know." The disciples did know both facts. The Passover was only two days away, and Jesus had been telling them for months that He was to be killed. Why, then, was He pointing out facts that the disciples already knew? What Jesus was doing was *revealing* to the disciples that His death was tied to the Passover (see outline and notes—Mt.26:17-19). The Passover throughout history had pictured His death. Christ was fulfilling the Passover with the shedding of His own blood upon the cross.

1. Historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex.11:1f). God had pronounced judgment, the taking of the firstborn, upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As God prepared to execute the final judgment, those who believed God were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house.
2. Symbolically, the passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The "lamb without blemish" pictured His sinless life (cp. Jn.1:29), and the "blood sprinkled on the door posts" pictured His blood shed for the believer. It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn. The "eating of the lamb" pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The unleavened bread (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one's life and household (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Feast of Unleavened Bread*—Mt.26:17).

2 (26:3-5) **Religionists, Plot Jesus' Death**: Jesus' death was plotted by the religionists. Matthew painted a dramatic picture. While Christ was on one side of town preparing His disciples for His death, the religionists were on the other side of town plotting His death. And note: they were in the house of the high priest behind closed doors.

1. Christ's death was plotted by all the leaders: the chief priests, the Scribes, and the elders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.16:21; DEEPER STUDY # 2—26:3).
   a. Note where they met, how deceptive it was. They met in the home (palace) of the high priest, not in the official court. It was a secret plot, to be kept quiet until the right moment for the arrest and murder.
   b. Note who it was that took the lead in the plot: Caiaphas, the high priest himself, the very person who was supposed to be the spiritual leader of the people.
2. Christ's death was to be wrought by deception and lies.
   a. He was to be arrested on false charges and killed (see outline and notes—Mt.26:60-66).
   b. He was to be arrested quietly, after all the pilgrims had left the feast to return home. The *feast day* refers to all eight days of the feast. The danger of an uprising would not have passed until they had all left the city. Of course, the threat of an uprising was removed by the willingness of Judas' to betray Christ. In the crowded masses of about two million bodies within the city, Judas was able to show them where Christ was and to quietly identify Him. He was able to show them how Christ could be quietly taken in the dark of the night (cp. Mt.26:47-50).

> **"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Ro.3:13).**
>
> **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived" (1 Cor.6:9).**
>
> **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal.6:7).**
>
> **"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:6).**
>
> **"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:7-8).**
>
> **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas.1:22).**
>
> **"For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful" (Ps.36:2).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).**

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

Thought 1. Note how even the most religious can be gripped by the fear of losing position, power, recognition, esteem, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12). How worldly, how attached to the things of the world even the most religious become!

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(26:3) **High Priest—Chief Priests—Caiaphas**: the office of High Priest began with Aaron and his sons (Ex.28:1). The office was hereditary and was for life, but when the Romans conquered Palestine, they made the office political. They chose their own man, a man who would cooperate with the Roman government. Finding such a man was often difficult. For example, between 37 B.C. and 67 A.D. there were at least twenty-eight High Priests. These men were greatly respected and highly honored throughout life, and even when they were removed from power by the Romans, they were still consulted by other Jewish leaders. The ex-high Priest, Annas, was a prime example. He still wielded unusual power (cp. Jn.18:13; Acts 4:6). He and the others who had served as High Priests or else held the top positions of leadership were also called *chief priests*.

The term of office for a High Priest was determined solely by the Romans. The Romans let a High Priest reign so long as he pleased them. The reign of the twenty-eight averaged only about three years, except for Caiaphas. Caiaphas was High Priest for about eighteen years (18 A.D. to 36 A.D.). Apparently he was a master at intrigue and compromise. This throws great light on his fearing an uproar and wishing to wait until the feast was over to arrest Jesus (Mt.26:5). There was the danger that the people might rally to support Jesus if they saw Him arrested; so many believed Him to be a great prophet that a serious uprising was a real possibility. Caiaphas knew the Romans would hold him responsible and remove him from office. He would lose everything he had. The shrewdness of the man was seen in the strategy he laid. They were to arrest Jesus quietly after the masses had left the feast.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(26:5) **Passover**: the atmosphere of Jerusalem at the Passover Feast was always explosive. The city was overly packed with pilgrims. Josephus, the notable Jewish historian, says that by law each sacrifice had to represent at least ten persons. He reports over a quarter million sacrificial lambs were slain; therefore, he estimates that two million or more pilgrims were celebrating at this particular feast (Josephus, *Wars*. 6. 9:3). (See notes—Mt.26:3-5.)

	B. The Messiah Anointed for Death: A Picture of Sacrificial Love & Faith, 26:6-13 (Mk.14:3-9; Jn.12:1-8)	have been sold for much, and given to the poor. 10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. 11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. 12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. 13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.	**4 The anointing was a grasping of opportunity**
1 In Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, a woman anointed Jesus[DS1]	6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,		
2 The anointing was an act of love & faith in the Lord Jesus[DS2]	7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.		**5 The anointing pointed toward the burial of Jesus, toward His death**
3 The anointing was a sacrificial gift, a commitment beyond common sense	8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? 9 For this ointment might		**6 The anointing was an eternal memorial**

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

B. The Messiah Anointed for Death: A Picture of Sacrificial Love & Faith, 26:6-13

(26:6-13) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Anointed—Jesus Christ, Death—Love—Worship**: Mark and John also record this anointing of Jesus. John says it actually took place six days before the Passover (Jn.12:1). Matthew, as pointed out before, arranges events by subjects. He is discussing the death of Christ, so He places it here. John also identifies the woman as Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha. Matthew says that they were in the house of Simon the leper, and John says Martha served (Jn.12:2). Apparently Simon the leper was the husband of Martha (although others feel that he could be her father or father-in-law) (Mt.26:6; cp. Jn.12:2).

What happened was this: the multitudes were flowing into the city for the Passover, and the excitement of the Passover was filling the air. There was a sense that something significant was about to happen. Of course, Mary had no idea of the events that were to take place in the last week of Jesus' life, events which were to begin the very next morning with the triumphal entry. But Mary, along with everyone else, sensed that the time for the kingdom to be established was at hand. Mary, who was always sitting at Jesus' feet, sat there again, gazing into His eyes. As she gazed, she sensed two things. She sensed the need to repent of her recent criticism of Jesus (cp. Jn.12:3; see note—Jn.12:3), and she sensed a foreboding of trouble surrounding Him. She saw within His eyes a weight so heavy that she was *drawn* to express the most profound faith and appreciation in Him possible. She took the most precious thing she had, an invaluable bottle of perfume, and anointed Him as the Messiah, the anointed One of her life.

Mary's act was one of the most loving and precious acts ever shown to Jesus, if not *the* most loving and precious act. It was an act of supreme love and adoration. What Jesus had to say about it shows this (v.10-13). Just how loving an act it was can be seen by picturing all that was going on throughout the city at this time and all that was yet to happen: the plotting, the intrigue, the hostility, the attacks, the planned murder, the crowds streaming into the city by the teeming thousands—crowds who created a worldly, carnival atmosphere. Even Simon's own household had an enormous crowd in it with all the disciples present. Just imagine the noise from the conversation alone. Yet there sat Mary at Jesus' feet, once again soaking up all He said, loving and adoring Him. He had done so much for their family. Simon the leper was apparently her brother-in-law (husband to Martha). He had probably been healed by her Lord. Her brother, Lazarus, had been raised from the dead. They had all been saved by Him. How she loved Him! How she wished to express her love and faith in Him! He seemed so tired, so weary, so foreboding; there was something in His eyes that expressed His concern and preoccupation as she gazed into them. She wanted to help and encourage Him, to show Him that she cared for and loved Him, so she arose and went to get the most precious thing she had to give Him. And she gave it in the most precious way she knew: she anointed her Lord, even as David and all the kings of Israel had been anointed in the past. She anointed Him, not from any official position, but from her heart. It is for this reason that she lives in the memory of all as a memorial. In the behalf of all, she anointed the Lord to be the One who was to experience death for all. In behalf of all, she anointed Him as the Lord and Savior, the true Messiah of all hearts and lives who worship and serve Him as the anointed One of God.

1. In Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, a woman anointed Jesus (v.6).
2. The anointing was an act of love and faith in the Lord Jesus (v.7).
3. The anointing was a sacrificial gift, a commitment beyond common sense (v.8-9).
4. The anointing was a grasping of opportunity (v.10-11).
5. The anointing pointed toward the burial of Jesus, His death (v.12).
6. The anointing was an eternal memorial (v.13).

1 (26:6) **Bethany**: see note—Mt.21:17.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(26:6) **Simon the Leper**: Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper. Little is known about Simon. He was probably a leper who had been healed by Jesus. Tradition says he was the husband of Martha. Scripture also seems to indicate this. Matthew says Jesus was dining in the house of Simon the leper, and John says Martha was serving. This would seem to indicate a close relationship. Martha was probably his wife or older daughter. If she were Simon's wife, then her brother and sister, Lazarus and Mary, seemed to be living with her and Simon. Note that Simon's house was large enough to entertain Jesus and His disciples all at once. On such occasions, he would probably have had servants serving under the direction of his wife and not an older daughter. However, if Martha were Simon's oldest daughter, then Simon was the father of Mary and Lazarus as well. It was while Jesus was in Simon the leper's home that Mary came up to Jesus and anointed Him.

Thought 1. Note a striking point: the man who welcomes the Lord into his home will learn much about the Lord. Just imagine the experience Simon the leper had by inviting Jesus to dinner! The important thing to know about Simon the leper is this: he welcomed Jesus into his home.

Thought 2. Note the closeness of the family. Throughout Scripture they are mentioned together, in particular Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. When Christ is a constant guest in a family's home, there is usually a close bond that does not exist otherwise.

Thought 3. Mary's love for Jesus was a most unusual love. Its depth is clearly seen in this most wonderful act (see note—Mt.26:6-13).

2 (26:7) **Faith—Love**: the anointing was an act of love and faith in the Lord Jesus. Very simply put, Mary anointed Jesus to show Him how deeply she loved Him and believed Him to be the true Messiah, "the anointed One of God" (see notes—Mt.26:6-13; cp. Mt.1:18). He was her Savior, Lord, and King. He had done so much for her and her family. She wanted Him to know how much she appreciated, loved, and believed Him.

Something else needs to be noted as well. Mary sensed something within Jesus: a foreboding, a preoccupation of mind, a heaviness of heart, a weight of tremendous pressure. Her heart reached out to Him and wanted to encourage and help Him. Being a young woman in the presence of so many men, she was not allowed to vocally express herself that much. Such a privilege was not allowed women of that day, so she did all that she could: she acted. She arose and went for the most precious gift she could think of—a most costly bottle of perfume. And she gave it to Him in such a way that He would know that at least one person truly loved Him and believed Him to be the Messiah. Her hope was that such faith and love would boost His spirit.

Thought 1. How do we show our love and faith in Christ? Imagine how difficult it was for Mary to do what she did in the presence of so many. She set aside pride and shyness in order to demonstrate her love and faith in Him. How far are we willing to go in order to show our love and faith for Christ?

Thought 2. Note how Mary demonstrated her love and faith.

1) Mary gave the most precious thing she had to the Lord.

> **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).**
>
> **"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**
>
> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**

2) Mary bore the witness of her love and faith in Christ publicly. Her love and faith in Christ was demonstrated for all to witness.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(26:7) **Anointing**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 10:38.

3 (26:8-9) **Commitment—Sacrifice**: the anointing was a sacrificial gift, a commitment beyond common sense.

1. The anointing was sacrificial. It was worth 300 denarii. A denarius was a small silver coin worth a laborer's daily wage (Mt.20:2), so the perfume was costly, valued at approximately a year's wage (based on a six-day working week).

There is another fact to note about the sacrificial gift. Perfume was a precious item to Eastern women. Mary was taking a most precious possession and giving it to her Lord.

2. The anointing was a commitment beyond common sense. Imagine the scene: a bottle of perfume worth a whole year's wage being broken and poured upon the head of Christ. Common sense would say to the genuine Christian, "Sell it. Use the money for the poor, the hungry, and the homeless." This is just what the disciples did; in fact, they were indignant and vexed about it. They questioned the act; they considered it a waste. After all, if she wished to anoint Christ, she could have used a less expensive perfume. But the disciples failed to see two points.

a. Mary was driven to express her faith in her Lord and her love for Him *personally*. The most meaningful way she could do this was to anoint Him as her Lord with the most expensive perfume she possessed.

b. The most significant person in Mary's life was the Lord. He was the Messiah, the Savior and Lord of her life and family. She wished to show Him that He was deserving of all she was and had.

The point is this: the disciples questioned what Mary did, just as most people would. In the eyes of the world, they would be right. A cheaper perfume could have been used, and not just a few, but a multitude of poor could have been helped with so much money. But what they and the world fail to see is that true love has to be expressed in a personal way. Love is never known unless it is experienced and shared by the believer.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Mt.7:3; cp. v.1-5).

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not" (Jas.4:2).

Thought 1. True love sacrifices self, gives of itself—all that one is and has. Love is not really shown when we give only what we can afford. It is when we sacrifice, dig deep into our lives and money, giving of ourselves all we are and have, that we really show love. The more we sacrifice, the more we demonstrate our love.

Thought 2. There is a strong message in Mary's act—a strong message on giving much and giving sacrificially. But note: the gift and sacrifice were made out of a heart of genuine love and faith in Christ. This is the most important thing to keep in mind about Mary's gift: her heart and life were wholly focused upon Christ.

Thought 3. Sacrifice is sometimes more important than common sense. Sometimes sacrifice should take precedence over common sense. Sometimes common sense must be stretched into sacrifice. Sacrifice is what brings about enlarged horizons, growth, development, advancement, more and more of whatever we are doing. In fact, the more we sacrifice under God's care, the more growth, development, and advancement we see. Name the field, name the area, name the work—the principle holds truth. The more we (or society) sacrifice under God's care, the more advancement we witness. There is a place for common sense, but there is a greater place for sacrifice.

However, there is one area that we often shrink from and ignore and do not allow the principle to take effect: the area of giving money or of tithing. We do not want our *easy living* and wealth to be touched. Because of evil hearts, men have allowed money and the power to purchase to become the object and judge of life. Too often a man's image, esteem, power, influence, and rights are determined by how much he has.

4 (26:10-11) **Love—Works—Service**: the anointing was a grasping of opportunity. The disciples censored Mary and condemned her act, but Christ defended her. He gave two reasons why Mary's act was justified.

1. Mary's anointing was a *good work*, a work poured out upon Him *personally*; that is, it was a *personal* gift. Yes, it was an extravagant gift, but it was a gift to Christ Himself. It was not a gift to an idea or program of His. This fact, that it was done to Him personally, makes the difference.

2. Mary's opportunity to show her love for Christ would not always be present. Christ was soon to be gone and ascended to the Father. Bodily, He would not be present for Mary to show her love. The poor would always be present to whom Mary could minister, but not Jesus. He would be gone. If she were ever going to demonstrate her love and faith, she had to do it now. The opportunity had to be grasped now; it would soon be gone.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Ph.3:13-14).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).

Thought 1. Note four lessons.

1) Opportunities do pass. In fact, they pass ever so rapidly. If we do not act and act immediately, we miss the chance forever. The privilege of witnessing, helping, growing, advancing, improving, and discovering—on and on the opportunities arise. If we fail to act, the opportunities pass on never to return, and we lose the chance to ever reach out and help and improve.
2) The great tragedy of most lives can be summed up in two simple words: missed opportunity.
3) What others think, even their condemnation and censorship, should never keep us from showing our love and faith in the Lord Jesus. Our witness should always be strong for Christ, just as strong as Mary's was: strong in grace and kindness, in courage and unashamedness.
4) Our works and gifts should first of all be given to Christ personally. Our thoughts should be upon Him, concentrating and not wandering as we serve and give. They should be performed and given as though they were being laid at His feet.

5 (26:12) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the anointing pointed toward the burial of Jesus, that is, His death. This is exactly what Christ said: "She did it for my burial." Some commentators think that Mary knew what she was doing, that she understood what Christ had been predicting, that He was to die soon. They feel Mary grasped the fact when others did not, but this is unlikely. The atmosphere surrounding the Lord's followers was that the kingdom was about to be set up. However, whether she knew what she was doing or not, Christ took her act and *applied it* to His death. He said that her love and faith and the anointing of His body pointed toward His death. In simple terms, Mary's love and faith, gift and anointing was *a witness of anticipation*. She was witnessing to the Lord's death by looking ahead to it.

Today, the believer's love and faith, gift and anointing *are a witness of fact*. The believer is to witness to the Lord's death by looking back to it. It is a fact: He did die for the sins of the world (cp. 1 Jn.2:1-2).

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**

Thought 1. Every act of love and faith for Christ is a witness to Christ's death, and the more we sacrifice in giving money and in working, the stronger our witness is to His death. The depth and strength of our belief in His death can be measured by the depth and strength of our sacrifice. The death of Christ would be seen much clearer if we demonstrated stronger love and faith in Him, or to put it another way, if we sacrificed more for Him.

Thought 2. Mary witnessed and pointed to the Lord's death by honoring and anointing His body publicly. We witness and point to the Lord's death by honoring and anointing (proclaiming) the fact of His death.

6 (26:13) **Devotion**: the anointing was an eternal memorial. Christ honored Mary because she had so greatly honored Him.

Several things about Mary stand as an ideal for all: her deep love and faith in Christ, her sacrificial gift, her courage in proclaiming her strong love and faith by anointing Jesus before a room full of men. Such devotion and love could not be allowed to fade from history. Christ memorialized it. He will memorialize the faith and love of any believer who so sacrifices for Him—throughout all of eternity.

> **"Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Mt.26:13).**
>
> **"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Tim.1:5).**
>
> **"Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (Ps.112:6).**
>
> **"The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot" (Pr.10:7).**

Thought 1. Mary proclaimed the gospel, the death of Christ from a heart of love and faith. This is what Christ wants: hearts that love and believe Him and will proclaim His death. Thus, He has seen to it that Mary's act lives on eternally.

	C. The Messiah Betrayed by Judas: The Picture of a Ruined Life, 26:14-16 (Mk.14:10-11;Lk.22:3-6)
1 **Picture 1: A great call rejected**	14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,
2 **Picture 2: The gnawing sin of greed & the love of money**	15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.
3 **Picture 3: Deceit & intrigue**	16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

C. The Messiah Betrayed by Judas: The Picture of a Ruined Life, 26:14-16

(26:14-16) **Introduction**: Judas stands as a great warning to every man including the strongest believer. Judas was one of the original twelve apostles chosen by Christ. He was a man with so much potential that he was chosen to serve with God's very own Son during His earthly journey, but he failed and came ever so short. Just why he failed needs to be closely studied and heeded by all.

1. Picture 1: a great call rejected (v.14).
2. Picture 2: the gnawing sin of greed and the love of money (v.15).
3. Picture 3: deceit and intrigue (v.16).

1 (26:14) **Judas**: the first picture is that of Judas' great call. Judas' great tragedy was his failure as one of the twelve apostles. Just think about the fact. Judas had been personally chosen by Christ. He had some great potential, some unique qualities that attracted the Lord. Therefore, the Lord gave Judas the most honored opportunity in all the world to develop his abilities—the privilege of walking with Him personally.

⇒ Judas knew Christ face to face.
⇒ Judas walked with Christ day after day.
⇒ Judas heard most, if not all, that Christ taught.
⇒ Judas saw most, if not all, that Christ did.
⇒ Judas was trained to be an apostle by Christ Himself.
⇒ Judas served as an apostle, even on witnessing tours, under Christ's personal command (Mk.6:7f).
⇒ Judas was warned of sin's consequences by Christ Himself.

Nevertheless, despite all the opportunities, Judas' life was a terrible tragedy. He was so gifted and had so much opportunity, yet he lost it all. Why? Simply because he turned his back on the Lord Jesus Christ. He went to "the chief priests" of this earth and put his fate into their hands instead of placing his life into the hands of Christ. He had allowed his craving for more and more to blind him to the truth about Christ—that He was truly the Son of God who demanded loyalty, even when man could not understand the events and happenings that surrounded Him (see note—Mt.26:15. This note will explain what is behind this statement.) Judas simply did not believe that Christ was truly God's Son. Therefore, he did not give his heart and life to Christ—not really. He was a follower of Christ; he was even one of the first twelve apostles, but he was not a genuine believer who entrusted his life to Christ.

> **"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:26-28).**
>
> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**

Thought 1. Judas' great potential and terrible tragedy teaches so much.

1) It is not ability, but availability that counts.
2 Gifts do not assure permanent success; Christ alone assures permanent (eternal) success.
3) Walking among godly people does not assure salvation; allowing Christ to enter one's heart and life is the only assurance of salvation.

4) Christ sees the potential of every man's gifts. What is lacking is man's seeing the necessity of Christ in the use of his gifts.

Thought 2. Think of the people who have heard the truth of Christ time after time, yet they still have not trusted Him as the Son of God. They are traitors, having turned their backs upon God; therefore, they are guilty of high treason against God.

2 (26:15) **Judas Iscariot**: the second picture is Judas' gnawing sin of greed and love of money. Various commentators give different reasons why Judas betrayed Christ, but Scripture clearly says that the reason was greed: "What will ye give me, and I will give [betray] Him to you."

Judas' gnawing greed was a *growing* sin. This is seen by looking at what is said about him in the Scripture.

1. Judas was chosen by Christ to be an apostle (Mt.10:4); therefore, we know he was sincere in the beginning. There was something within Judas—qualities that attracted Christ, qualities that Christ knew could mean a lot to the Kingdom of God.
2. Judas was a man gifted in financial affairs, apparently even more so than Matthew, the wealthy tax collector, and the businessmen among the apostles such as Peter, James, and John (see Master Subject Index under each name for discussions on their business backgrounds). Among all these, Judas was placed in charge of the Lord's funds and the purchasing of whatever was needed (Jn.12:6; 13:29; cp. Lk.8:2-3 for some who supported Jesus' ministry). His appointment from among so many was bound to be due to unusual spiritual qualities as well as to unusual ability in financial management.
3. Judas, at some unknown point, began to embezzle from the Lord's funds. John says unmistakably that Judas was a thief (Jn.12:6). John relates this fact when he says that Judas was greatly disturbed with Mary, the sister of Martha. Mary used some very expensive perfume to anoint Christ instead of selling it to secure money for the Lord's treasury. John says the reason for Judas' disturbance was because Judas was a thief and could have embezzled some of the money (Jn.12:5-6).
4. Judas refused to repent, and he hardened his heart more and more in his sin. Christ knew of Judas' embezzlement and hinted at it, giving Judas opportunity after opportunity to repent.

> **"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him...Jesus answered them, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve" (Jn.6:64, 70-71).**

Judas was bound to feel the pangs of guilt at such times, yet he continued to deceive himself that Christ did not really know and had no real proof. Judas kept right on taking what he felt he could safely embezzle, hardening his heart more and more.

5. Judas apparently followed Christ out of a heart of greed and worldly ambition, and not out of a heart of love and faith in Him as the Son of God. This seems to be indicated by two facts.
   a. He felt that wealth, power, and position would be his when Christ set up his kingdom. The other apostles thought the same, but there was a vast difference. They mistook the Messiah's method of saving the world, not His person; whereas Judas mistook both the Lord's method and person. He did not believe and trust the Lord to be the Son of God. The others did.
   b. He apparently was disillusioned with Christ after the triumphal entry. Christ did not immediately set up His kingdom, and as the days passed, the fact that He was not going to set up His kingdom became more and more apparent. The authorities were mobilizing against Christ to kill Him, and it seemed as though they were going to be successful. Jesus had even been teaching that they were to be successful. He was to be killed by their hands (cp. Mt.26:1-2).

      Judas became convinced that he was mistaken about Christ. Christ was not the real Messiah. He was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah. He was doomed, and there was no way out. Judas experienced his dreams of wealth, power, and position with Christ being shattered. Thus what he was trying to do was to get what he could out of the situation. He wanted to be in good standing with what he perceived to be the winning side.
6. Judas filled his heart with the lust for more and more instead of filling it with Christ. He went too long without repenting and letting Christ in his life, and the devil was able to fill his being. The devil blinded and took control of his thoughts (Lk.22:3). Hence Judas was able to justify his betrayal in his own mind. He was, after all, helping the leading religionists of his day as well as himself. Thus he betrayed Jesus of Nazareth, who apparently in Judas' mind was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah.

In looking at the bargain to which Judas agreed in betraying Christ, thirty pieces of silver seems to be a small price for betraying someone of the Lord's stature. It amounted to only about four to five months' wages. However, two things need to be kept in mind.

1. Judas probably expected to get much more. But he did not dictate the terms, the chief priests did. They were going to arrest Christ in just a few days anyway, just as soon as the pilgrims left the city (Mt.26:5). All Judas did was move their schedule up a few days.
2. Judas felt Christ was doomed, without any hope of escape. Again, he had become convinced that Christ was not the true Messiah, but just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah. There is a possibility that Judas betrayed Christ because he was angry for having been deceived as well as for having been disillusioned. He was willing to get what he could, no matter how small the amount.

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live" (Pr.15:27).

"Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Is.56:11).

Thought 1. Greed is a growing sin. It has to be fed to grow. Desire for things is normal and natural. It is when we feed the desire time and again, indulging and hoarding more and more, that our desire becomes sin and grows and grows (see notes—Jas.4:1-6. These notes will stir additional thoughts for application in dealing with desires and lust.)

Thought 2. Greed is very dangerous. It is one of the most dangerous sins.

⇒ Greed enslaves quickly.
⇒ Greed can lead to all other sins.
⇒ Greed can make a person sell his country, body, or friends—anything and anyone—all for greed.

Thought 3. Covetousness, the desire for more and more, will eat at us just like a cancer. Judas had what he needed: food, clothing, housing, purpose, meaning, and significance. He did not go without. What was he after? The sin of lust—lusting for more and more—ate away at him, causing him to put his hand into the till.

Thought 4. It is not money that is sinful. It is the love of money (1 Tim.6:10). Money is a *thing*; it is inanimate, lifeless. It has no feelings, no desires, no will to act. Man is the culprit. Man is the one who lusts for more and more; thus man is the one who sins, not a piece of paper or metal.

Thought 5. Many follow Christ not out of a deep conviction and belief but out of the desire to get what they can out of Him. They are religious in order to *fit in* with a so-called Christian society. They want to promote themselves or their business within the community. To profess Christ and to belong to a church is the thing to do. But their profession in Christ does not hamper their human lusts at all. They live just as all other men live, paying little if any attention to true morality and just relationships, pure behavior and honest dealing, clean living and fair treatment.

Thought 6. Judas allowed his strength to become his weakness. This is often true with us.

⇒ Gifts of administration can lead to being overbearing.
⇒ Gifts of speaking can lead to being super-spiritual.
⇒ Gifts of leadership can lead to being self-seeking.
⇒ Gifts of loveliness can lead to being sensual.
⇒ Gifts of humility can lead to no service.

3 (26:16) **Judas**: the third picture is that of Judas's carrying out a deceitful intrigue against Christ. Note the words "He sought opportunity to betray Him." The picture is that of being on the prowl, searching and seeking, looking here and there for the right moment. Judas' heart was set, full of intrigue, plotting evil and planning its strategy. He did not believe Jesus was the Son of God, but he did not stop at unbelief. He willed to do evil against Christ, to hurt Him and to destroy Him, and he sought opportunity to do so. Just how deceitful Judas was can be seen by noticing that immediately after bargaining with the authorities, he sat down to eat with Jesus. He sat at the very table where the Lord's Supper was being instituted.

Thought 1. Judas not only rejected but also sought to destroy Jesus. Many reject Christ, but they do not all seek to harm and destroy Him. Some do, but not all.

⇒ Some curse Him, consciously and unconsciously dishonoring His name.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His divine nature, that He is the Son of God.
⇒ Some talk and teach against the written revelation of Christ Himself and the truth, that is, the Word.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His active presence in the life of the genuine believer.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:1-5).

Thought 2. Note something: even after Judas' bargain to betray Christ, Christ gave him opportunity to repent.

	D. The Messiah's Last Supper: The Lord's Supper Instituted, 26:17-30 (Mk.14:12-26;Lk.22:7-23; cp. Jn.13:1-30)	said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.	a monstrous deception
		24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.	b. He warned the sinner of terrible judgment
1 The Lord's supper was based upon the Passover	17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?	25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.	c. He identified the sinner
a. Christ tied the Lord's supper to the Feast of Unleavened Bread[DS1]			
b. Christ tied the Lord's supper to His death: His "time was at hand"	18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.	26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.	**3 The Lords' supper was given as a permanent ordinance**
			a. Christ took the bread, gave thanks, broke it & gave it: His body[DS2]
c. Christ tied the Lord's supper to religious obedience: "I will keep the passover"	19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.	27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;	b. Christ took the cup, gave thanks and gave it: His blood[DS3]
2 The Lord's supper was used as an appeal to a sinner	20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.	28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.	c. Christ instituted a new covenant: forgiveness[DS4]
a. He revealed the treachery	21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you,	29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.	d. Christ promised to celebrate the supper with His followers in the future
1) The sinner was a disciple	that one of you shall betray me.		
2) The revelation caused a stir	22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?	30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.	e. Christ and His disciples sang a hymn & departed
3) The sinner committed	23 And he answered and		

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

D. The Messiah's Last Supper: The Lord's Supper Instituted, 26:17-30

(26:17-30) **Introduction—The Lord's Supper—The Passover**: this is the passage where Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, one of the ordinances which He charged His followers to practice on a regular basis (Mt.26:2). He instituted the Supper in verses 26-30. Note that the preparations made in verses 17-25 are the preparations for the Passover. The disciples knew nothing about the Lord's intentions to institute a new ordinance in His name. They thought Christ was preparing to celebrate the Jewish Passover. This is significant, for it shows that Christ tied both His death and the Lord's Supper to the Passover. By so doing, Christ was saying two things.

1. Jewish tradition held that the Messiah was going to redeem Israel during the Passover. In fact, they believed He would redeem them on the very day that God delivered Israel out of Egyptian bondage. By tying His supper to the Passover, Christ was proclaiming Himself to be the Messiah whom Israel anticipated.
2. The sacrificial lamb used in the Passover was a picture of Christ, the Lamb of God, sacrificing Himself for man. By instituting the Lord's Supper on this day, Christ was not only tying His death to the Passover, He was proclaiming two new things:
   a. He was proclaiming Himself to be the Lamb of God who was to be slain for the sins of men.
   b. He was proclaiming the Lord's Supper to be the new celebration which was to be observed by His followers. The Lord's Supper was to replace the Passover, a man's celebration of God's deliverance from bondage.

1. The Lord's Supper was based upon the Passover (v.17-19).
2. The Lord's Supper was used as an appeal to a sinner (v.20-25).
3. The Lord's Supper was given as a permanent ordinance (v.26-30).

1 (26:17-19) **Lord's Supper—Passover**: the Lord's Supper is based upon and tied to the Passover.

1. The Lord's Supper is tied to the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, to the first day of the Feast, the day of preparation and the sacrifice of the lamb (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:17).
   a. It was on the first day of the Feast that the disciples came to Christ. Again, they knew nothing about Christ's plans to institute a new celebration. They just assumed He was going to celebrate the Passover as

always. But by instituting the Lord's Supper on this day, Christ definitely tied the Supper to the Passover (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:17).

b. It was the disciples who came to Christ. Christ did not have to approach them. They knew that it was His practice to observe the celebration.

c. Christ faced *great difficulty* in observing the celebration. He had no home, no place of His own for the observance. But there was a much greater obstacle confronting Him at this particular celebration: enemies within the city were seeking to kill Him. Note His faithfulness in observing the celebration despite this fact.

2. The Lord's Supper is tied to *Christ's death*. Christ said "My time is at hand." "My time" or "My hour" is a term which Christ constantly used to refer to His death (see note, pt.2—Jn.2:3-5). He tied His death to the Passover with the words, "My time [death] is at hand; I will keep the Passover." And, of course, His death is what the Lord's Supper celebrates (v.26-28).

3. The Lord's supper is tied to *religious obedience*. Christ said, "I will keep the Passover." Jewish tradition held that the Messiah was going to redeem Israel during the Passover. In fact, the Jews believed the Messiah would redeem them on the very day God delivered Israel out of bondage to Egypt. By obeying this religious celebration, the Passover, Christ was doing three significant things.

a. He was proclaiming Himself to be the Messiah whom Israel had always anticipated.

b. He was, again, definitely tying the Lord's Supper to the Passover.

c. He was stressing the importance of *religious obedience*, that is, being obedient in celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Thought 1. Christ kept the Passover. *Religious obedience* is important to God; therefore, we are to be obedient and faithful to religious observances. Note how Christ was faithful in His observance, even in the face of death. What a rebuke to us—we who allow the comfort of our homes, the enjoyment of our recreation, the pleasing of our flesh to keep us away from the Lord's Supper and other religious observances!

> **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).**
>
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).**
>
> **"Ye are my freinds, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:14).**
>
> **"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor.11:26).**
>
> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).**

Thought 2. The Lord's "time was at hand." He had to grasp the opportunity while it was at hand. So must we. But the day is coming when it will be too late to celebrate the Lord's Supper. We must celebrate it while we can.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(26:17) **Feast of Unleavened Bread**: this feast is another name for the Passover Feast (see Lev.23:5-8; Lk.22:1). However, on the first day of the Passover week, the Feast of Unleavened Bread had special significance. It was the day that all preparations were made to celebrate the Passover. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2; cp. Ex.12:1-51, esp. 11-28 for the background of the Passover.) Preparations included securing the lamb and taking it to the temple to be sacrificed. Preparations also included securing the food and drink items necessary for the Passover and arranging the room for the Feast. But there were two preparations for which the Feast of Unleavened Bread received its name.

1. There was the baking of unleavened bread. On the very night of the Passover, God had told Israel to make final preparations for being delivered from Egyptian bondage. But the Israelites did not have time to bake leavened bread. They had to bake bread without leaven because of the time it takes for leavened bread to rise. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was simply one of the Passover ceremonies by which Israel remembered God's glorious deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2.)

2. There was a ceremony by which all leaven within the house had to be removed. It must be remembered that leaven was a symbol of evil to the Jews. Therefore, in removing all leaven, they were picturing the need for putting evil out of their lives and households. There was an actual search made throughout the rooms of the house looking for any crumb of leaven that might have fallen upon the floor or between some furniture. Whatever leaven was found, no matter how small a crumb, it was removed from the house. By removing all leaven from their households, the Jews were saying they wanted to be included among the faithful of their forefathers, the faithful who had cleansed their lives and households for the journey of deliverance from bondage.

2 (26:20-25) **Judas—Lord's Supper**: the Lord's Supper was used as an appeal to a sinner. Christ used the occasion of the Supper to appeal to Judas. He gave Judas a last chance to repent of his sin. Christ took three steps with Judas.

1. Christ revealed the sin and the treachery of Judas. It was a shock, for the Lord said the betrayer was a disciple: "One of you shall betray me" (v.21). It was treachery and deception. Judas had tried to hide his sin, and he had done a good job. No one knew about his plot, not even the disciples, his closest associates. But Jesus knew.

The apostles were, of course, stirred: "exceeding sorrowful" (v.22). They became so heavily burdened over the news that they began to question their own loyalty. "Is it I?" each began to ask.

The sinner committed a monstrous deception (v.23). It was the one who "dippeth his hand with me in the dish." Imagine the deception: the sinner sat with Christ, partook of the Lord's Last Supper, plotted and was guilty of the most terrible sin.

> **"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Ps.41:9).**

2. Christ warned the sinner of terrible judgment (v.24). Jesus knew the destiny of the sinner, the terrible fate that awaited him. It would have been better had the sinner never been born.
3. Christ identified the sinner (v.25). He answered Judas, letting him know that his sin was not hid. Christ knew. Note what Judas called Christ: "Rabbi," teacher. The other disciples had called Him, "Lord" (v.22).

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3, 5).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**

Thought 1. The Lord's Supper is an occasion that speaks to sinners. It can be used to point out sin for which Christ died and to warn about the consequences of sin if a person does not repent.

Thought 2. Judas sat at Jesus' Last Supper, and he deceptively partook of it with sin in his life. Too many believers do the same. Their close associates and fellow believers may be deceived, but not God. He knows all about the sin.

Thought 3. Judas deceived the apostles. People can deceive others, even family and friends, and never be discovered, but God knows the heart and the sin.

Thought 4. The disciples examined themselves. They looked at themselves to see if they were the sinner. Believers are exhorted to examine themselves before partaking of the Supper (1 Cor.11:27-28). Examining oneself is necessary. No believer is sinless nor beyond sin. The exhortation is clear: "Be not highminded, but fear" (Ro.11:20).

Thought 5. Christ revealed that He was to be betrayed in order to strengthen the faith of the disciples (Jn.13:19). He revealed His omniscience, that He was truly God (cp. Jn.14:29).

Thought 6. Note how Judas tried to continue His deception. Even after the Lord had revealed that a sinner sat among them, Judas turned to the Lord and asked, "Is it I?" How like so many! They continue to deceive and deceive, ever seeking to satisfy the lust of their sin.

Thought 7. Judas illustrated a significant point: the reason for continuous sin. The reason was unbelief in Jesus. Jesus was not *Lord* to Judas. To Judas Jesus was only a man, a misguided and self-proclaimed messiah (see outline and notes—Mt.26:14-16).

3 (26:26-30) **Lord's Supper**: the Lord's Supper was given as a permanent ordinance.

1. It was while "they were eating" the Passover meal that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper. He was replacing the Passover with the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is the new ordinance of God to celebrate His deliverance of man from bondage and slavery (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2).
2. In God's eternal plan, the sacrificial lamb used in the Passover had always been a picture of Christ, the real Lamb of God who was to be sacrificed for man. By instituting the Lord's Supper during the Passover meal, Christ was not only tying His Supper to the Passover, He was proclaiming Himself to be the Lamb of God who was to be slain for the sins of men (v.27-28; cp. 1 Cor.5:7; Rev.13:8).
3. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper before He died, not after His resurrection. This is very significant. It means that His death was voluntary. He had not yet died; He did not have to die. He could have slipped out of town and escaped, but He chose to willingly lay down His life for the sins of men. Therefore, the Lord's Supper is the great celebration of *the voluntary* sacrifice of God's Son for man. The broken bread and poured wine picture the *willingness* of God's Son to lay down His life for man's sins.

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper by doing five things.

1. Christ took the bread, His body, and He gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples (v.26).
   a. By taking the bread into His hands, Christ was indicating that His death was a voluntary act. His destiny was in His hands.

> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**

b. By giving thanks, Christ was offering praise for deliverance and for a life full of provision, a provision that came from God Himself.

c. By breaking the bread, Christ was saying that His body was to be broken and sacrificed as a victim for man's deliverance (Is.53:5). This act was so significant that the early church sometimes called the Lord's Supper simply "the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor.10:16). Under the Old Testament, the broken bread pictured the sufferings of the Israelites. Now, under the New Testament, the bread is to picture the broken body of Christ (1 Cor.11:24).

> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**

d. By giving the bread and saying, "Take, eat, this is my body," Christ was saying that He is to be received into a man's life. And that moment of redemption is to be remembered in this ordinance (see note—Mt.26:26).

> **"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).**

2. Christ took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to the disciples (v.27).

a. By taking the cup into His own hands, Christ was again teaching that His death was voluntary (cp. Jn.10:11, 17-18).

b. By giving thanks, Christ was again expressing praise and appreciation for deliverance promised through sacrifice.

c. By giving the cup and saying, "Drink ye all of it," Christ was again saying that He must become a part of man's very being if man wished deliverance. Note: the word "gave" (edoken) is in the Greek aorist tense which means that Christ gave the cup *once for all*. He died once and only once, and man partakes of His death once and only once.

> **"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).**
>
> **"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Ro.6:10).**

3. Christ instituted a new covenant: forgiveness (v.28). Note the Lord's exact words.

a. "This is my blood." His blood was to become the sign and symbol of the new covenant. His blood was to take the place of the sacrificial lamb of the Passover.

b. "The new testament." His blood, the sacrifice of His life, established a New Testament, a new covenant between God and man (cp. Heb.9:11-15). Faith in His blood and sacrifice is the way man is to approach God. Before, under the Old Testament, a man who wanted a right relationship with God approached God through the sacrifice of an animal's blood. The Old Testament believer believed that God accepted him because of the sacrifice of the animal. Now, under the New Testament, the believer believes that God accepts him because of the sacrifice of Christ. This is what Christ said: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28; cp. Eph.1:7; 1 Jn.2:1-2; Heb.9:22). A man's sins are forgiven and he becomes acceptable to God by believing that Christ's blood was shed for him (1 Jn.1:7. See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; 5:1.)

> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**
>
> **"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:54-58).**

c. Now note the words, "Drink ye all of it." A man must receive what Christ has done for him. He must drink, partake, absorb, assimilate Christ's blood into his life. That is, a man must believe and trust the death of Christ to forgive his sins. He must allow Christ's death to become the very nourishment, the innermost part and energy and flow of his life (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.26:27-28).

4. Christ promised to celebrate the Supper with His followers in the future (v.29). This is the glorious promise to all genuine believers: they shall sit down with Christ at the great marriage Feast of the Lamb (see outline and notes—Mt.22:1-14). It is the promise of perfection and of being a part of the new heavens and earth, of sitting with Christ in the Kingdom of God which is to be established in the future (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Note that Christ again predicted His death.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; is so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (1 Pt.5:1).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).

5. Christ and His disciples sang a hymn and departed. Christ closed the Lord's Supper with a hymn. In the midst of great sorrow and perplexity, of a heavy and burdening atmosphere, Christ led His people in a hymn. It was probably the Hallel (Ps.115-118).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor.6:10).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Ph.4:4).

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col.3:16).

Thought 1. How do we become sons or children of God and receive eternal life? Christ said (1) by receiving Him (Jn.1:12), and (2) by feeding upon Him (Jn.6:53-54, 57-58).

Thought 2. Under the Old Testament, the blood of Christ was symbolized in the blood of animals. Under the New Testament, the blood of Christ is symbolized in the wine of the Lord's Supper.

Thought 3. Note the glorious confidence and surety of Christ. In the face of being murdered, He promised that He would sit down with his followers in the coming kingdom. The death of Christ was not the end; it was the beginning of eternal life for the person who really believed in the death of Christ.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(26:26) **Lord's Supper**: the words "Take, eat; this is my body" are not cannibalism (see outline and notes—Jn.6:52-58). The words simply mean that a man is to receive Christ into his life. A man's deliverance from the bondage of sin and death is by *taking or eating* of Christ's body. That is, the man must receive, partake, consume, absorb, and assimilate Christ into His life. He must allow Christ to become the very nourishment, the innermost part and energy, the very consumption of his being.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(26:27-28) **Lord's Supper**: the words "Drink ye all of it" (the blood of Christ) mean to receive the death of Christ in place of one's own death. A man's deliverance from sin and death comes by receiving Christ's death as his own. The man must identify with Christ's death. He must drink, partake, absorb, and assimilate the Lord's death. The death of Christ must become the very nourishment, the innermost part and energy, the very flow of his life. (Cp. 1 Cor.2:2.)

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(26:28) **Forgiveness** (aphesin): to send off, to send away. The wrong is cut out, sent off, and sent away from the wrongdoer. The sin is separated from the sinner.

There are four main ideas in the Biblical concept of forgiveness.

1. There is the idea of why forgiveness is needed. Forgiveness is needed because of wrongdoing and guilt and the penalty arising from both (cp. Ro.3:23; 6:23; 8:1).
2. There is the idea of a *once-for-all* forgiveness, a total forgiveness. A man is *once-for-all* forgiven when he receives Jesus Christ as his Savior. Belief in Jesus Christ is the only condition for being forgiven *once-for-all* (Eph.1:7; Ro.4:5-8).
3. There is the idea of forgiveness that maintains fellowship. Fellowship exists between God as Father and the believer as His child. When the child does wrong, the fellowship is disturbed and broken. The condition for restoring the fellowship is confessing and forsaking the sin (Ps.66:18; Pr.28:13; 1 Jn.1:7).
4. There is the idea of a *releasing from guilt*. This is one of the differences between man's forgiving a man and God's forgiving a man. A man may forgive a person for wronging him, but he can never remove the guilt that his friend feels. And often he cannot remove the resentment he feels within his own heart. Only God can remove the guilt and assure the removal of resentment, and God does both. God forgives and erases the guilt and resentment (Ps.51:2, 7-12; 103:12; 1 Jn.1:9).

	E. The Messiah Foretells the Disciples' Failure: Stumbling & Falling Away in Life, 26:31-35 (Mk.14:27-31; Lk.22:31-34; Jn.13:36-38)	again, I will go before you into Galilee. 33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.	resurrection[DS2]
1 There is the prediction: All shall fall away a. Offended[DS1] because of Christ b. Offended because Christ is rejected c. The remedy: The Lord's	31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen	34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.	**2 There is the claim of over-confidence** a. Caused by comparing oneself with others b. Caused by being blind to the cross c. Caused by not knowing oneself, the flesh d. Caused by contradicting Christ

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

E. The Messiah Foretells the Disciples' Failure: Stumbling and Falling Away in Life, 26:31-35

(26:31-35) **Introduction**: one of the great convictions of believers is that they must warn the world of sin and its consequences. Yet in the midst of this warning and its fervor, something is often missed: believers, too, must be warned of sin and its consequences. Believers are not above sin; they are not removed from human flesh. However, there is something that makes them different: they have been given a spiritual nature. They now live *in the spirit* as well as *in the flesh*. The flesh is still with every believer. Therefore, every believer must be warned: here and there he will stumble and fall. But Christ is ever waiting to receive and forgive him if he will do but one thing: genuinely confess and repent. Such is the warning that Christ gives to His disciples in this most meaningful passage.

1. There is the prediction: all shall fall away (v.31-32).
2. There is the claim of over-confidence (v.33-35).

(26:31-35) **Another Outline**: The Warning about Falling Away (Mt.26:31-35).

1. Some fall because they are offended "in" Christ, v.31.
2. Some fall because Christ is rejected by the crowd (v.31).
3. Some fall because they fail to see and believe the resurrection of Christ, (v.32).
4. Some fall because of over-confidence (v.33).
5. Some fall because they are blind to the cross (v.34).
6. Some fall because they do not know self, that is, the flesh (v.35).

1 (26:31-32) **Backsliding**: there is the prediction—*all* shall fall away. "All ye" is emphasized; not a single one will stand fast. Every disciple will fall away.

Christ shared two reasons why the disciples would fall away, two reasons that are common to every man.

1. "All shall be offended *because of me*" (en emoi, *in me*). Men question who Christ is, wondering about Him and sometimes being turned off by Him. The word offend means to stumble, to fall (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:31). When facing Christ, men stumble over three things. (For a thorough discussion see DEEPER STUDY # 9,10—Mt.21:44; cp. note—Lk.20:17-18.)
   a. Men stumble over the identity of Christ (Jn.6:54-58, 60, 66).
   b. Men stumble over the cross of Christ (1 Cor.1:21-23, esp.23).
   c. Men stumble over the cross God calls them to bear (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

Very simply, when men look at Jesus Christ and His cross, many react. They...

- doubt
- deny
- ignore
- reject
- close their hearts
- spiritualize
- consider Him & His cross to be irrational in the modern, scientific world

When Christ was arrested, the apostles questioned and wondered if Christ were really the Messiah. He did not resist arrest, and He did not use His mighty power. He was not leading the people in an uprising against the Romans, nor was He freeing Israel and setting up the nation as the center of God's kingdom. The apostles were disillusioned and perplexed; they simply could not understand. Their hopes were hanging upon a cross of despair. In this passage, Christ was foretelling them of their falling away. He knew that after His resurrection, they would remember His words and be able to return more easily and understand more fully. Remembering that He had foretold them would help them to return and to become stronger (cp. Jn.14:29; 13:19).

2. The disciples would be offended because Christ was rejected. Visibly, He was rejected by the crowd. But behind the scenes, in the invisible world, it was God who smote the Shepherd; that is, God put Christ to death (cp. Zech.13:7). It

was in "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" that Christ was to die (Acts 2:23). Christ had to give His life for man if man were to be saved.

> **"For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved" (Acts 2:25).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

When the crowd rejected Christ, the disciples felt threatened. They feared the crowd and lacked the courage to take a stand with Him. They turned away, fled, and deserted. Peter even denied Him vocally (Mt.26:69-75).

There is a remedy for *falling away*: the resurrection. Note the Lord's words, "I will go *before you*." Christ was telling the apostles two things:

1. They were to come to Him after His resurrection (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:32). Despite their fall, He would still accept them. In fact, He would be waiting for them.
2. They would be *forgiven* for having denied Him.

> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).**

Thought 1. How quickly a *fall* can come. Picture the disciples' sitting in the Upper Room with Christ as He shared with them. It was this very night that they would fall—not the next week, not the next month, but this night—the very night that He and they were sharing so much, so intimately (v.34). (Cp. Jn.14-16 to see just how much Jesus shared and how precious and intimate the occasion was.)

Thought 2. Christ knew His disciples would stumble and fall. He knew they would be extremely discouraged. Knowing this, note what He did.

1) He did not upbraid, scold, reproach, or condemn them.
2) He planned to meet them, forgiving and receiving them—all in the power of His love and resurrection.

Thought 3. Christ knows nothing but love for the believer who stumbles and falls, even if the believer commits the most terrible sin, that of denying Christ with his lips. However, one thing is essential for forgiveness: repentance.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(26:31) **Offend** (skandalizo): to stumble, to cause to stumble, to fall.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(26:32) **Resurrection—Galilee**: Galilee was not to be the first place where Christ was to appear after His resurrection. He made a number of appearances over several days to different groups of the disciples. Galilee was to be the official meeting place, a meeting place where all the disciples were to be present and receive the renewing of their commission (Mt.28:16-20).

2 (26:33-35) **Self-Confidence—Flesh, Weakness of**: there was the claim of over-confidence by Peter. Peter's over-confidence was caused by four things.

1. His over-confidence was caused by comparing himself with others. Peter could not believe what he was hearing. Christ said, "All shall stumble," including him. Others may, Peter thought, but not him. There was not a chance, and he wanted Christ to know it. Note that Peter compared himself with others, in fact, with "all others": "Though all men shall be offended...yet will I never be." Peter saw the weaknesses and the flaws of others. Perhaps they could fail, but not him; he could never fall away from Christ. Others may be weak, but not him. Peter committed the terrible sin of humanity: pride (1 Cor.10:12). Peter thought himself stronger than others, above and beyond them spiritually.
2. Peter's over-confidence was caused by being blind to the cross (v.34). Peter just did not see the cross. It was Christ's hanging upon the cross that was going to cause Peter to deny Christ. Christ had told him all about the cross, but he had refused to believe it (see notes—Mt.17:22; 18:1-2). The fact that human flesh was so sinful, so depraved that God would have to crucify it was just too much to grasp (see outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; Ro.6:1-10; 6:10-13; Gal.2:19-21; 5:24; 6:14-17. Cp. Ro.6:2; Col.3:3.)
3. Peter's over-confidence was caused by not knowing himself, his own personal weaknesses, the weaknesses of his human flesh. Peter's self-image was strong. He saw himself above *serious* sin and failure. He asserted with all the confidence in the world that he would die for Christ before denying Him.

Note several things.

a. Peter was a strong believer, one of the strongest.
b. Peter really failed to understand himself and his flesh. The one sin that a believer should not commit is to deny Christ. To die for Christ rather than to deny Him is the one thing a genuine believer would be expected to do.
c. Peter believed and believed strongly that he, his flesh, was above serious sin (cp. Ro.3:9f; 7:8, 14-18; Gal.5:19f).
d. Peter failed not once, but three times, and all three times were in the same night when Christ was right off to his side being tried for His life (Lk.22:61).

4. Peter's over-confidence was caused by contradicting Christ instead of listening to Him. Christ was warning the disciples about the deceitfulness and weakness of the human heart. Peter and the rest just refused to accept the fact. They denied personal weaknesses.

Thought 1. The fact that others fail is not reason for confidence in oneself but a reason for guarding oneself even more.

Thought 2. All men come short, stumble, and fall. Falling and stumbling are the way of human flesh. One falls in a particular area; another falls in another area. The difference between men is that one confesses and repents in his heart and the other does not. In fact, many do not even acknowledge the need to repent.

Thought 3. Over-confidence is a dangerous sin.

> **"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).**
>
> **"Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips" (Pr.27:2).**
>
> **"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).**
>
> **"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).**
>
> **"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me: I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood" (Is.47:8-9).**
>
> **"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Lk.18:9).**
>
> **"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).**
>
> **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).**

Thought 4. We are not to compare ourselves with others. We are to "bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal.6:2).

> **"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).**
>
> **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:1-3).**

Thought 5. Peter really felt he was above serious sin. How like human nature! How common to us all, how self-righteous!

Thought 6. No believer is above serious sin, and all sin is serious. In particular, the very thought that one is above serious sin *is* serious sin.

	F. The Messiah's Agony in Gethsemane: Confronting Death & The Terrifying Trials of Life, 26:36-46 (Mk.14:32-42; Lk.22:39-46; Jn.18:1; cp. Heb.5:7-8; 12:3-4)		
1 Christ entered the garden of Gethsemane[DS1] a. With all the disciples b. For the purpose of praying c. Alone with just three disciples	36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.	asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?	a. He found them asleep
	37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.	41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.	b. He warned of temptation c. He warned of the flesh & its weakness, v.43,45
2 He suffered—agonizing grief & pain[DS2,3] a. Felt pain unto death b. Requested companionship c. Warned: Watch & pray for yourselves as well	38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.	42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.	**5 He continued to pray—agonizing for release** a. He asked His Father to remove the cup a second time
3 He turned to God—crying a. Prostrated Himself b. Prayed: "O My Father" c. Asked God to remove the cup[DS4]	39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.	43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.	b. He found the disciples asleep a second time c. He prayed a third time—the same words
4 He stood alone—neglected by His closest friends	40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them	45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.	**6 He received release—great peace & courage** a. The words of great release b. The words of great courage

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

F. The Messiah's Agony in Gethsemane: Confronting Death and the Terrifying Trials of Life, 26:36-46

(26:36-46) **Introduction—Death—Jesus Christ, Sacrifice & Death**: death for Jesus Christ was different than death for all other men. In death, Jesus took all the sins of the world upon Himself and stood before God the Judge and...

- accepted the verdict of *guilty* for every man.
- accepted the penalty and punishment of death for every man.

It is in the word *death* that the difference lies. *Death* is not what some persons conceive it to be: some dreamy state of being; or some euphoric existence in another world; or the end (disfunctioning) of the body with only the spirit of one's work or life left behind in the memory of others; or simply annihilation. Death means separation from God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27), and it is this that makes Christ's death different from the deaths of other men. He did not experience death for *one man's sins*; He experienced death for *every man's sins*. In confronting death, He experienced unbelievable agony and pain because He was to be separated from His Father; and the one thing Christ did not want to face was having to be cut off from His Father. If there were any other way to save man, He wanted it (His human nature).

This is the terrifying struggle Christ was suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane—a struggle so terrible that it would have killed Him if God had not sent an angel to strengthen Him (Lk.22:43). In His great struggle and persevering prayer, Christ shows us how to confront death and the terrifying trials of life.

1. Christ entered the Garden of Gethsemane (v.36-37).
2. He suffered—agonizing grief and pain (v.37-38).
3. He turned to God—crying (v.39).
4. He stood alone—neglected by His closest friends (v.40-41).
5. He continued to pray—agonizing for release (v.42-44).
6. He received release—great peace and courage (v.45-46).

1 (26:36-37) **Jesus Christ, Prayer Life—Prayer**: Christ entered the Garden of Gethsemane.

1. He entered with all the disciples except Judas who had already begun his terrible betrayal. The disciples were all still with Him. Knowing the dark hour and terrible tragedy He was about to endure, He was doing all He could to keep them close to Himself. He wanted them to remember His great dependence upon God. By having the experience of Gethsemane fresh in their minds, they would be better able to face their disillusionment, blindness, unbelief, and desertion. They would be better able to overcome their weaknesses when He arose and confronted them. Thus He was holding them together as closely as possible as long as He could.

2. Christ entered the garden to pray. His words suggested that they, too, should begin seeking God in prayer: "Sit ye here, while I go and pray." Luke actually says that He told them all to pray: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Lk.22:39-40).

3. Christ withdrew some distance farther into the garden, taking Peter, James, and John with Him. Why these three? The reason seemed clear. Christ had a double need: a need to be alone with God and a need for close companionship and prayer from those closest to Him. This becomes clearer in the discussion of v.38.

> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).**
>
> **"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).**

Thought 1. A man needs a garden, a private spot where he can get all alone with God in times of great trial.

Thought 2. Two things are essential when we face a desperate hour of need.
1) Withdrawing, getting all alone in some private spot.
2) Praying and sharing our need with God.

Thought 3. Note something of paramount importance: How does our desperate hour affect our loved ones? Christ was thinking as much of His disciples as He was of His own need. He was holding them together and encouraging them to pray for themselves as well as for Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(26:36) **Gethsemane**: the word "Gethsemane" means *oil press* or *olive press*. Gethsemane was a garden sitting on the Mount of Olives. It was probably a garden of olive trees, beautifully situated on the slopes of the mountain overlooking all the surrounding area including the city of Jerusalem. Private and public gardens on the surrounding mountains were common because of the beauty of the mountains and because of the lack of space within the city. It was to such a garden that Christ withdrew in His desperate hour of need.

2 (26:37-38) **Jesus Christ, Death**: in confronting death, Christ suffered agonizing grief and pain (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.26:37). Note three things.

1. Christ felt so much sorrow and heaviness, so much inner pain, that it almost killed Him. Note His words: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The pain and agony were so intense that He sweated great drops of blood.

God the Father had to send an angel to strengthen Him (Lk.22:43-44. Cp. the reference to this experience in Heb.12: 3-4, esp. 4.) Apparently, all that Christ had been through and was about to go through was opened up to His mind. His whole being was now focusing upon the suffering He had to experience as the sin-bearer for the world. The mental vision literally compressed His physical body, almost to the point of crushing Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38.)

2. Christ was suffering so much agonizing grief and pain that He requested the presence of close friends. He needed them to *pray* for Him and be a *comfort* to Him. This is seen in His words, "Watch *with me*." Christ needed to be alone with God, but He also needed friends close by who were also praying for Him. Just knowing that they were close by praying and feeling for Him would be a strong encouragement.

3. Christ warned: watch and pray for yourselves as well. The greatest trial the disciples were to ever know was at hand, and they did not know it. In just a few hours, they were going to fall away. They desperately needed to pray that they "enter not into temptation" (v.41); that the depth of sin would not discourage them to the point that they would feel too unworthy to repent.

Thought 1. The greatest lesson to be learned from Gethsemane is probably this: we are to strive against sin at any cost. The Scripture clearly proclaims this lesson:

> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction [hostility] of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb.12:3-4).**

Christ strove against sin, against the temptation to save the world by some other way than the cross (being separated from God the Father). He strove and strove against the temptation, experiencing so much pressure that His sweat was as "*great* drops of blood" (Lk.22:44). Just imagine striving against sin to such a point! (See note—Mt.27:26-44.)

Thought 2. Something needs to be meditated upon time and again: the great agony that Christ bore for us. Nothing pictures His great agony any more than the Garden of Gethsemane.

Thought 3. Think of the Lord's enormous love for us. He foresaw all that He was to bear for us. All was opened up to His mind, yet He willingly surrendered Himself to bear it all (to get a quick picture of all that He was to bear, glance quickly at note, pt. 1—Mt.26:37-38).

Thought 4. The presence, prayer, and comfort of close friends can be a tremendous source of help when we face desperate needs.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(26:37-38) **Jesus Christ, Suffering—Death**: words could never express what Christ experienced. Words are just inadequate, totally inadequate. Using all the descriptive words in the world would be as inadequate in describing the sufferings of Christ as using a syringe to drain an ocean.

1. There was the *mental and emotional agony*: the weight, pressure, anguish, sorrow, and excessive strain such as no man has ever experienced. He was the Son of God, Maker of heaven and earth, yet images and thoughts were pressing ever so heavily in upon His spirit, the images and thoughts of...
   - the *unbelief* of all men everywhere.
   - the *rejection* of His own people, the Jews.
   - the *malice* of the world's leaders, both Jew and Gentile, religious and civil.
   - the *betrayal* of one of His own, Judas.
   - the *desertion* of all His men.
   - the *denial* by the leader of His own men, Peter.
   - the *injustice and condemnation* of His trial.
   - the *ridicule and pain* of being scourged, spit upon, slugged, cursed, mocked, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the cross and killed.
2. There was the *physical experience of death* while being the Son of God. What is it like for the Son of God to die just as all men die? If just the physical aspect of Christ's death is considered, His death is still different from all other men.
   a. Christ as the Son of God possessed the very seed, quality, ingredient, and energy of life within His being (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3).
   b. Christ as the Son of God possessed no seed, quality, or ingredient of death (Jn.14:6; 1 Tim.6:16; 1 Jn.1:1-2; cp. Jn.1:4); but man does. Man possesses the seed of corruption and death. Man's sinful nature knows nothing and expects nothing but death, but the sinless nature of Christ knows nothing of sin and death. His sinless nature and the agony and pain of death were bound to be as different from man's death as white is different from black.

      There is another point to note as well. Man suffers humiliation in death. No matter how much man struggles to live, he wastes and wastes away until he is carried into the grave to become dust of the ground. But not Christ; He was sinless and perfect even in His human nature. His sinless nature knew nothing of death. Imagine the humiliation: the Son of God—the Perfect Man, the Perfect God—having to die upon this earth! No wonder He "began to be sorrowful and *very heavy*!" No wonder He could say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death.*" In some mysterious way, God made Christ to become sin for us (2 Cor.5:21).
3. There was *the spiritual experience of death* while being the Son of Man (see note—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—8:20; note—Ro.8:2-4). There is so much here, yet so little can ever be known.
   a. First, what is it like to be without sin? Christ, made in the image of man and being fully man, was sinless. He lived as all men live facing all the trials and temptations that men face, yet He never sinned. He was without sin. He became the Perfect and Ideal Man—all that God wants man to be. He became the Pattern for all men.

      "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15; cp. 2 Cor.5:21; 1 Pt.2:22; 1 Jn.3:5).

      "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).

   b. Second, what is it like to bear all the sins of the world? What is it like to be perfect and sinless and then, all of a sudden, to have all the sins of the world laid upon Oneself? In some mysterious way, God took all the sins of the world and laid the whole *body of sin* upon Christ. In some mysterious way, God made Christ to become sin for us (2 Cor.5:21). Christ, as the Ideal Man, became the Ideal Sin-Bearer. He bore all the sins and all that sin causes—all the...

• darkness	• weight	• worry	• strife	• poison
• pollution	• pressure	• guilt	• war	• corruption
• filthiness	• anxiety	• savagery	• torture	• consumption
• dirt	• turmoil	• conflict	• enmity	• disturbance

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).

"In due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

c. Third, what is it like to bear all the judgment and condemnation of sin for all men? Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world, suffered *separation* from God. The terrifying mystery of this hellish experience is seen in His cry upon the cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44; note—27:46-49; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.2:21-25).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(26:37) **Sorrowful (lupeisthai)—Very Heavy (ademonein)**: *sorrowful* means to be distressed, grieved, pained. It means to be *consumed* with intense sorrow of heart. *Very heavy* means to be troubled, dismayed, disturbed. It means to be *gripped* with intense heaviness of soul. *Very heavy* pictures the trouble and dismay that is caused by an *unexpected calamity*. It is consternation, a heaviness that drives a man to be alone, for he is unfit for company. He desperately needs quiet, and he needs a few companions to understand and help him bear the trouble.

3 (26:39) **Jesus Christ, Death**: in confronting death Christ turned to God, crying with strong cries and tears (cp. Heb.5:7). Four things are seen in this verse.

1. Christ got all alone and prostrated Himself before God. Luke says He withdrew "about a stone's cast" from the three apostles. Note two significant points: (a) He needed to be alone with God—He was desperate. (b) He fell on His face—the pressure and weight were unbearable.

2. Christ prayed, "O my Father [pater mou]." Note that Christ called God "My Father." This is what a small child calls his father day by day. It is the address of a child's love, of dependency and trust. The child knows that His father will hear and turn to him when he calls *Father*. But note also the words, "*O my* Father." Christ was broken, weighed down, fallen, prostrated on the ground. In desperation He cried out "*O my* Father." Just like a child, He cried out to His Father in childlike brokenness and dependency; He knew that His Father would hear and turn to help Him.

3. Christ asked God to remove the cup from Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Cup*—Mt.26:39. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44; cp. Mt.20:19.) The human nature and will of Christ are clearly seen here. He was as much man as any man is. Thus He begged God to choose another way other than the cup (cross), if possible. The experience of being separated from God upon the cross was too much to bear.

4. The Divine nature and will of Christ were also clearly seen. Note the Lord's words: "Let this cup pass from me: nevertheless...." The first act and impulse, the first struggle and movement of His will had come from His flesh: to escape the cup of separation from God. But the second act and impulse, the second struggle and movement of His will came from His Divine nature: to do not as He willed, but as God willed.

Christ's surrender to do God's perfect will was critical.

⇒ It was through His surrender that He was made perfect and stood before God as the Ideal and Perfect Man.

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal and Perfect Man that His righteousness is still able to stand for every man.

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal and Perfect Man that He was able to bear the cup of God's wrath against sin *for every man*.

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal and Perfect Man that His sacrifice and sufferings are still able to stand for every man.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

Thought 1. There are three vivid pictures in this point that should speak to our hearts.
1) The picture of Christ's child-like dependency and trust in His Father.
2) The picture of Christ's bearing the awful cup of God's wrath *for us*.
3) The picture of our enormous obligation to Christ: the obligation to be appreciative and to express our appreciation in love, adoration, worship, and service.

Thought 2. Note both the human will and the Divine will of Christ. The first impulse of the human will is to get and possess what one desires, but the second impulse of the Divine will is to do as God wills. Genuine believers are "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pt.1:4). Therefore, they too possess both wills. Note that this is a good way to describe temptation. The first impulse to do as one wishes comes from the human will, but the second impulse to do as God wills comes from the divine will. What we must do is learn to surrender to the divine will, to the godly impulse, just as Christ did.

> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).**
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> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(26:39) **Cup**: Jesus Christ was not fearing nor shrinking from death itself. This is clearly seen in Jn.10:17-18. Death for a cause is not such a great price to pay. Many men have so died—fearlessly and willingly, some perhaps more cruelly than Christ Himself. Shrinking from betrayal, beatings, humiliation and death, increased by foreknowledge is not what was happening to Christ. As stated, some men have faced such persecution courageously, even inviting martyrdom for a cause. The Lord knew He was to die from the very beginning, and He had been preparing His disciples for His death (cp. Mt.26:1-2). It was not just human or physical suffering that Christ was shrinking from. Such an explanation is totally inadequate in explaining Gethsemane. The great cup or trial that Jesus was facing was separation from God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38). He was to be the sacrificial "Lamb of God" who takes away the sins of the world (Jn.1:29). He was to bear the judgment and wrath of God for the sins of the world (see note—Mt.27:46-49; cp. Is. 53:10). Jesus Himself had already spoken of the *cup* when referring to His sacrificial death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23; note—Mk.14:35-36; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.18:11).

Scripture speaks of the cup in several ways.

1. The cup is called "the cup of the Lord's fury."

> **"Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out" (Is.51:17).**

2. The cup is associated with suffering and God's wrath.

> **"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps.11:6).**
>
> **"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk.22:42).**

3. The cup is also associated with salvation. Because Jesus drank the cup of suffering and wrath for us, we can "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps.116:13). He bears the judgment of God for the sins of the world.

> **"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand" (Is.53:10).**

4 (26:40-41) **Jesus Christ, Death**: in confronting death Christ stood alone, neglected by His closest friends.

1. He arose from prayer and went to the three who were supposed to be praying with Him. They were asleep. The companionship, the spirit of prayer and comfort He had sought, was not there. All were asleep. He had been left alone to wrestle with God by Himself.
2. Christ warned of temptation. The disciples had failed to pray for Him, but they must not fail to pray for themselves. Christ said, "Watch and pray." Both were important. *Watchfulness* sees and *praying* prepares. They were to watch in order to see temptation coming, and they were to pray in order to be prepared when temptation struck.
3. Christ warned of the flesh and its weakness. They were sleeping because of the emotional strain and distress of the evening. As Luke says, they slept because of *sorrow*, that is, sadness (Lk.22:45). The evening had been shocking and taxing. They were weary, fatigued, and preoccupied. Concentration in prayer was difficult. They probably fought to stay

awake and to pray for their Lord. But the importance of prayer and spiritual dependency upon God in facing trials had not yet been learned. They were making two mistakes common among believers.

a. The disciples were depending upon their own wisdom and strength instead of God's Spirit to fight whatever battles lay ahead.

b. The disciples were taking God's deliverance for granted instead of assuring His deliverance through the testimony of prayer. They believed Christ to be the Messiah; therefore, they believed God was going to deliver them against the Romans no matter what. As carnal, fleshly men are apt to do, the disciples no doubt thought prayer mattered little. They were just presuming upon God, taking His deliverance for granted. What Christ said was, "Watch and pray; for only as you watch and pray can you keep from falling when the trial comes." Watchfulness and prayer bear *testimony* to God.

This point needs to be noted: watchfulness and prayer bear *testimony* to God. When men watch and pray, they demonstrate that dependency and trust in God are well founded. When God answers the prayers of men, He demonstrates that He loves and cares and delivers those who truly look up to Him. Without watching and praying, God allows men to fall in order to teach that dependency and trust in Him are absolutely essential.

4. They were failing to stay awake to pray, to watch and to be watchful in prayer. Their spirits were not alive and alert enough to overcome the flesh. The drowsiness and slumber of the flesh were stronger than the spirit (see note 5, pt.2—Mt.26:42-44; cp. Eph.6:18).

> **"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Lk.12:37).**
>
> **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:5-6).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**
>
> **"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).**

Thought 1. No believer is ever alone. Even if his closest friends neglect the spirit of prayer and comfort, God is with him.

Thought 2. Many trials arise immediately and unexpectedly. They jump right up in front of us. Only persistent, sleepless prayer will prepare us for such crises (cp. Eph.6:18).

Thought 3. The flesh struggles against the spirit (Gal.5:17).

5 (26:42-44) **Jesus Christ, Death**: in confronting death, Christ continued to pray—agonizing for release.

1. He asked His Father to remove the cup a second time. Matthew is the only writer to give the words of Christ in this second prayer. Mark simply says that He "spoke the same words" (Mk.14:39). There are two views about what Jesus was saying.

a. Some commentators say that He was accepting the cup and consenting to the fact that He must drink it: "If [since] this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." When reading the verse this way, the battle does seem to be already won. Christ seems to have already accepted the fact that there just was no other way than to bear the cup. His human nature already seems to be subjected to the Divine nature.

b. Other commentators understand the verse to say what Mark seems to be saying: "And again He went away; and prayed, and *spoke the same words*" (Mk.14:39). Christ was continuing to pray and to agonize for release from the cup. He, of course, was willing to bear it, but His soul was crying out with "strong tears" for another way. Two facts always need to be remembered.

First, Christ was not shrinking from death; He was shrinking from drinking the cup of separation from God.

Second, the pressure of bearing all the suffering of the world as the Son of Man was unbearable. He felt as though He would die, and Scripture seems to indicate this by mentioning that an angel had to be sent to strengthen Him against the pressure.

2. Christ found the disciples asleep again. Note "their eyes were heavy." This indicates they fought against drowsiness but lost the fight. They could not shake off their...

- physical drowsiness.
- spiritual blindness (not accepting Christ's former prophecies of death).
- carnal security (taking God for granted).

3. Christ prayed a third time, praying the same words (v.44). The pressure was unbearable. He must have release. Note: this was the third time Christ prayed, and note the statement "the same words" (ton auton logon). This seems to be saying that He was struggling in the *same agonizing spirit*, struggling *to be released* from the life-threatening pressure. *Three times* He came before God pouring out His soul, with "strong tears," begging for *release*. In so doing, He has demonstrated forever the necessity of persevering in prayer in order to secure release from agonizing pressure. God answers persevering prayer.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas.4:7-8).

Thought 1. Persevering prayer is the great lesson of Gethsemane, and our Lord Himself gives us the greatest example of persevering prayer. When facing the pressuring and terrifying trials of life, Christ teaches us by example to seek release by coming before God in prayer. And He teaches us to stay before God—asking and asking, praying and praying—continuing and persevering in prayer until God answers. (See outlines and notes—Mt.7:7-11. Cp. Eph.6:18; Lk.18:1-8.)

Thought 2. There are three enemies that constantly fight against persevering prayer, that must be struggled and struggled against (see note, pt.2—Mt.26:42-44).

1) Physical drowsiness.
2) Spiritual blindness: not believing the Lord's words, wanting to understand and interpret Him as we wish instead of letting Him speak for Himself.
3) Carnal security: presuming upon and taking God for granted.

6 (26:45-46) **Jesus Christ, Death**: in confronting death, Christ received great release, great peace and courage.

1. There were His words, the evidence of great release: "Sleep on now, and take your *rest*." Christ's agony, His desperate need for friends to "watch" with Him was now gone. God had given Him great relief of soul. The very tone of His words to His disciples revealed a calmness of spirit, a peace of mind, a relief of the physical and emotional strain that was about to kill Him. God had met His need in a most wonderful way.

"In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul" (Ps.138:3).

"And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Lk.22:43).

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb.5:7; cp. 5:7-9).

2. There were His words, the evidence of great courage: "Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

Note two things:

a. There was no shrinking now, no agony, no desperation. Christ was relieved and strengthened, ready to face the sufferings necessary to secure the salvation of man.

b. Christ said He was being "betrayed into the hands of sinners." All those taking part in His death were *sinners*. His death was the most heinous crime of history. He, the Son of Man, the Ideal and Perfect Man, was killed by men. But there is more here: He died for the sins of the world. It was every man's sin that caused Him to be crucified. Every sin is an act of rebellion, of simply saying "No!" to God (Ro.3:23). Therefore, every man is guilty of putting Christ to death. There is a sense in which every sin and every act of rebellion crucifies "the Son of God afresh, and put[s] Him to an open shame" (Heb.6:6).

Thought 1. Note a critical point: God did not give Christ what He asked; that is, God did not remove the cup. Christ had to drink the cup, but God did answer His prayer. God relieved the agony and strengthened Him to bear the cup. God kept Him from failing. The lesson is clear: God sometimes answers our prayers with "No." But He strengthens us and gives us something much better.

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps.40:8).

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:30).

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Then said, I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all....But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb.10:7-10, 12).

	G. The Messiah Betrayed, Arrested and Deserted: Four Pictures of Commitment, 26:47-56 (Mk.14:43-52; Lk.22:47-53; Jn.18:3-11)	drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.	a. He misunderstood Jesus' kingdom & "warred in the flesh" b. Jesus rebuked carnal commitment: Rebuked "warring in the flesh"
1 Judas betrayed Jesus a. Was one of the apostles b. Headed a large crowd c. Had them armed d. Was sent by the religionists	47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.	53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?	**4 Picture 3: A purposeful commitment—Jesus' willingness to die for man** a. He could save Himself
2 Picture 1: A deceptive commitment—Judas' betrayal a. The deceiver laid his plans b. The deceiver carried out his plan c. The deceiver was asked a searching question: Why had he come?	48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. 49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him.	54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? 55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.	b. He purposed to fulfill Scripture & die (cp.v.56) **5 Picture 4: Two tragic commitments** a. A commitment that opposes Jesus: The world's treatment
3 Picture 2: A carnal commitment—Peter's carnal militancy	51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and	56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.	b. A commitment that forsakes Jesus: The disciples' fleeing

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

G. The Messiah Betrayed, Arrested, and Deserted: Four Pictures of Commitment, 26:47-56

(26:47-56) **Introduction**: humanly speaking, this is a tragic scene. Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and deserted within a few minutes. Just imagine facing all three events within so short a time: being betrayed by one of His own disciples; being falsely arrested by a mob determined to kill Him; and being deserted by all His closest friends, the apostles themselves. Jesus stood alone. He did not *have* to; not a single hand or abusive word or indignity *had* to be borne. But He chose to stand there. He willingly suffered all the abuse and indignity that He might save the world.

Much can be learned from what happens in this event. There are four separate events or pictures seen.

1. Judas betrayed Jesus (v.47).
2. Picture 1: a deceptive commitment—Judas' betrayal (v.48-50).
3. Picture 2: a carnal commitment—Peter's carnal militancy (v.51-52).
4. Picture 3: a purposeful commitment—Jesus' willingness to die for man (v.53-54).
5. Picture 4: two tragic commitments (v.55-56).
   a. A commitment to oppose Jesus: the world's treatment.
   b. A commitment that forsakes Jesus: the disciples' fleeing.

1 (26:47) **Judas—Jesus Christ, Betrayed**: Judas betrayed Jesus. Judas is seen leading a large crowd to arrest Jesus. Note the four facts stated.

1. Judas was one of the twelve apostles, a disciple, a professing follower of the Lord. Just a few hours before, that very evening, he had been sitting at the table of the Lord eating bread with Him. Now, ever so quickly, he had turned away and had actually taken the lead in betraying the Lord (cp. Acts 1:16).

> **Thought 1.** There are too many within the church just like Judas. They profess Christ, yet ever so quickly they turn away. Some even give leadership to others in opposing Christ (or righteousness).

2. Judas led a large crowd to arrest Jesus (see note—Lk.22:47-48).
3. Judas made sure they were armed. He feared Jesus ("hold Him fast," he had said, v.48). Judas had witnessed Jesus' power and His escaping from crowds before (cp. Lk.4:30; Jn.8:59).
4. Judas was officially sent by the religionists: the chief priests and leaders (Mt.26:3-5, 14-16). The very people who should have received Him rejected Him. His severest enemies were those who professed to believe in God and who gave religious leadership to the people.

> **Thought 1.** If Jesus returned to earth today, how many religionists would reject and oppose Him? In fact, how many religionists are already rejecting Him? How many reject Him as He is revealed by those who follow Him? How many go about formulating an image of Christ as they wish, after their own lusts?

2 (26:48-50) **Commitment—Deception—Judas**: the first picture of commitment is a deceptive commitment—that of Judas' betrayal.

1. The deceiver Judas laid his plans. It would be dark. How would the temple guard be able to recognize Jesus in the dark and keep Him from slipping away? Judas thought and thought and came up with a plan. He would identify Jesus for them by walking up and greeting Jesus with a kiss. A kiss was a sign of friendship and commitment among people in the East, in particular among friends. Judas felt he could deceive the disciples; they would never suspect his sin.

Thought 1. The point here is the planning and plotting of evil while professing Christ. How many profess Christ and yet lay plans to steal, lie, cheat, sin? How many profess loyalty to Christ and yet plan to give their allegiance to someone else? How many of us profess Christ and yet, just like Judas, plan to serve our own self-interest?

Thought 2. When we plan and plot to sin, we play the deceiver.

2. The deceiver Judas carried out his plan. What he planned he did: "He came to Jesus, and said, 'Hail Master,' and kissed Him." The word for "kissed Him" (katephilesen) is strong. It means to kiss strongly, forcefully, passionately, fervently, repeatedly. Either Judas had planned to really put on a show to hide his sin or else his nervousness caused him to act passionately. The sin was bad enough, but the deception was worse.

Thought 1. What we plan, we often do, both good and evil.

Thought 2. Professing Christ and living in sin makes two things out of us: a betrayer and a deceiver. We betray Christ and deceive others.

3. Jesus asked a searching question: "Friend, why have you come?" Note that Jesus did not rebuke or reproach Judas. He asked Judas a question, a question that forced Judas to search his deceptive heart. Christ still wanted to reach Judas, if possible. He asked, "Why have you come, Judas? You have greeted me as a loyal companion. Have you come committed and loyal to Me?" The question was bound to pierce and arouse a searching conviction within the deceptive heart. The deception and sin were completed. Christ was arrested (v.50).

"And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" (Tit.1:10).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"[These] shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you [the church]; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:13-14).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

Thought 1. Note that God's glorious long-suffering toward us was demonstrated by Christ (cp. 2 Pt.3:9).

1) Christ submitted to the hypocritical profession of Judas and the mistreatment of the barbarious crowd.
2) Christ tried to reach Judas again, just as He had tried and tried before.

Thought 2. Christ asks everyone of us: "Friend, why have you come? Why have you come to me? To the church?"

1) Because you are really committed and loyal?
2) Because you want gain: social standing, business, livelihood, security, influence, position, religious recognition?
3) Because you want acceptability within the community?
4) Because you want to satisfy conscience: to have just enough religion to keep you from feeling guilty?
5) Because you want to please family or friends?
6) Because you were taught to come?
7) Because all your friends come?

Thought 3. The question of Christ should pierce every one of our hearts and arouse a searching conviction.

3 (26:51-52) **Carnal—Peter**: the second picture of commitment is a carnal commitment—that of Peter's carnal militancy.

1. Peter misunderstood Jesus' kingdom and he "warred in the flesh." The disciple was Peter and the servant whose ear was cut off was Malchus (Jn.18:10). Jesus restored the ear; He miraculously healed it (Lk.22:51).

Peter thought the Messiah's hour had come. Christ was now ready to free Israel and establish the throne of David as the dominant nation in the world (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes— 22:42; Lk.7:21-23). Peter drew his sword (note that he had one) and struck, slashing off the ear of Malchus.

2. Christ rebuked Peter and his carnal commitment, his warring in the flesh.
   a. He told Peter to put his sword back into its sheath where it belonged.
   b. He healed Malchus' ear (Lk.22:51).
   c. He told Peter that "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

The picture painted by Peter's behavior is carnal commitment, acting and struggling in the flesh. Peter took his stand for Christ *in the flesh*; therefore, he failed. Eventually, he deserted Christ. Acting in the flesh will always result in failing and deserting Christ. Peter's carnal commitment is seen in four mistakes. Each mistake is too often seen in the lives of believers.

1. Peter misunderstood the Lord's Word. First, Peter thought Christ was to establish an earthly kingdom. He thought in terms of the earthly, the physical, the material. Therefore, he failed to grasp the spiritual and eternal kingdom (the spiritual world, the spiritual dimension of being) proclaimed by Christ. Second, Peter never accepted the Lord's word. Christ had predicted His death and forewarned the apostles, giving them extensive training for months (see notes—Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27). Yet Peter refused to give up his preconceived ideas and accept what Christ was saying. Therefore, he did not see the eternal world of the Spirit nor the eternal salvation which Christ was securing.

2. Peter did not wait for instructions from Christ. He acted on his own; he took matters into his own hands. The disciples had asked, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" But Jesus had not yet answered. However, this did not stop Peter. He acted on his own. How like so many of us! Too often, we act without waiting on the Lord.

3. Peter did not ask Christ what to do, not again and again. He did not persist until Christ answered.

> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**
>
> **"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Lk.21:36).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**

4. Peter did not think clearly nor use discretion nor act wisely. His action could have led to the failure of God's will. It could have led to the death of many. That is what Christ said: "Violence leads to violence. If you draw the sword, the soldiers will cut you down." Among God's people, the place of the sword is in the sheath, not drawn and slashing at people. God's people are to proclaim love and peace, not war and violence, not carnal and fleshly behavior.

> **"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.4:6).**
>
> **"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

Thought 1. The weapons of the believers warfare are spiritual, not physical or carnal (cp. 2 Cor.10:3-5; cp. Ro.8:5-8; Gal.5:17).

4 (26:53-54) **Jesus Christ, Love—Obedience**: the third picture of commitment is a purposeful commitment—that of Jesus' willingness to die for man.

1. Jesus could have saved Himself. He could have prayed to His Father and seventy-two thousand angels would have rallied to His defense and blasted His enemies away. He does not need the weak efforts of men to defend Him. He is God's Son, God's only Son, and God will defend His Son as He wills.

2. However, Jesus was determined to fulfill Scripture: He had to die, and He was willing to die for man. His life was not being taken from Him by men. He was laying it down willingly as God had purposed.

> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Is.53:5-7).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**
>
> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**

Thought 1. Christ is the perfect example of purposeful commitment. The commitment God wants from us is a purposeful commitment: a commitment to die daily for Christ and His cause (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

Thought 2. Purpose, meaning, and significance are what every man desires and needs. Such is found in Christ alone. He and His cause alone fill the heart of man with purpose, meaning, and significance.

5 (26:55-56) **Commitment**: the fourth picture of commitment is that of two tragic commitments.

1. A commitment to oppose Jesus: the world's treatment of Jesus.
   a. Note how the world treated Jesus: they treated Him as (1) a thief, as though He were going to steal from them; (2) as a dangerous man who must be opposed with weapons; and (3) as a man who must be opposed in the dark and in secret.
   b. Note how the world opposed Jesus and cut His heart. The words of Jesus are spoken with feeling, hurt, and intense sorrow.

> **"Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me" (v.55).**

Jesus allowed such indignities and shameful behavior, but it hurt and broke His heart. He was, after all, the Son of God.

> **"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).**
>
> **"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (Jn.12:28).**
>
> **"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).**

2. A commitment that forsakes Jesus: the disciples' fleeing. They fled for at least two reasons.
   a. They feared for their own lives. Jesus was not using His power to free Himself. They could not understand. They fled to save themselves.
   b. They were disillusioned; they could not understand Jesus' behavior and why He would not blast His enemies away to free Himself. A point needs to be noted about their disillusionment: it was their own fault.

      First, they were close-minded; therefore, they were weak in faith. They had closed their minds to His full mission and purpose. They had *refused* to literally accept His word about dying and rising again. They had failed to grasp the spiritual and eternal nature of His kingdom. They symbolized what He was saying. Now that it was happening, they were not prepared for it. Their faith was too weak.

      Second, they were worldly and materialistic-minded. They had hung on to their earthly concept of the Messiah: the Messiah who was coming to bring utopia to this material and physical world. They were, therefore, not prepared to deal with their earthly Messiah's being bound and taken prisoner by men of this earth. Their faith lacked the strength to bear such a trial.

> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever" (2 Pt.3:17-18).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).**
>
> **"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).**
>
> **"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).**
>
> **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).**

Thought 1. The world opposes Christ.

1) Many treat Him as a thief. They believe He withholds pleasure and prevents (cheats) people from really living. They believe that His commandments cause people to miss out on life.
2) Others oppose Him as though He is dangerous. They actually curse and try to stamp out His name and church. They oppose Him and His church with every weapon they can find.
3) Still others oppose Him by plotting and sinning in the dark and in secret.

Thought 2. All opposition and shameful behavior—all sin cuts the heart of Jesus. It was because of sin that He died (2 Pt.2:24).

Thought 3. Too many disciples forsake Jesus for the same reason: disillusionment. And too often our disillusionment is caused by the same two reasons: either being close-minded or being worldly and materialistic-minded.

	H. The Messiah's Trial before Caiaphas & the Sanhedrin: Lessons under Trial, 26:57-68 (Mk.14:53-65; Lk.22:54, 63-71; cp. Jn.18:12-14, 19-24)	and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?	**surance of Jesus**
1 Jesus was led to trial	57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.	63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.	**6 There was the claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah, the Son of God** a. He was questioned: Put under oath to answer
2 There was the confused faith & loyalty of Peter a. He could not understand b. But he loved: He came back to see the end	58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.	64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.	b. He claimed to be the Messiah[DS2] c. He gave two proofs 1) His resurrection & exaltation[DS3] 2) His second coming
3 There was the stacked court: Predetermined rejection & opposition[DS1]	59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;	65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.	**7 There was the tragic verdict** a. The crime: Blasphemy b. The evidence: His claim
4 There was the false charge: A revolutionary a. Many false witnesses: The charges were unconvincing b. Two false witnesses: The charge was convincing—a revolutionary	60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, 61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.	66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.	c. The sentence: Death
5 There was the calm as-	62 And the high priest arose,	67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, 68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?	**8 There was the physical abuse inflicted** a. Bitter hatred & behavior b. Ridicule of His claim to be the Messiah

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

H. The Messiah's Trial before Caiaphas and The Sanhedrin: Lessons under Trial, 26:57-68

(26:57-68) **Introduction**: Christ had been rejected and opposed throughout all His ministry. Now He was being officially condemned to die by the high court of the Jews, the Sandedrin. Christ was standing before the court, and all the negative feelings of humanity against God were beginning to seep through: confusion, disloyalty, unbelief, rejection, disregard, opposition, bitterness, enmity, hatred.

A glance at the major points of the passage gives some insight into what really lies within the heart of man toward God. Because Christ stood so magnificently before the court, the believer can look and learn lesson after lesson that helps him to stand before the great trials of his own life.

1. Jesus was led to trial (v.57).
2. There was the confused faith and loyalty of Peter (v.58).
3. There was the stacked court: predetermined rejection and opposition (v.59).
4. There was the false charge: a revolutionary (v.60-61).
5. There was the calm assurance of Jesus (v.62).
6. There was the claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah, the Son of God (v.63-64).
7. There was the tragic verdict (v.65-66).
8. There was the physical abuse inflicted (v.67-68).

1 (26:57) **Jesus Christ, Trials**: Jesus was led to trial. He had been arrested and now He was being put on trial for His life. In the span of just a few hours, He was to be tried at least six times (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:66-71). The first trial was an informal trial before Annas, the retired High Priest who was highly respected by the Jewish leaders (Jn.18:13, 19-24). The trial before Caiaphas, in the present passage, was the second trial. The court (Sanhedrin) was already assembled. These were the very men who had Jesus arrested (Mt.26:3-5). They were the High Priest, the Scribes and the elders, that is, the Sanhedrin, the council who ruled the Jewish people for the Romans (v.59). In a hastily called meeting, the council was sitting there waiting for the guards to bring Jesus to them. Several facts reveal the evil of their hearts (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; note—16:1-12; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12).

1. They had hastily assembled the court *at night*. It was illegal to try cases at night. All criminals had to be tried in the day.

2. They were meeting in Caiaphas' palace (home), not in the official court. This, too, was illegal. All cases had to be tried in court.
3. Jesus was being tried during the Passover week. No cases could be tried during the Passover week.
4. They had not met to try Jesus but to secretly devise charges that would condemn Him to death.

Thought 1. A heart that wants to do evil will twist the rules. These religionists had to twist the law if they were going to condemn Christ.

Thought 2. A person often finds it easier to oppose Christ within a group than when alone. Not all among these religionists felt malice toward Christ, but most went along with those who did. They did not stand against the malicious and unjust treatment of our Lord. (It is doubtful if Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea had been summoned to the hastily called illegal meeting. Their favorable feelings toward Christ were probably well known to the council. However, this is disputable, cp. Mt.27:57; Jn.3:1f.)

Thought 3. The house of Caiaphas, the religious leader, should have been an ideal home, a home that stood forth as a strong testimony for God. Yet, here it is seen as a center for evil.

Thought 4. Two things need to be observed and searched out in our lives.
1) How far institutional religion twisted the minds of these men. Has it twisted our minds?
2) How much these men were concerned for personal security, position, and influence (power). How far away these men were from God, and they were religionists (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9). How far have we allowed security, position, and influence to lead us away from God?

2 (26:58) **Peter**: there was the confused faith and loyalty of Peter. Peter was confused. He just could not understand why Jesus was not blasting His enemies and setting up His earthly kingdom (see note—Mt.26:51-52). When it was clear that Jesus was not going to act, Peter fled for his life, but he had not gone far. His love for Christ had stopped him, and now his love was turning him around to follow Christ along the trail to Caiaphas' palace. He wanted to see the end, just what would happen to His Lord.

> **"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:6-7).**
>
> **"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn.4:18).**

Thought 1. Peter was caught between two forces: loyalty to Christ and fear for self. We are often caught between the same two forces. If we stand for Christ, we often find that we suffer ridicule or abuse or being passed over for some position, or a host of other possible acts of persecution.

Thought 2. Peter's failure was due to misunderstanding the truth about Christ (see note—Mt.26:51-52). Failure to understand Christ will lead to failure now and doom us to eternal failure.

3 (26:59) **Religionists**: there was the stacked court against Christ—predetermined rejection and opposition. The court was not convening to see if Jesus were guilty. The court was meeting to seek false witnesses against Christ (cp. Ps.35:11). They wanted to sentence Him to death. They had already determined in their hearts to reject and oppose Him. He was a threat to both their nation and their personal security and position. They feared the loss of both, so they were set on killing Him. (For a discussion of the reasons for their opposition, see note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12.)

Thought 1. The religionists rejected and opposed Christ for two primary reasons, the same two reasons that men reject and oppose Him today.
1) They were unwilling to deny self, to surrender all they were and had to Christ. They feared loss, the loss of some security, money, position, pleasure. They loved the world and self more than they loved God.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**

2) They were unwilling to deny their institutional religion, their rituals and ceremonies and their religious practices that were *man-made*, *man-conceived,* and *man-honoring*.

> **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).**
>
> **"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (3 Jn.11).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(26:59) **Sanhedrin**: the ruling body of the nation of Israel, both the governing council and supreme court of the Jews. It had seventy-one members and was presided over by the High Priest. Its membership was made up of the Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes or lawyers, and the elders who were leaders from among the people. A quorum was twenty-three. The legal power of the Sanhedrin to pass the death sentence was restricted about twenty some years before the trial of Jesus. However, they did retain the right of excommunication (cp. Jn.9:22). To secure Jesus' death, they were forced by law to appeal to the Romans for the death sentence.

4 (26:60-61) **Jesus Christ, Charges Against**: there was the false charge—a revolutionary. Note the words "found none" are repeated twice. The religionists sought false witnesses but found none whose charges were strong enough. The law required two witnesses who had no contact with each other and who agreed on the same evidence. The court was to examine each separately. Apparently, the religionists ran into several problems...

- The evidence of the false charges was just too weak to convince the Roman authorities of Jesus' guilt.
- A strong case could not be formulated from the charges made.
- Two witnesses who agreed on a single charge could not be found.

Finally, two witnesses did come forth with a charge that seemed to be strong enough. Note the words "at last." The case almost broke down and failed. Imagine! Even in seeking false witnesses, the case against our Lord could not be established.

Note the following facts.

1. The two witnesses with adequate testimony were false witnesses.
2. The two were crude and base. This is shown by their contemptuous attitude and public animosity: "this fellow" (autos)—a disrespectful, contemptuous address.
3. The two distorted Jesus' words. Jesus had said, "Destroy *ye* this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19). Jesus had actually said the Jews were to be the destroyers. But the false witnesses said, "*This fellow said*, I am able to destroy the temple of God." They distorted His words, making Him the destroyer.

The false witnesses also misunderstood Jesus' words. Jesus was referring to His body, to the temple of His body and to the resurrection of His body. The Jews apparently thought He meant He would destroy and rebuild the Jerusalem temple in three days. It was this charge, the charge of being a revolutionary, that the religionists believed they could use to convince the Romans to execute Jesus.

> **"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).**
>
> **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jn.7:7).**
>
> **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you....But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (Jn.15:18, 25).**

Thought 1. When men are bent on doing something, they often go ahead and do it—regardless of the method.
1) When a man is bent on rejecting Christ, he rationalizes and justifies himself and rejects Christ.
2) When a man is bent on doing something wrong, he rationalizes and justifies himself and does it.

Thought 2. One of the greatest mistakes we make is to distort the Word of Christ. The two false witnesses distorted and twisted His Word. When we distort and twist what He said, we condemn ourselves to destruction.

> **"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pt.3:15-16).**

5 (26:62) **Jesus Christ, Trials**: there was the calm assurance of Jesus. Note these facts.

1. The two witnesses who charged Jesus with being a revolutionary could not agree (Mk.14:59).
2. Jesus "held His peace." He was silent; He said nothing in defending Himself against the false charges.
3. The High Priest and court become disturbed and perhaps confused by Jesus' silence. They needed Him to begin speaking, hoping He would add evidence to the charge, thereby incriminating Himself. The High priest turned and attempted to pressure and browbeat Jesus: "Answerest thou nothing?..."

"But Jesus held His peace" (v.63). He was calm, assured, peaceful, and confident in the midst of turmoil. Why did He say nothing?

1. He stood in the will of God. He had been and was obedient to God. In the "determinate counsel of God," it was God's will for Him to die (Acts 2:23; cp. Is. 53:7; Ps.38:13-14). Therefore, He would surrender to the false charge and murderous intention of the council.

2. He said nothing because He would not become entangled in a useless argument. To answer would be useless, for He would be defending Himself against a false charge and against a group of men who were set on opposing and destroying Him.

3. He would answer only when an opportunity arose to proclaim the truth of the gospel: that He is the Messiah and that God does love the world (Mt.26:63-64; cp. Jn.3:16).

> **"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Pt.3:10).**
>
> **"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Pr.13:3).**
>
> **"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles" (Pr.21:23).**

Thought 1. Christ taught that there are times when silence is the best policy.

1) When words would entangle us in *useless argument*.
2) When men are *set on opposing and destroying* us.
3) When men *persecute* us (see note—Mt.10:23).
4) When men *reject* our message (Mt.10:12-14).

Thought 2. God will give us an inner peace and calm assurance in great trial (cp. Jn.14:27; 16:33).

> **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**
>
> **"[You] are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.1:5-7).**
>
> **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13).**

Thought 3. Jesus Christ willingly submitted to such false charges so that no man could "lay anything to the charge of God's elect" (Ro.8:33). Jesus Christ was falsely accused that we might not be condemned (Ro.8:34).

6 (26:63-64) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: there was the claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah, the Son of God. Four things happened here.

1. The High Priest questioned Jesus and put Him under oath to answer. The words "I adjure thee by the living God" was an official oath which demanded an answer. The High Priest used his office as God's representative to demand an answer: "*By the living God*, answer. Are you claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of God?" he asked Jesus.

2. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God (see note—Mt.1:18). Jesus answered, "Thou hast said." It was a strong assertion. All that Caiaphas had said was true. Mark added the striking words of deity, "I am" (ego eimi) (Mk.14:62; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20; note—18:6).

Note that Christ also called Himself "the Son of Man" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.26:64).

Thought 1. Jesus claimed beyond question to be the promised Messiah, the Son of God. He was claiming to be God of gods, Lord of lords, One with the Father in every respect (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20; note—18:4-6. See outline and notes—Ph.2:5-11.)

Thought 2. What if Jesus had said, "No. I am not the Messiah. I am not the Son of God." Where would we be today? Honestly and objectively, where would the world be today? Just imagine a world without the cross of Christ!

3. Jesus gave two proofs for His claim. His resurrection and exaltation and His second coming prove both His person and authority.

Thought 1. The believer hopes in the resurrection and exaltation and in the second coming of Christ, but the emphasis of Christ to these unbelievers is judgment.

⇒ His resurrection declares Him to be the Son of God (Ro.1:4).

> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**

⇒ His exaltation declares His position and authority to rule and reign over all men (Ph.2:9-11).

> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in**

heaven, and earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

⇒ His return will declare His execution of justice and judgment (Mt.24:30; Jn.5:28).

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt.24:30).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice" (Jn.5:28).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(26:64) **Christ**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(26:64) **Son of Man**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20.

7 (26:65-66) **Jesus Christ, Condemned**: there was the tragic verdict. Note that Caiaphas tore his clothes. Mark even says he tore his under garments (tunic). This was a custom among Jews when they heard or saw God's name dishonored or disgraced (2 Ki.18:37; 19:1 cp. Is.36:22; 27:1; Acts 14:14). Caiaphas had gotten what he wanted. Christ had committed blasphemy which was punishable by death among the Jews (Lev.24:16; cp. Acts 7:58). No other witnesses were needed. *A vote by acclamation* was quickly called for: "What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death."

8 (26:67-68) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the physical abuse inflicted. The bitter enmity and hatred of the Jews broke through. The rights and expectation of justice was completely forgotten. The abuse took two forms.

1. Bitter hatred and behavior. Spitting in the face was a sign of monstrous disrespect. Beating with the fists and palms (erra pisan, rods) was an outburst of the inner bitterness within the hearts of the religionists against Christ.

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Is.50:6; cp. Is.52:14).

"They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (Mic.5:1).

2. Ridicule of His claim, mocking His supernatural power and sarcastically calling Him "thou Christ."

Thought 1. Rejecting and opposing can cause bitterness. Too many harbor an inner bitterness against God and Christ. Too many have allowed their rejection and opposition and the events which happened to them to grow into bitterness. Thus when opportunity arises, they vent their feelings and hostility. Too many believers, in rejecting or opposing Christ, allow bitterness to seep into their hearts. Too many vent their feelings and bitterness when they have a chance to attack some movement of God or some true believer who faithfully follows Christ day by day.

	I. The Messiah Denied by Peter: A Look at Denying Christ, 26:69-75 (Mk.14:66-72; Lk.22:54-62; Jn.18:15-18, 25-27)	Nazareth. 72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. 73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee. 74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.	b. Denial by oath: Called Jesus "the man"—downgraded Him **4 The denial by cursing & swearing** a. Charge: Peter was a disciple 1) A crowd came 2) Speech betrayed b. Denial by cursing & swearing **5 The answer to denial: Repentance**[DS2] a. Remembering the Lord's Word b. Getting alone c. Godly sorrow: Repent
1 The cause of denial: Sitting with the crowd[DS1] **2 The denial by pretension** a. Charge: Peter had been with Jesus b. Denial by pretension: Did not know Jesus **3 The denial by oath** a. Charge: Peter had been with Jesus 1) Made by a maid 2) Made before crowd	69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. 70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. 71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of		

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

I. The Messiah Denied by Peter: A Look at Denying Christ, 26:69-75

(26:69-75) **Introduction—Apostasy—Jesus Christ, Denied**: denying Christ is serious, very serious. It is a tragic and terrible sin, yet Christ forgives even a man who denies Him. He forgave Peter; and in forgiving Peter, He has demonstrated forever God's unbelievable love for man, no matter how terrible man's sin. Just think for a momemt. Christ forgave a man who professed an undying loyalty to Him yet who ended up denying Him three times when the man felt pressured and threatened by a crowd. No greater picture of God's great love and marvelous grace can be found.

Note another point as well: Peter wanted the world to know about the Lord's great love. The story of His denying Christ originates with him. No other disciple was there to witness it. He shared the terrible experience and God's wondrous grace in forgiving him. Mark was Peter's disciple, and Mark is the gospel writer who shares the most detail about Peter's denials.

Peter's tragic experience in denying Christ says much to believers of all generations.

1. The cause of denial: sitting with the crowd (v.69).
2. The denial by pretension (v.69-70).
3. The denial by oath (v.71-72).
4. The denial by cursing and swearing (v.73-74).
5. The answer to denial: repentance (v.75).

1 (26:69) **Apostasy—Denial**: the cause of Peter's denial was that he "sat without in the palace." He sat down with the crowd, the crowd which represented the world of rejecters. Very frankly, Peter was failing Christ and failing Him miserably. Sitting down among the crowd was the last place he should have been. Of course, He should have never forsaken Christ. But having fled, he should have been off alone with God in prayer, seeking answers and understanding from God (see notes—Mt.26:51-52; 26:55-56). Or he should have been with the other apostles, leading them to seek the face of God for understanding and direction.

There are at least three causes for denial—three things that can lead a person to deny Christ. All three are seen in Peter's experience (also see notes—Jn.18:12-27).

1. Deserting Christ: turning away from Him and fleeing from Him (cp. Mt.26:56).
2. "Following Christ afar off": not walking close to Him, not standing and being identified with Him (cp. Mt.26:58).

> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:7-8).**

3. "Sitting without" or sitting with the crowd: not being where one should be, with the disciples of the Lord.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Th.3:6).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(26:69) **Palace**: Peter was not actually in the palace proper. He was in the courtyard. The first denial took place in the courtyard, the second on the porch of the palace.

2 (26:69-70) **Apostasy—Denial**: there was the denial by pretension. This is always a denial that pretends to have nothing to do with Christ.

The guard at the gate (a woman) knew John and allowed him to enter (Jn.18:15). Apparently John requested her to let Peter enter. Note the words, "thou *also* wast with Jesus." She seemed to be making a simple statement to Peter, perhaps for identification purposes. There seemed to be no threat or danger to Peter, yet Peter pretended to know nothing about Jesus. Again, note his exact words: "I know not what thou sayest"; that is, he pretended to know nothing about what she was saying or to know nothing about this Jesus of Nazareth. In either case, Peter denied and pretended to have nothing to do with Jesus.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Pr.29:25).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

Thought 1. Pretending is one of the constant sins of men.
⇒ We are asked if we think something. We do, yet we deny it.
⇒ We are asked if we feel something. We do, yet we deny it.
⇒ We are asked if we fear something. We do, yet we deny it.
⇒ We are asked if we did something. We did, yet we deny it.

Thought 2. Too many believers deny Christ by pretension. Very simply, they pretend not to know Christ when out in the world...
- at their employment
- at their school
- at their social functions
- among their neighbors
- among their friends
- among strangers

Thought 3. Pretension is two things.
1) Pretention is hypocrisy. It is pretending to be something we are not.
2) Pretension is denial of Christ. It is shying away from or lying about one's confession of Christ.

3 (26:71-72) **Apostasy—Denial**: there was the denial by oath. This is a denial that is strong and emphatic, "I swear by God, I do not know the man. I know nothing about Him."

1. This charge was made by another maid or servant girl, and it was made before a crowd of people. By being made before a crowd, Peter felt more threatened. The charge is the same, "This fellow was also with Jesus." Note the charge was true.
⇒ Peter had been with Jesus. He was an apostle; in fact, he was supposedly the leader of the apostles.
⇒ Peter was the disciple who had professed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (Mt.16:16).
⇒ Peter was the disciple who had sworn loyalty to Christ even if it meant death (Mt.26:33-35).
2. The denial which uses an oath downgrades Christ. Note that Peter called Christ, "the man!" He, of course, was the Man; but Peter did not mean the Man in this sense. Peter ignored who Jesus really was, pushing his responsibility to profess Christ out of his mind. Embarrassment, ridicule, abuse, persecution, and the threat of arrest and death intimidated him; so he denied any knowledge of Christ with an emphatic oath: "I swear to God, I do not know the man."

> **"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).**
>
> **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).**
>
> **"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).**

Thought 1. Note something important. In the first denial, Peter was charged by only one person. His denial was a simple denial by pretension, of simply ending the issue: "I know not what thou sayest." But in this second denial, Peter was charged before a crowd. He felt more threatened; therefore, his denial was stronger and more emphatic: he used an oath. The lesson for us is clear. The more we are among the crowds of the world, the more we are threatened with ridicule, embarrassment, abuse, and persecution for our profession in Christ. And the more we are threatened, the more likely we are to deny Christ (cp. Ro.12:1-2; 2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16).

Thought 2. There is a strong warning for us in Peter's denials.
⇒ Peter was a strong disciple.
⇒ Peter knew and had trusted Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God.

⇒ Peter had a strong profession of loyalty to Christ.
⇒ Peter had just partaken of the Lord's Supper; in fact, he had just been privileged to partake of the very first Supper.
⇒ Peter had left all to follow Christ.
⇒ Peter had been taught about God, taught by Christ Himself.
⇒ Peter had even been forewarned that the flesh was weak and that he would fail.

Thought 3. Every denial (in fact, every neglect) of Christ downgrades the Lord. Denial (and neglect) ignores just who Christ is, the Son of God who possesses all power and majesty and dominion. Denial shows that we fear men more than we fear and reverence God. Neglect of Christ shows how little we fear and reverence Him. The Biblical exhortation always needs to be kept in mind: "The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb.10:30-31).

Thought 4. Peter had forgotten Christ's exhortation: "Swear not at all...." (Mt.5:34-37).

Thought 5. Too many believers fear, and because they fear, they lose their testimony for Christ and the opportunity to witness and win others to Christ. Too many fear...

- embarrassment
- ridicule
- abuse
- loss of position
- worldly friends
- worldly neighbors
- business management
- loss of promotion

4 (26:73-74) **Apostasy—Denial**: there was the strongest and most terrible denial of all, the denial by cursing snd swearing.

1. The charge was made by a crowd this time, a crowd who actually came up to Peter to charge him. Luke says it happened about one hour after the second charge (Lk.22:59). And John says that one of the persons in the crowd was a kinsman of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off in the garden of Gethsemane (Jn.18:26). Note that the third charge differed from the other two: Peter was no longer charged with having been with Jesus; he was now charged with being "one of them," one of the disciples. Note also that it was his speech, his accent that gave him away. Peter was from the north, from Galilee, and his northern accent differed significantly from the speech of Judaea and Jerusalem.
2. The denial by cursing and swearing is a terrible sin. A man who is put under pressure to prove himself often resorts to cursing and swearing. Note three things.
   a. Peter *began* to curse. His cursing was a continuous thing.
   b. Peter's failure was a deteriorating failure. His first denial was simply pretending not to know Christ, simply evading the issue. His second denial was stronger, using a socially acceptable oath (although it was wrong and a sin). His third denial declines into depraved cursing, totally unacceptable to righteous hearts and pure minds and clean lips.
   c. As soon as Peter had cursed and swore for a while, "immediately the cock crew."

Thought 1. A crowd of unbelievers can put pressure upon any of us. Peter was where he did not belong. He was hanging around in the midst of a worldly crowd. He belonged in one of three places: by the side of Christ, or alone with God seeking answers and understanding, or with the other apostles, rallying them in prayer for understanding and direction.

> **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).**
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).**
> **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Pr.4:14).**

Thought 2. Our speech should give us away. Our speech should be kind, gentle, yet strong—strong for the Lord. A person should be able to tell we are believers by our speech. Note that Peter used his speech, his cursing to try to deceive the crowd into thinking that he was anything but a disciple. The Lord's disciples are not to curse and swear. Cursing and swearing are terrible sins in the eyes of the Lord (see outline and notes—Mt.5:33-37).

Thought 3. Sin causes man to deteriorate: it causes him to deteriorate more and more, to wax worse and worse. Note what happened to Peter.
1) Peter's first denial: he pretended ignorance, simply sinned.
2) Peter's second denial: he committed apostasy, infidelity.
3) Peter's third denial: he committed perjury, blasphemy.

5 (26:75) **Denial**: there was the answer to denial—repentance. Three steps were involved in Peter's repentance.

1. Remembering the Lord's words: apparently while the rooster was crowing, the Lord, standing in the chamber of the palace, turned around and caught Peter's eye (Lk.22:61). And Peter, eye to eye with the Lord, remembered the words the Lord had spoken to him:

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Lk.22:31-32).

In the midst of all His own pain and suffering, the Lord took time to look at Peter. His look told Peter that His Lord had not forgotten him. The Lord still loved and cared for Him and wanted his loyalty and service. Christ had prayed for Peter, and the power of that prayer was now moving in Peter's heart and life. Peter now remembered His Lord's word and that word began to take effect.

2. Getting alone: Peter left the porch or courtyard as fast as he safely could. He rushed out through the gate into the night to get alone with God. He was broken and full of anguish and pain for having failed his Lord: he "wept bitterly."

3. Repenting and experiencing godly sorrow. Peter repented and expressed godly sorrow (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land" (Ezra 10:11).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

Thought 1. The same steps Peter took are the steps we need to take in repenting of sin.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(27:75) **Repentance**: see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30.

	CHAPTER 27	What is that to us? see thou to that.	e. He was not helped; he was left to himself
	J. The Messiah's Traitor, Judas, & His End: A Picture of Wrong Repentance & Human Religion, 27:1-10 (cp. Acts 1:16-19)	5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.	f. He cast the money at the priests
		6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.	g. He fell into utter despair & hung himself
1 Jesus was condemned by the Sanhedrin	When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:	7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.	**3 The religionists' human religion**
a. They met to finalize the charge to convince the Romans			a. They were inconsistent: In behavior & religious rules
b. They bound Jesus	2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.	8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.	b. They were deceptive: They tried to hide their evil by public service—bought a cemetary
c. They led Jesus away—to Pilate			1) Became known as the "field of blood"
2 Judas' wrong repentance	3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,	9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;	2) Fulfilled Scripture[DSI]
a. He saw his sin: Jesus was condemned			
b. He repented, but to the priests not to God			
c. He made restitution, but too late			
d. He confessed, but to the priests not to God	4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said,	10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.	

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

J. The Messiah's Traitor, Judas, and His End: A Picture of Wrong Repentance and Human Religion, 27:1-10

(27:1-10) **Introduction—Judas**: there were two misguided culprits involved in the death of Christ—Judas Iscariot and the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews. Judas was the culprit who betrayed Christ; the body of the Sanhedrin was the culprit who condemned Christ in a stacked and unjust trial.

There is recorded in this passage something often overlooked: Judas did repent (v.3). He turned away from his terrible sin and tried to make restitution. However, his repentance was a wrong repentance. What he did fell far short of what he needed to do. Nevertheless, he did try to right his wrong. It is this picture, the picture of wrong repentance, that is discussed in the first part of this passage.

The second part of the passage pictures the humanistic religion of the priests. It discusses how they treated Judas' repentance and blood money, that is, the money they themselves had paid him for betraying Christ. The incident shows just how much man uses and twists religion to suit his own desires and lusts.

1. Jesus was condemned by the Sanhedrin (v.1-2).
2. Judas' wrong repentance (v.3-5).
   a. He saw his sin: Jesus was condemned.
   b. He repented, but to the priests not to God.
   c. He made restitution, but too late.
   d. He confessed, but to the priests not to God.
   e. He was not helped; he was left to himself.
   f. He cast the money at the priests.
   g. He fell into utter despair and hung himself.
3. The religionists' human religion (v.6-10).
   a. They were inconsistent: in behavior and religious rules.
   b. They were deceptive: they tried to hide their evil by public service—bought a cemetary.

1 (27:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Trial—Sanhedrin**: Jesus was condemned by the Sanhedrin (see notes—Mt.26:57-68). They had met the evening before in a hastily called meeting to put Christ on trial for His life. They had secured the false witnesses and charges they sought. Now, in these verses, they are seen meeting to formulate the charges in such a way that the Romans would be forced to condemn Christ as a revolutionary. As soon as the charge was worded, they bound and led Christ away in an atmosphere of triumph.

The fact to note is that Judas apparently witnessed these unjust proceedings against Christ. "He saw that Christ was condemned" (v.3), and it was his witnessing the unjust condemnation of Christ that led to the two events of the present passage.

2 (27:3-5) **Judas—Repentance**: Judas' wrong repentance. Judas did repent, but his repentance was a worldly repentance, not a godly repentance. Seven things are said about Judas.

1. Judas saw his sin; he saw Jesus condemned. Note the words, "When he saw that he [Christ] was condemned." It was seeing Jesus so unjustly condemned that caused Judas to do what he now did. He knew Christ, how good Christ was. He did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah, but he knew that Jesus was a tremendously good man, and he knew that it was because of his sin that Jesus was being condemned to death in a most unjust and savage way (see notes—Mt.26:57-68). This fact—plus the fact that Jesus was definitely God's Son and that God was causing a sharp pang of guilt in the chest of Judas—drove Judas to seek relief. He felt boiling up within him an intense remorse and grief, the sense of being all alone, even without God, and a sense of not knowing what to do. It was too much, more than he could bear. He felt he would explode if he did not get relief of soul and some deliverance.

Note: Judas knew the religionists were seeking to kill Jesus. Apparently many knew of the plot (Jn.5:18; 7:1, 19-20). This was the very reason Judas went to the authorities and betrayed Christ into their hands. Some say there is a possibility that he thought sufficient charges could never be formulated against Christ. However, this is not likely, and Scripture gives no hint of this possibility. Jesus was a revolutionary. The religionists feared for their religion (Judaism), position, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9). Judas knew Christ was making changes, and when the authorities began to make their move, Judas set out to get what he could out of a bad situation. He wanted to assure his own safety and security (see outline and notes—Mt.26:14-16). The guilt and remorse boiling up within him seems to be the explanation for his deep conviction of sin and repentance.

> **"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).**
>
> **"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25).**
>
> **"For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps.38:4).**
>
> **"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (Ps.51:3).**

Thought 1. Believers see Christ condemned practically every day, that is, cursed, ridiculed, and abused by various people standing around talking. Such condemnation should convict us. Our silence should stir turmoil within our hearts. We need to speak up and take a position by the side of our Lord. Too many betray our Lord in such moments. Jesus is God's Son, and He deserves the utmost respect from every man.

2. Judas repented. However, he repented to the priests, not to God. Note the words "Judas...repented himself...to the chief priests and elders." There is no mention of God at all. This was his mistake. Repentance means to change and to turn away from sin to God (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30). Judas needed to change, to turn from his terrible sin. But he needed to turn to God, not to other men.

> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**
>
> **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).**

Thought 1. Sin should lead to repentance. When we sense *guilt* for real sin, we should repent and turn from the sin. *But to whom we turn* is the critical factor: we are to turn to God. Turning away from sin is not enough. Changing and turning our backs and walking away from sin is not enough. We must turn our faces toward God and walk with Him.

3. Judas made restitution. Judas did what God wants every man to do: make restitution for his sin. But he was too late. He should have made restitution while events could be changed. He should have shown a repentance to God and returned the money *before Christ was condemned*. It was too late now. Christ was already condemned and his life was doomed.

Note that this was the second mistake Judas made. He repented to the priests, not to God; and here he made restitution, but too late.

Thought 1. We should make restitution for our sins, but we must act soon enough to make amends and to change events. We must act soon enough to save the situation. The first step, of course, is to repent before God; and then we can make restitution. But note, there is a right way and a wrong way to do both. Judas repented, but he repented in a wrong way. He turned in remorse to men instead of turning to God. He made restitution, but he made restitution too late. We must *turn to God and make restitution*, being sure to correct the situation soon enough.

Thought 2. Money and other things which are secured through evil ways will eat away at a person's mind and heart.

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

4. Judas confessed, but he confessed to the priests not to God. Note Judas' words, "I have sinned." But he was speaking to the chief priests and elders, not to God. Note something important: Judas accepted personal responsibility for his sin; he blamed no one else. He said, "I have sinned." His problem was that he went to men instead of going to God. He should have confessed his sin to God; instead, he carried his burden to men. He should have gone to God for relief and confession, for only God could have saved and relieved him.

Note: Judas was gripped with a worldly sorrow, not a godly sorrow (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (Ezra 10:11).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord" (Jer.3:13).

Thought 1. Confession is essential if we wish forgiveness, but confession is to be made to God not to men.

Thought 2. We sin and are personally responsible for our own sin. No one else is responsible for our sin. Blame cannot be laid at anyone else's feet.

Thought 3. There is a wrong confession, a worldly sorrow, as well as a right confession, a godly sorrow (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

5. Judas was not helped, and he was left to himself. Judas felt guilt, for he had betrayed Christ. The religionists did not feel guilt for they saw Christ as a threat to their religion and nation (Mt.12:1-8; 12:10; 15:1-20; 15:6-9). Therefore, in their minds, they were serving their religion (God) and their nation (God's chosen people). If Judas were bothered with a guilty conscience, he was a fool. They had no time, especially right now in the *busyness* of the moment. They did not have time to be concerned with a guilt stricken fool who could not see *the good* he had done in helping his nation and religion. Note the words of the religionists to Judas, and keep in mind that Judas was a man who was desperately crying out for help: "What is that to us? See thou to it [that is your concern]."

Four terrible things are seen in the action and words of the religionists.

a. Hardness of heart: a hardness that keeps a man from helping those in need, even those who are desperate for help.
b. Misunderstanding the ministry: not understanding the true ministry and call of God which is to help people at any cost. (The religionists were the priests of God; yet instead of helping, they just left Judas to himself.)
c. Extreme blindness: a blindness of mind caused by rationalizing and twisting the truth. They were able to justify their behavior in their minds, so they were able to turn from Judas and to continue on in their sin of putting Christ to death.
d. Obstinate unbelief: unbelief that persists, that just marches on in its own will and way, rejecting and rejecting the truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

Thought 1. The mind can easily twist the truth and rationalize. It can easily take misbehavior and justify it. If we lust to do something, the mind can usually find a way to do it, a way that allows us to justify ourselves. But, just as the priests were guilty of terrible sin, so are we. No matter how much we rationalize and justify our behavior, the truth condemns us. The truth of righteousness cannot be changed.

Thought 2. *Busyness* to some degree kept the religionists from helping Judas. The claim is too often made that we are too busy to help. The first priority of ministry is to help those in need.

Thought 3. Note the four terrible things seen in the action of the religionists. They are applicable to many.

Thought 4. What would have happened if Judas had run up to Christ, begging forgiveness? If he had run to the disciples for help?

6. Judas threw the money at the feet of the priests. This was an act of frustration and anger, of hopelessness and helplessness. What could he do? The religionists were not going to change their verdict against Christ. Neither were they going to help him in his desperate need. In his mind, there was no one to help. He was stricken with guilt, standing all alone with no hand to help. Hopelessness and helplessness set in. In anger against the priests, he threw the blood money into the court at the feet of the priests and raced out of the temple into the streets of the city. He passed through the city gate into the country, seeking to escape his gnawing conscience, the glare of human eyes, and the haunting face of Him whom he had betrayed.

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me...." (Ps.42:6).
"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).
"Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go" (Jer.2:25).

Thought 1. There is a fact that always needs to be remembered. When facing spiritual need, God is the One to whom we should turn, not man. The help of man in providing spiritual deliverance is empty. The end result of man's deliverance is always frustration, helplessness, and hopelessness. Man cannot erase guilt and liberate the anguished soul of man.

7. Judas fell into utter despair and hung himself. He was gripped by guilt, grief, despair, and helplessness. He was haunted and saw no hope. Left alone with his thoughts, he felt his sin was too terrible to be forgiven. He felt God could never forgive him for so great a sin. So he took his belt, and as Peter seems to indicate, tied it to an overhanging rock on a mountain precipice and hung himself. The belt broke and Judas fell headlong, bursting his body asunder (Acts 1:18).

Note a significant fact: Judas' sin was not unpardonable. He could have been forgiven. Throughout history many murderers have been forgiven, but Judas make a common mistake, a mistake that is more clearly seen by being stated in several ways.

⇒ He felt his sin was too great to be forgiven.
⇒ He thought the mercy of God was limited, too small to forgive his sin.
⇒ He thought his sin was greater than the mercy of God.
⇒ He allowed his sin to overshadow and blot out the mercy of God.

"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 10:1).
"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).
"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).
"But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).
"Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

Thought 1. We should never abandon ourselves to despair nor become suffocated with grief. We should never be haunted with helplessness and hopelessness. Christ Jesus delivers and helps meet our need perfectly.

Thought 2. God's mercy is so great and so sufficient it will cover any sin. We just need to come to Him, confess and repent, then He will forgive and deliver us unto eternal life.

Thought 3. Note the difference between Judas and Peter. Both sinned against the Lord and regretted their sinful acts, but only Peter repented. He repented and was received by the Lord and recommissioned for service (Jn.21:15-17). But Judas gave up in utter despair and destroyed himself. Regret can lead to repentance or to remorse and destruction.

3 (27:6-10) **Religionists**: the religionists' human religion. These verses show just how the chief priests took their religion and twisted it to suit their own desires. The corruption of their lives and religion is clearly seen.

1. Their corruption is seen in their inconsistency. They were inconsistent in both their behavior and their religious rules. They held the position of serving God, yet they sought false witnesses against an innocent man and condemned Him to death (Mt.26:57-68). They claimed to be the servants of God, yet they turned away from ministering to a man (Judas) in desperate need. Neither their behavior nor their religion matched their profession.

They were also inconsistent in their religious rules. They took the money out of the temple treasury to pay a bribe, but they would not put the same money back into the treasury. They were careful to keep the religious rules that suited them, but they were loose in true justice and mercy.

The law said that money gained or used in an evil way was not acceptable for God's service (Dt.23:18). It was this rule that they haggled over, this rule that shows how inconsistent they had become in behavior and religion. They had taken the religion given by God and twisted it to suit their own wills and desires. They had developed a man-made religion that allowed them to do as they wished.

2. Their corruption is also seen in their deception. They tried to hide their evil by public service. They took the blood-money of Judas and purchased land for a public cemetary. The purpose of the religionists seems clear. They had hoped that such a service to the public would help in quieting any grumbling over the death of Christ. But note: their scheme failed. The public, discovering through talk and rumor that the field had been purchased with the blood-money of Jesus' betrayer, began to call the cemetary "the field of blood."

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

"And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen.6:12).

"But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean" (Is.28:7-8).

"They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge" (Jer.5:28).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(27:9-10) **Old Testament Quotation**: this quotation is from Zech.11:12-13, not from Jeremiah. There are several explanations for Jeremiah's being credited with the statement. Two of the more reasonable explanations are as follows.

1. Some later writer added the word "Jeremiah" to the Scripture while making a copy. The word is omitted in the Syriac, Persic, and other Latin copies.
2. Many Hebrew manuscripts list Jeremiah as the first prophetic book. Matthew, unable to remember exactly where the prophecy was found, uses the first prophetic book, Jeremiah, to stand for the roll of the prophets. Jeremiah, by being the first prophet, represented the prophets.

	K. The Messiah's Tragic Trial before Pilate: The Tragedy of an Indecisive Man,[PSI] 27:11-25 (Mk.15:1-15; Lk.23:1-25; Jn.18:28-40)	18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.	d. Pilate's reason: He knew Jesus was innocent
		19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.	**3 He failed to listen to a strong warning**
1 He rejected the Lord's strong confession a. Jesus' strong & straightforward claim: He is King b. Jesus' strong & controlled behavior: Under severe accusation, He was silent & purposed c. Jesus' strong & enduring purpose: Under repeated questioning, He endured d. Jesus' impact: Pilate was impressed but still indecisive	11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. 12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing. 13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? 14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.	20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. 21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. 22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. 23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.	**4 He ignored the influence of evil men upon people** **5 He gave in to worldly pressure**
2 He compromised clear evidence a. A custom of Rome to humor the Jews b. A notorious criminal: Barabbas c. Pilate's planned compromise: Offering Barabbas for Jesus	15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. 16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. 17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?	24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. 25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.	**6 He tried to escape responsibility for evil** **7 The conclusion: The responsibility for Jesus' blood is cried out for by the Jews**

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

K. The Messiah's Tragic Trial before Pilate: The Tragedy of an Indecisive Man, 27:11-25

(27:11-25) **Introduction**: Pilate's treatment of Jesus is better understood by referring to note three, which discusses Pilate himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:11-25). Despite his enormous and proven ability as a leader, he was indecisive as he stood before Christ. He knew Christ was innocent, for he saw no evil in Him (cp. Lk.23:22). Yet he had to tread carefully with the Jewish authorities lest he fall into their disfavor. If they reported him to Rome, he could lose his position and wealth.

In the behavior of Pilate is seen the picture and tragedy of an indecisive man. (Also see outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.15:1-15; outline and notes Lk.23:1-25; Jn.18:28-19:15.)

1. He rejected the Lord's strong confession (v.11-14).
2. He compromised clear evidence (v.15-18).
3. He failed to listen to a strong warning (v.19).
4. He ignored the influence of evil men upon people (v.20).
5. He gave in to worldly pressure (v.21-23).
6. He tried to escape responsibility for evil (v.24).
7. Conclusion: the responsibility for Jesus' blood is cried out for by the Jews (v.25).

(27:11-25) **Another Outline**.

1. Pilate marvelled, was impressed with Jesus (v.11-14).
2. Pilate sought an escape for Jesus (v.15-18).
3. Pilate received a warning from his disturbed wife (v.19-21).
4. Pilate sought the counsel of a frenzied mob (v.20-23).
5. Pilate sought to unshoulder the responsibility (v.24-25).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(27:11-25) **Pilate**: the procurator of Judaea. He was directly responsible to the Emperor for the administrative and financial management of the country. A man had to work himself up through the political and military ranks to become a procurator. Pilate was, therefore, an able man, experienced in the affairs of politics and government as well as the military. He had held office for ten years, which shows that he was deeply trusted by the Roman government. However, the Jews despised Pilate, and Pilate despised the Jews; in particular, he despised their intense practice of religion. When Pilate became procurator of Judaea, he did two things that aroused the people's bitter hatred against him forever. First, on his state visits to Jerusalem, he rode into the city with the Roman standard, an eagle sitting atop a pole. All previous governors had removed the standard because of the Jews' opposition to idols. Second, Pilate launched the construction of a new water supply for Jerusalem. To finance the project, he took the money out of the temple treasury. The Jews never forgot nor forgave this act. They bitterly opposed Pilate all through his reign, and he treated them with equal contempt (see note—Mk.15:9). On several occasions, Jewish leaders threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emperor. This, of course, disturbed Pilate greatly, causing him to become even more bitter and contemptuous toward the Jews.

1 (27:11-14) **Jesus Christ, Trials**: Pilate (the indecisive man) rejected the Lord's clear confession. Paul refers to the Lord's strong confession before Pilate: "Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession" (1 Tim.6:13). Note the strength of that confession.

1. Jesus' strong, straightforward claim: He is King. This is one of the charges brought against Christ, that He claimed to be a King (Lk.23:2). Pilate, somewhat surprised, reacted scornfully, asking Christ: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Christ strongly claimed He was King: "Thou hast said" (cp. Mt.26:25, 64. See esp. Jn.18:36-37.)
2. Jesus' strong, controlled behavior: under severe accusation, Jesus was silent and purposed (cp. Is.53:7). The religionists, fitfully aroused, accused and accused Jesus, yet He remained silent. Note His control and nobility. (a) He knew there was no need to argue with a close-minded person. He would not dignify their behavior by being drawn into argument with them. (b) He was purposed to do God's will by dying for the sins of the world. His hour to die had come. There was no need to argue, no need to try to escape death by argument. The depth of man's depravity was to be demonstrated for now. He would be noble: silent, purposed in His behavior.
3. Jesus' strong, enduring purpose: under repeated questioning He endured. Apparently Pilate wished to release Jesus (cp. v.18). He knew Jesus was innocent and to release Him would be a way to get at these contemptible religionists. Thus Pilate tried to get Jesus to answer the charges. He did not understand why Jesus would not answer, what Jesus was doing. All Jesus did was stand there, silent, portraying an image of strength, of some enduring purpose. But Pilate was unable to grasp its meaning.
4. Jesus' impact: Pilate was impressed, but still indecisive. He marvelled at Jesus' claim to be King and at His silence. Yet he still lacked the courage to make the right decision. He still waivered under the pressure of the accusers and failed to release Jesus.

> **"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).**
>
> **"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10:21).**
>
> **"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).**
>
> **"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him" (1 Ki.18:21).**

Thought 1. Christ has given man a strong confession.

1) A strong claim: He is King (Jn.18:36-37).
2) A strong, controlled behavior: perfection (Heb.5:8-9; cp. 2 Cor.5:21).
3) A strong, enduring purpose: to die for the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24; 3:18).

Thought 2. An indecisive man is just like Pilate: he rejects the clear confession of our Lord.

Thought 3. Christ teaches a lesson here about arguing. It is futile to argue with a close-minded or fitfully aroused person. To argue only dignifies their behavior.

Thought 4. Christ endured in His great purpose, even unto death. We must be just as enduring.

2 (27:15-18) **Indecision—Compromise—Pilate—Jesus Christ, Trials**: Pilate (the indecisive man) compromised clear evidence. Pilate saw the evidence. Jesus was innocent; the religionists were envious of Christ and His threat to their security (v.18). He wanted to declare Christ innocent, but he felt he had to satisfy the cries of these religious worldlings as well. Thus, he conceived a compromise. It was a long-time custom for Rome to release a prisoner to the Jews at the Passover Feast. By such, Rome sought to humor and secure more cooperation from the Jews. Within the prison was a notorious criminal, Barabbas. Pilate had him brought before the people along with Christ and shouted out that the people could choose which one was to be released. At this point Pilate walked back into the Judgment Hall giving the crowd time to decide (v.19).

Note two things.

1. Pilate was seeking a compromise. He was trying to declare Christ innocent and to please the worldlings who were accusing Christ. Despite the clear evidence that Christ was innocent, he still lacked the courage and decisiveness to take a stand for Christ.

2. Pilate fully expected the people to choose to release Christ. He thought his compromise had worked, for who would not choose a great teacher over a notorious criminal?

> **"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).**
>
> **"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:23-24).**
>
> **"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5: 11-12).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:7-10).**

Thought 1. Two facts about the nature of man need to be noted.

1) Compromising with a man set on doing evil will not work. He will go on with his evil no matter the compromise. It is the way of nature.
2) Compromising when the evidence is clear will not work. It weakens character and principle and position.

Thought 2. We need to declare Christ innocent, declare loudly and clearly that He is the Son of God. This is not a day for indecision and compromise of the truth. Christ is King, perfectly innocent of sin and evil. We need to be decisive, to take a stand for Christ.

3 (27:19) **Warning—Pilate**: Pilate (the indecisive man) failed to listen to strong warning. While Pilate was sitting on his judgment seat waiting on the people's decision, his wife came to him. She had had a dream about Christ. Note three things.

1. She declared Jesus to be just, righteous. She was declaring that Christ was not only an innocent man, but a righteous and good man.
2. She warned there was something very unusual about Jesus, something that could cause suffering and sorrow. She warned Pilate that he must declare Jesus to be innocent or hereafter be sorry.
3. Pilate listened to the warning but still chose to seek a compromise, still lacked the courage to declare Christ innocent.

Thought 1. The indecisive man is warned: suffering and sorrow lie ahead. Judgment is coming upon any man who does not take his stand for Christ (Mt.10:32; Lk.12:8).

Thought 2. God uses many ways in His attempt to reach men. He used the dream of a wife to warn Pilate. He also warns us: we must be courageous, not indecisive. Today is the day of salvation.

> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfuless of sin" (Heb.3:13).**
>
> **"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain" (Jas.4:13).**

4 (27:20) **Evil, Ignoring—Pilate**: Pilate (the indecisive man) ignored the influence of evil men upon people. The picture is tragic. Religious leaders were either moving or sending their emissaries among the people to influence them to do this evil deed—the deed of murdering Christ. All the while Pilate sat indecisively upon his throne, ignoring the reality of the situation.

> **"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ro.2:24).**
>
> **"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father....These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you" (1 Jn.2:22-23, 26).**

Thought 1. Evil men will try to influence others in order to get their way. To ignore the fact is to hide one's head as an ostrich in the sand.

Thought 2. Indecision and compromise are not the way to stop the influence of evil men. Evil men will continue to influence people as long as we are indecisive and compromising.

Thought 3. The perfect innocency and righteousness of Christ must be proclaimed. Proclaiming His righteousness is the only way to stop the influence of evil men in the world. We cannot ignore the fact.

5 (27:21-23) **Pilate**: Pilate (the indecisive man) gave in to worldly pressure. The scene is again tragic. Pilate walked back out to the people for their decision. They shocked him, crying for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus.

Pilate had cornered himself, creating the most terrible dilemma imaginable. Stunned, somewhat in a state of shock, he cried back to the people, "Why, what evil hath He done?" But it was too late. The people, aroused by the worldly religionists, fitfully and repeatedly shouted back, "Let Him be crucified." Note several things.

1. The people preferred an evil man to the Holy Man, preferred a man who *took* life to the Prince who *gave* life (cp. Acts 3:14-15).
2. Pilate was weak, indecisive, non-courageous throughout the whole episode. He would not act decisively; he would not courageously declare Christ to be what he knew: innocent.
3. The people asked for Jesus to be executed in the most horrible and painful way—by crucifixion. This was just as Christ had foretold (Mt.20:19).

> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**
>
> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb.11:24-25).**

Thought 1. The pressure of the world to do evil is great. Indecision and compromise are not the way to face the world: decisive dedication and separation are (Ro.12:1-2; 2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16).

Thought 2. Most do prefer the company of evil, sinful men to that of the Prince of life. Note: even worldly religionists choose the worldly over the Prince of life.

Thought 3. Note a critical point. It is when we are indecisive or willing to compromise that the pressure of the world to do evil gets to us. Hesitating and being indecisive will cause us to give in to pressure and sin. We usually choose to go along with sin when we are indecisive.

6 (27:24) **Man, Weakness—Pilate**: Pilate (the indecisive man) tried to escape responsibility for evil. The picture is dramatic. Pilate was overruled by the people's choice. His own opinion availed nothing, had no influence whatsoever over Jesus' death. Thus he took a bowl of water and lifted it high; he washed his hands and dried them off. By such an act, Pilate was symbolizing two things.

1. He was declaring the innocency of Jesus.
2. He was washing his hands of the whole affair, declaring the people to be the guilty party in the death of Jesus.

But Pilate was not free of guilt. He was the governor, and he knew Christ was innocent of the charge. The responsibility to declare Jesus innocent was his, even if he had to override the accusers. Pilate had the authority and responsibility to do right, to see that justice was done.

> **"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).**
>
> **"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Ki.18:21).**

Thought 1. We cannot wash our hands from guilt. If we act irresponsibly, we stand guilty. We stand guilty...

- for rejecting the Lord's strong confession.
- for compromising.
- for failing to listen to strong warning.
- for ignoring the influence of evil men.
- for giving in to worldly pressure.
- for trying to escape the responsibility for evil.

Thought 2. Everyone is responsible for his actions. Decisive action is what God calls for, decisive action that declares Christ to be innocent and righteous (2 Cor.5:21).

7 (27:25) **Jews—Israel**: the crowd cried out for the responsibility of Jesus' blood to be laid to their charge. This is a tragic and unbelievable scene. The mob cried out for God to hold them responsible for the death of Christ. The people did not know what they were saying, yet they were still killing Christ and still acting in an unjust, sinful, savage spirit. Because of their evil spirit against God's Son, all the evidence of history points toward their request's being granted.

⇒ Their nation and its capital, Jerusalem, were destroyed and taken from them.
⇒ Their people have been exiled and scattered for centuries.
⇒ Their very name is often the object of prejudice and hatred.
⇒ Annihilation of their race has been attempted time and again.

Amazingly, the Jewish people remain a nationality, yet the evoked vengeance has fallen upon them for centuries. Despite their terrible sin, the Jews hold a very special place in God's heart and plan. He will continue to hold them together as a race until the fulness of the Gentiles is completed (cp. Ro.11:25f).

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Mt.21:43).

"I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper" (Lk.14:24).

"He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid" (Lk.20:16).

"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree" (Ro.11:17).

"My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hos.9:17).

	L. The Messiah's Suffering and Crucifixion: A Picture of the World's Treatment of God's Son,[PSI] **27:26-44** (Mk.15:16-32; Lk.23:43; Jn.19:16-24)	when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.	
1 The rulers passed judgment upon Christ	26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he	35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.	m. They crucified Him n. They gambled His clothes away
2 The soldiers mocked & tortured Christ	had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.	36 And sitting down they watched him there;	o. They sat down & stared at Him
a. They scourged Him b. They humiliated Him before a hundred or more soldiers	27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.	37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.	p. They ridiculed His claim again
c. They stripped Him & put a scarlet robe on Him	28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.	38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.	q. They crucified Him between two thieves
d. They put a crown of thorns on His head & a reed in His hand	29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and	39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,	**3 The average persons, the passers-by, mocked & abused Christ**
e. They bowed & ridiculed His claim to be King	they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!	40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.	a. Mocked His power to destroy and rebuild the temple b. Mocked His claim to be God's Son
f.. They spat upon Him g. They beat Him on the head with a reed	30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.	41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,	**4 The religionists & government leaders mocked & taunted Christ**
h. They ridiculed Him & aggravated the wounds	31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.	42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.	a. Mocked His claim to be the Savior, to save others b. Mocked His claim to be the King of Israel
i. They forced Him to carry the cross until He was exhausted j. They enlisted a Gentile to help carry His cross	32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.	43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.	c. Mocked His claim to trust God perfectly d. Mocked His claim to be the Son of God
k. They escorted Him to a terrible place for execution	33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,	44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.	**5 The criminals mocked Christ**
l. They gave Him vinegar mixed with gall	34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and		

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

L. The Messiah's Suffering and Crucifixion: A Picture of the World's Treatment of God's Son, 27:26-44

(27:26-44) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Death**: this Scripture covers the sufferings and crucifixion of our Lord. Matthew, in his organized way, presented a picture of the world's treatment of God's Son. He saw various classes of people, symbolizing the world, stand before Christ. Their treatment of Him was unbelievable and horrible. The people of *God's world* were not only rejecting God's Son, they were torturing and destroying Him.

1. There were the rulers: they passed judgment upon Christ—the judgment that He was a threat and must be destroyed (v.26).
2. There were the soldiers: they mocked and tortured Christ (v.26-38).
3. There were the average persons, the passers-by: they mocked and abused Christ (v.39-40).
4. There were the religionists and government leaders: they mocked and taunted Christ (v.41-43).
5. There were the criminals: they mocked Christ (v.44).

(27:26-44) **Another Outline**: The Crucifixion.

1. The scourging of Jesus (v.26).
2. The soldiers' horseplay and torture (v.27-31).
3. The journey to Golgotha—Simon of Cyrene (v.32-33).
4. The drugging (v.34).

5. The crucifixion (v.35).
6. The gambling for His clothes (v.35).
7. The title of accusation on the cross (v.36-37).
8. The two thieves (v.38).
9. The passers-by who taunted and mocked (v.39-43).
10. The thieves who taunted and mocked (v.44).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(27:26-44) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the Lord's sufferings and torture were marked by Divine pain and human cruelty.

1. The divine pain of the Lord Jesus came from being fully conscious of the judgment He was to bear for man—separation from God (see note—Mt.27:46-49). The pressure of this hellish experience is seen in Gethsemane. Under great emotional stress, the tiny capillaries right under His skin which lined the sweat glands apparently gave way and burst. Jesus sweated great drops of blood. Such an experience causes marked weakness and sometimes a state of shock. The terrifying mystery of this hellish experience is seen in His cry upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This was the point at which the great separation from God began (see notes—Mt.27:46-49; Eph.4:8-10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.3:19-20).

2. The physical torture He bore at the hands of men was abhorrent. Before the High Priest, an officer struck Jesus across the face (Jn.18:22). The palace guards blindfolded, mocked, spat upon, and slapped Him in the face; and they kept Him up all night (Lk.22:63-66).

Before Pilate, the Roman trial: His hands were tied to a post above His head and He was scourged (Jn.19:1). The prisoner was lashed until He was judged near death by the presiding centurion (Jewish trials allowed only forty lashes).

Still before Pilate: the guards called the whole band of soldiers together and began to mock His claim to be King of the Jews (Mk.15:16). They threw a robe around Him and continued to strike Him across the face. They took the scepter from His hand and used it to whip Him and to drive the thorns even deeper. Finally, they ceased this sadistic treatment and ripped the robe from His back. This tore open the dried blood caked to its lining. Excruciating pain followed (cp. Mt.27:28-31; Mk.15:16-20; Jn.10:1-5).

Bearing the cross itself: it was heavy, very heavy. He had to carry it up and down the streets of the city, taking a meandering route. The Romans did this as a living lesson to all that crime does not pay. Christ just broke down under the load; and Simon, the Cyrene, was forced to carry the cross for Him (Mt.27:32; Mk.15:21; Lk.23:26).

1 (27:26) **Sanhedrin—Pilate**: the rulers passed judgment. Christ was a threat; He must be destroyed. The Sanhedrin, both its religious and civil (elders) leaders, and Pilate passed judgment upon Christ. In their minds, Christ was a threat to them. Even Pilate gave in, despite his doubts, to the execution of Christ in order to preserve the peace of his rule and the security of his position (see outline, notes, and *DEEPER STUDY # 1*—Mt.27:11-25).

Thought 1. Position, power, wealth, security, envy, and much more—all cause the powerful of this earth to seek to destroy Christ and His influence.

2 (27:26-38) **Jesus Christ, Suffering**: the soldiers mocked and tortured Christ. Their treatment included at least seventeen abuses.

1. They *scourged* Christ (v.26). He was stripped and beaten with a whip. This was a savage, excruciating punishment. The whip (phagellow) was made of leather straps with two small balls attached to the end of each strap. The balls were made of rough lead or sharp bones or spikes, so that they would cut deeply into the flesh. His hands were tied to a post above His head and He was scourged (Jn.19:1). It was the custom for the prisoner to be lashed until He was judged near death by the presiding centurion (Jewish trials allowed only forty lashes.) The criminal's back was, of course, nothing more than an unrecognizable mass of torn flesh(cp. Is.50:6).

Thought 1. Two important facts.

1) Christ was being *punished* and *chastised for our sins*:

"The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

2) Christ suffered the chastisement for our sins *willingly*:

"I gave my back to the smiters" (Is.50:6).

2. They humiliated Christ before a hundred or more soldiers (v.27). Note the words, "the whole band" (speiran). A *band* of soldiers usually meant a *cohort* which was made up of six hundred soldiers. However, "band" (speiran) sometimes meant maniple. Every cohort consisted of three maniples, about two hundred soldiers. Which is meant here is not known. Most believe the number of soldiers was large, certainly close to the two hundred serving in a maniple.

Thought 1. Christ was humiliated and made a spectacle in order to save us. We are to become spectacles for Christ in order to reach some for Him.

"For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (1 Cor.4:9).

"Ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used" (Heb.10:32-33).

3. They stripped Christ and put a scarlet robe on Him (v.28). Christ was stripped *naked and shamed* and made to appear *ridiculous* by being clad with a royal robe.

Thought 1. Sin made man naked and shamed him (Gen.3:7). We are naked before Him who is to judge the world. Christ was stripped naked and shamed that He might secure clothing that is white and pure for us (that is, righteousness).

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" (Rev.3:18; cp. Eph.4:23-24).

Thought 2. Christ *wore* (*bore*) the scarlet robe for us. The scarlet robe symbolized that He was to bear our sins.
1) Because He wore the scarlet robe of our sins, our sins can be as white as snow.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

2) Because He wore the scarlet robe of our sins, we can wash our robes in the blood of the lamb.

"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev.7:14).

4. They put a crown of thorns on the head of Christ and a reed in His hands (v.29). A mock crown was made out of some limbs from a thorn bush and jammed upon His head. The thorns pierced through the skin of His brow and under His hair. Blood streamed down his head and face. A mock sceptre was made out of the weak, limber reed and thrust into His hand.

Thought 1. Thorns are a symbol of God's *curse* upon the earth, a result of sin (Gen.3:18). Christ was bearing the sin that brought about the curse. He was made a curse for us.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

Thought 2. Christ held the limber, weak reed, the reed that is so easily shaken with the wind (Mt.11:7), that wavers and withers and wastes away. He held the reed that symbolizes the weak kingdoms of the world, kingdoms that are so easily shaken and withered and wasted away. He held it as part of His sufferings so that He might secure an eternal sceptre, an eternal throne and kingdom.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of thy kingdom" (Heb.1:8).

5. They bowed and ridiculed the claim of Christ to be king (v.29). They ridiculed His claim to be king by *jokingly* bowing the knee before Him and mockingly shouting, "Hail, King of the Jews." They scorned Him as a sham king.

Thought 1. The day is coming when bowing the knee and confessing Christ to be Lord will be no joke. There will be no mocking and no scorning in that day.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

6. They spat upon Christ (v.30). (Cp. Is.50:6.) It was the custom for subjects to kiss their rulers as a sign of homage and allegiance. The soldiers gave the Lord a mock allegiance by spitefully spitting in His face.

Thought 1. Christ bore the spite, spitting, and mocking homage in order to deliver men from perishing. But the day has now come when the Lord is not to be spit upon, but kissed. He is to be given a genuine, not a mocking, allegiance.

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Ps.2:12).

7. They beat Christ on the head with the reed (v.30). The Greek word for "smote Him" (etupton, imperfect tense) means they *kept on beating Him*. They took the reed, the mock sceptre, and used it as a weapon, beating Him on the head

continuously. They probably passed the reed from one soldier to another, giving many an opportunity to vent their folly and spite. He was bruised and bleeding, a horrible sight.

Thought 1. Two important facts.
1) **"He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities" (Is.53:5).**
2) **"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him" (Is.53:10).**

8. They stripped Christ of the kingly robe and put His own robe back on Him, aggravating the wounds. They were now ready to get to the matter at hand, His crucifixion. As they stripped the kingly robe off, two things happened.
   a. The dried blood clinging to the robe ripped away from the wounds. As Christ suffered excruciating pain, His blood began to flow from the wounds again.
   b. In removing the kingly robe, the soldiers were stripping Him of the authority they had given Him. It was just a mock authority and homage, but it had symbolized the attitude of the world toward paying homage to God's Son.

Thought 1. No man determines the authority of God's Son. He possesses authority because He is God's Son, not because man gives Him authority. God has given Him all authority and rule because He has borne the sufferings and death of the cross for man.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:22-23).**

Thought 2. "The blood of Jesus Christ His (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).

9. They forced Christ to carry the cross until He was exhausted (v.32). The condemned criminal's carrying his own cross was the common practice. A centurion riding upon his stallion led the way. A herald followed, shouting out the criminal charges against the condemned. Immediately behind the herald was the condemned man bearing his cross and a small detachment of soldiers. The criminal had to carry his cross up and down through the streets of the city, taking a meandering route. The Romans did this as a living lesson to the citizens of a city that crime did not pay.

Thought 1. Note two important facts.
1) Man forced Christ to carry the cross to Golgotha. There is a spiritual symbol here. Spiritually, it is man's sin that forced Christ to bear the cross for man.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**

2) God forced Christ to bear the cross for man.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**

10. They enlisted a Gentile to help with the cross of Christ (v.32). Christ broke under the weight of the cross. This is not surprising, for He had just suffered so much...
- suffered the agony of the Garden.
- suffered the tension and excitement of the trials.
- suffered the ridicule and torture of the soldiers.

He had lost too much blood from the savage torture, and He had gone without food and sleep for hours. The soldiers had the legal authority to tap a bystander upon the shoulder and enlist the citizen to help with whatever load needed carrying. In this case, of course, they needed someone to carry the cross for Christ. They tapped Simon of Cyrene, and he bore the cross for Christ. It is an event used by God to change the life of Simon forever (see note—Mk.15:21).

Thought 1. Christ bore the cross for us that He might enlist us in the service of God. Even as He bore the cross, we are now to bear the cross for Him. Simon literally bore the cross, symbolizing that we are to bear the cross for Christ spiritually (see note—Lk.9:23).

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**

11. They escorted Christ to a terrible place for execution (v.33). The place was called Golgotha, the place of a skull. Why it was given this name is not known. But note that it was known as a place of death, of dead men's bones. It was a rugged place which stirred thoughts of death, of corruptible and decaying flesh. It was a terrible place to die.

Thought 1. Even the very place where Christ was crucified symbolized death itself. Every act seemed to point to His dying for the deliverance of man. Here upon Golgotha was the picture or thought of death, and here upon Golgotha He was to die to deliver all men from the bondage of death.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

Thought 2. Christ was judged unworthy to live among the people of the world, so He was led out of the city and sent out of the world through execution. He was cast out of the vineyard (Mt.21:39). In the Old Testament, the sacrifice of animals took place outside the camp, and the blood was brought into the congregation. The Lamb of God was led outside the gate as a sheep is led to the slaughter.

"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb.13:11-12).

Thought 3. He bore the reproach of sin for us. We should, therefore, bear the reproach of righteousness for Him.

"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Heb.13:13).

12. They gave Christ vinegar mixed with gall (v.34). It was the custom to give the criminal spiked wine right before he was raised on the cross. The spiked wine was a strong stupefying liquor used as a narcotic drink. Scripture foretold this event (Ps.69:21).

Thought 1. Christ came to do the will of God, to die as a sacrifice for man. He refused to do God's will unthoughtfully, with deadened senses and a semi-conscious mind. He had work to do in sacrificing His life for man: He was to taste death for all men, and He would taste it in full consciousness and by being as mentally alert as possible.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God....By the which will we are sacrificed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:6-7, 10).

13. They crucified Christ (v.35). The crucifixion itself was the most horrible of deaths. The ancient writer, Tacitus, called it "a despicable death." Cicero called it "the most cruel and horrifying death." He simply said it was "incapable of description." There was the pain of the driven spikes forced through the flesh of Jesus' hands and feet or ankles. There was the weight of His body jolting and pulling against the spikes as the cross was lifted and rocked into place. There was the scorching sun and the unquenchable thirst gnawing away at His dry mouth and throat. There was the blood oozing from His scourged back, His thorn crowned brow, His feet, and His stick-beaten head. In addition, just imagine the aggravation of flies, gnats, and other insects. There was also the piercing of the spear thrust into His side. On and on the sufferings could be described. There has never been a more cruel form of execution than crucifixion upon a cross.

Thought 1. In the simplest of terms, Christ was crucified for our sins in order to bring us to God.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

14. They gambled for the clothes of Christ (v.35). Apparently, it was a custom for the executing soldiers to claim whatever they wished of the clothes of the crucified criminal. The soldiers stripped Christ and divided His clothes among themselves. His coat was valuable. It was seamless, one piece of cloth, woven from top to bottom just as the high Priest's coat or cloak was. The soldiers, therefore, decided to gamble by casting lots for it (Jn.19:23-24). This event was foretold in Ps.22:18.

Thought 1. Note two things.

1) Christ was stripped by the soldiers. But He stripped Himself of His glory in order to become man and die for us.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

2) The coat was a symbol of Christ, *the Mediator*, the Pontifex, which means in Latin, *the bridge-builder* between God and man.

> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**

15. They sat down and stared at Christ (v.36). Death by crucifixion was usually slow, very slow. It sometimes took days for the sufferer to die from his agony. Hence, soldiers had to be posted to guard the sufferer to keep any friends from trying to save him from death. In dealing with Christ, the soldiers' horseplay and work in crucifying Him was now done. They had only to wait. They sat down and watched His hanging there. We can imagine what they saw by picturing what He looked like after all the torture and by reviewing the seven sayings of the cross. Jesus hung there naked, being stared at; the whole scene was a shameful sight. The embarrassment of the shame must have cut the heart of Christ to the core. The stare of the soldiers was prophesied (Ps.22:17).

Thought 1. Sin is the nakedness, the shame, of man. Sin strips man and makes him naked before God. The cross is the shame of Christ, yet He bore the shame of the cross for us.

> **"I counsel thee to buy of me...white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear" (Rev.3:18).**
>
> **"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).**

Thought 2. God, in His providence, saw that guards were posted around the cross. Why? So that there could never be any legitimate question about His Son's really dying.

Thought 3. What the honest and thinking soldier saw was a noble, righteous man being unjustly put to death.

> **"And when the centurion, which stood over against Him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mk.15:39).**

16. They shamed Christ and reproached His claim again (v.37). It was the custom for the charges against a crucified criminal to be written out on a board and nailed to the cross above his head. This served both as information and as a warning to the public. It, of course, added shame and reproach to the crucified sufferer. In Christ's case, the charges were written in three different languages (Jn.19:20). Note the exact words, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." This inscription disturbed the religious leaders. They went to Pilate and said, "Write not, the King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews." Pilate simply answered, "What I have written, I have written" (Jn.19:21-22).

Thought 1. God overruled the shame and reproach of our Lord. God saw to it that the very charges against Him proclaimed His deity and honor. He was proclaimed King in three languages, languages which symbolized the world: the Aramaic (Jews), the Latin (the Gentiles), and the Greek (the intellectual Jew and Gentile).

> **"He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).**
>
> **"Our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim.6:14-16).**

17. They added shame and reproach by crucifying Christ between two thieves (v.38). Perhaps this was a day set aside for execution. Or perhaps the Jewish leaders pressed Pilate to execute Jesus with other criminals. Such would add weight to their position that He was no more than a mere man, an imposter who deserved to die just as other criminals. Whatever the reason, the fact that the Son of God was executed right along with other criminals added to the shame and reproach He bore. Again, this event had been prophesied (Is.53:12).

Thought 1. Christ was counted as a sinner that He might bear the sin of many.

> **"He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**

3 (27:39-40) **Jesus Christ, Mocked**: the average persons and the passers-by mocked and abused Christ. There were a large number of passers-by (Jn.19:20). Golgotha was close to the city, sitting on a hill that was probably close to a main road and a large gate leading into the city.

First, only Christ was mocked and abused; the two criminals were not. No abuse was heaped upon them. The murderers of the Lord were not satisfied with His death; they were filled with enmity and a bitterness that sought revenge and humiliation. Therefore, they sowed the seeds of enmity and mockery among those who passed by, and they too were caught up in the excitement of the sin and shame of the evil crowd.

Second, the passers-by saw Christ's hanging there, believing He had claimed to be a King. Being spurred on by His accusers, they reviled Him. The word for revile (blasphemoun) is strong, meaning to blaspheme, profane, rail at. They also wagged their heads at Him. This was a gesture of that day which showed insult, contempt, and mockery.

The passers-by mocked Christ for two things: His claim to have the power to destroy and rebuild the temple (see note—Mt.26:60-61), and His claim to be the Son of God (Mt.26:64). Note that the crowd used the very same words that the devil had tempted Jesus with at the begining of His ministry: "If thou be the Son of God" (Mt.4:6).

Thought 1. Too many curse and profane Christ when they hear about the claim that He makes upon their lives as the Messiah, the Son of God. The reaction of most men was predicted generations ago.

> **"All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head" (Ps.22:7).**
>
> **"I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shaked their heads" (Ps.109:25).**

Thought 2. Christ possessed the deity and all the dignity, power, and riches of God. Yet for our sake, He became weak and poor for us. He surrendered to the mockery and abuse of men in order to die.

> **"For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you" (2 Cor.13:4).**
>
> **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).**

Thought 3. The average person, the passer-by, often mocks and abuses Christ. How?

⇒ By ridiculing Christ's claim to be the Son of God.
⇒ By cursing and profaning the name of Christ.
⇒ By challenging Christ to prove His power by meeting his needs when he has not lived for Christ.
⇒ By acting worse toward Christ and His followers than toward the rest of society, even criminals.

4 (27:41-43) **Jesus Christ, Mocked**: the religionists and government leaders (elders) mocked and taunted Christ. Men of religion and government should be above this kind of behavior. However, being part of a sinful unbelieving crowd, men filled with enmity and bitterness are led to do shameful things. These leaders ridiculed the four major claims of Christ:

⇒ that He was the Savior
⇒ that He was the King
⇒ that He was the Son of Man who trusted God perfectly
⇒ that He was the Son of God

Their purpose was to vent their enmity and humiliate Christ, hoping to reinforce in the minds of the crowd that He was an imposter and deceiver. The religionists completely misunderstood God's Messiah, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**

Thought 1. Christ was all that He claimed to be.

1) The Savior.

> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10. See note—Mt.8:20.)**

2) The King.

> **"And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest" (Mt.27:11).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**

3) The Son of Man who trusted God perfectly.

> **"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).**
>
> **"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:30).**
>
> **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn.8:36).**

4) The Son of God.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world. Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God" (Jn.10:36).**

Thought 2. Leaders, civil and religious, are still men. It is not the position or profession that makes a man, but the heart. A heart of unbelief and enmity, a heart willing to become a participant with the sinful crowd will stoop to do shameful things, no matter the position or profession.

Thought 3. If Christ had used His power to save Himself, what would have happened to our salvation?

5 (27:44) **Jesus Christ, Mocked**: the criminals mocked Christ. The picture of the thieves joining in the mockery of Christ shows...

- the intensity of the ridicule and abuse.
- the bitterness and enmity against Christ within hearts.
- the depraved heart of a man who lets loose in a crowd, even when he is facing, or is going to face, punishment.
- the depth of shame to which men will stoop.

> **"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:23-24).**

	M. The Messiah's Great Triumph: The Miraculous Events Surrounding the Cross, 27:45-56 (Mk.15:33-41; Lk.23:44-49; Jn.19:30-37)	ed up the ghost. 51 And, behold, the veil of	**of Jesus' spirit**
1 The terrifying darkness	45 Now from the sixth hour	the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom;	**4 The great veil of the temple torn: From top to bottom**
a. For three hours	there was darkness over all	and the earth did quake, and	**5 The terrifying earthquake**
b. Over all the land	the land unto the ninth hour.	the rocks rent; 52 And the graves were	**6 The resurrection of many saints**
2 The mysterious loud cry	46 And about the ninth	opened; and many bodies of	
a. The great separation—God forsook Him	hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama	the saints which slept arose. 53 And came out of the	
	sabachthani? that is to say,	graves after his resurrection,	**7 The confession of the centurion & others**
	My God, my God, why hast	and went into the holy city,	
	thou forsaken me?	and appeared unto many.	
b. The cry misunderstood	47 Some of them that stood	54 Now when the centurion,	
	there, when they heard that,	and they that were with him,	
	said, This man calleth for	watching Jesus, saw the	
	Elias.	earthquake, and those things	
		that were done, they feared	
1) One showed compassion	48 And straightway one of	greatly, saying, Truly this	**8 The courage & love of the women**
	them ran, and took a spunge,	was the Son of God.	a. Many women
	and filled it with vinegar, and	55 And many women were	
	put it on a reed, and gave him	there beholding afar off,	
	to drink.	which followed Jesus from	
2) Others superstitiously mocked	49 The rest said, let be, let	Galilee, ministering unto	b. Some identified
	us see whether Elias will	him:	
	come to save him.	56 Among which was Mary	
3 The great shout of triumph & the yielding up	50 Jesus, when he had cried	Magdalene, and Mary the	
	again with a loud voice, yield-	mother of James and Joses,	
		and the mother of Zebedee's	
		children.	

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

M. The Messiah's Great Triumph: The Miraculous Events Surrounding the Cross, 27:45-56

(27:45-56) **Introduction**: while Christ hung on the cross, some miraculous events happened—events which demonstrated perfectly that the cross was a triumph, not a tragedy. The cross was the Messiah's great triumph. Eight events show this clearly.

1. The terrifying darkness (v.45).
2. The mysterious, loud cry (v.46-49).
3. The great shout of triumph and the yielding up of Jesus' spirit (v.50).
4. The great veil of the temple torn: from top to bottom (v.51).
5. The terrifying earthquake (v.51).
6. The resurrection of many saints (v.52-53).
7. The confession of the centurion and others (v.54).
8. The courage and love of the women (v.55-56).

1 (27:45) **Jesus Christ, Death—Earth, Darkness**: the terrifying darkness. A supernatural darkness hung over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour, or according to our time from noon to 3 p.m.

Think for a moment. Just imagine…

Who it was hanging on the cross…

- God's only Son, the Sovereign Lord of all beings, both visible and invisible (cp. Col.1:16).
- The great architect and creator of the whole universe, of all nature.

What He was doing there on the cross…

- Bearing the sins of all men.
- Bearing the judgment and wrath of God against sin *for all men*.
- Dying the death of man for all men.
- Doing all that was necessary to free men from sin, death, and judgment so that they might live forever.

What the depth of God's plan is…

> **"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it**

shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Ro.11:33-36).

When one really meditates upon the facts, is there any wonder that all things, including nature itself, were drastically affected by the death of God's Son? The darkness demonstrated and symbolized several things.

1. The darkness demonstrated that Christ was definitely God's Son. Before Him, all mouths are to be stopped in fear and reverence. There is no doubt that fear and wonder stopped the mocking mouths of the crowd standing around the cross. There is no mention of jeering taking place during these hours. The crowd was stricken with a sense of terror, wondering just what was happening (v.54).

"And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy" (Mk.14:33).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).

2. The darkness symbolized the darkest day of human history. This was the day when the Son of God Himself was being put to death for the sins of men.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

3. The darkness symbolized the darkness of sin:

⇒ sin which demands darkness to carry on its acts.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (Jn.3:19-21).

⇒ sin which leads to the most terrible darkness of all—death.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

4. The darkness symbolized the darkness of the human soul and its works. The darkness of the human soul was now being borne by the Son of God—all for man.

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)....But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph.2:1-5, 13).

"But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people" (Ps.22:6).

5. The darkness symbolized the withdrawal of the light of God's presence from the sinner. Christ hung upon the cross as the sinner—all for us—the sinner who was becoming sin for us.

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mt.27:46).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

6. The darkness symbolized the anger of God at sin. Sin and the sinner deserve nothing but the judgment of darkness. Sin deserves no light from God's presence, none whatsoever.

> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**
>
> **"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:4-6).**

2 (27:46-49) **Jesus Christ, Separated from God**: the mysterious, loud cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." This was the great separation, the moment when God forsook Christ, His only Son. What is the meaning of this shocking statement? The very idea that God could and would "forsake" His only Son staggers the human mind. Yet Christ shouted out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The meaning cannot be ventured into lightly. The meaning requires reverence and much prayerful thought. But even then, even after an eternity of prayerful thought, the depth of the meaning remains fathomless and unreachable to man. (See note—Mt.20:19.)

Scripture indicates at least the following meanings.

1. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus sensed that God had withdrawn His presence from Him. He sensed that God was no longer with Him.
2. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus sensed that God had withdrawn His deliverance. Always in the past when Jesus was troubled, God had met His need. For example, God had sent a voice from heaven to assure Him (Jn.12:27-28); and when He was facing the cup in the garden of Gethsemane, God had even sent an angel to strengthen Him. But now, hanging upon the cross, God had forsaken Him. There was no deliverance from God. He was left all alone.
3. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus sensed that He was bearing the *curse* of God, the curse of separation from God, the curse of the judgment and condemnation of God against sin (cp. Ga.3:13. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27.)
4. "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus sensed that God's life and holiness had left Him, that He had been delivered into the hands of the enemies of life and holiness, that is, into the hands of sin and death. He was being made sin and having to die. And both sin and death were foreign to God, alien to God's nature which is life and holiness. Both sin and death stood as enemies of God and enemies to all that belonged to God.

⇒ In becoming sin and in dying, Christ experienced all that was contrary to the nature of God—all that was involved in God's separating Himself from sin and death. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3. Cp. 2 Cor.5:21; Heb.2:14-15. Cp. Col.2:15 with Eph.6:12 and note—Eph.4:8-10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.3:19-20.)

Jesus' cry was prophesied in Ps.22:1. The reason God had to forsake Jesus is given in Ps.22:3: "Thou art holy." Jesus had "become sin" for many (2 Cor.5:21).

⇒ Christ bore sin for man; therefore, He had to bear the penalty due man—the penalty of separation from a perfectly holy God (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38; DEEPER STUDY # 4—26:39). In all the mystery of His death, Scripture proclaims: "[Jesus] His own self *bore our sins in His own body* on the tree...." (1 Pt.2:24).

Note that some of the crowd misunderstood the words of Jesus' cry. One had compassion and sought to help Him by giving Him a drink. But others stopped the man and superstitiously mocked by demanding that He be left alone to see if Elijah would come to save Him.

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).**
>
> **"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).**
>
> **"The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me" (Ps.69:9).**
>
> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**
>
> **"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).**

3 (27:50) "**It is finished**": the great shout of triumph and the yielding up of Jesus' spirit. There are three important points here.

1. Jesus cried, "It is finished" (Jn.19:30). The Greek word *tetelestai* is the shout of victorious purpose. Christ had completed His work, mission, and task. He was not crying the cry of a defeated martyr; He was crying the cry of a victorious conqueror.

2. "Yielded up the ghost" (apheken to pneuma) means that He willingly yielded and gave up His spirit. It must always be remembered that Jesus *willingly* died. He willingly came to this moment of yielding and giving up His spirit unto death. Both Paul and Peter cover the Lord's work during the three days immediately following His death until the resurrection.

a. On the cross:

> **"[He] spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it [the cross]" (Col.2:15. Cp. Eph.6:12.)**

b. On the cross and after death:

> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 Pt.3:18-20. See note—1 Pt.3:19-20.)**

c. After death:

> **"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)" (Eph.4:8-10. See note—Eph.4:8-10.)**

3. Christ died at the ninth hour, that is, 3:00 p.m. (v.45, 50). This was the very hour when the priests began to make the evening offering of the Passover Lamb. While the priests were going about sacrificing the symbolic lamb for the people, the true Lamb of God was being sacrificed for the people's sins outside the city walls (1 Cor.5:7; Heb.13:12).

4 (27:51) **Veil Torn**: the great veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom. In the minds of the Jews, the veil was one of the most important things in the temple. Why? Because it surrounded the ark of the covenant which symbolized the very presence of God Himself. It was huge and beautiful, made of the very finest materials. It was sixty or more feet high. To get some idea of the magnificence of the veil, imagine one of the other temple veils described by Josephus:

> *"...before these doors there was a veil of equal largeness with the doors. It was embroidered with blue and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a contexture that was truly wonderful. This mixture of colors [had] its mystical interpretation, but [it] was a kind of image of the universe; for by the scarlet, there seemed to be signified fire, by the fine flax the earth, by the blue the air and by the purple the sea....This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens"* (Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 5:4).

The significant point to note is that the veil was torn from top to bottom. This symbolizes that it was torn by an act of God himself. It symbolizes direct access to God (Heb.6:19; 9:3-12, 24; 10:19-23). It was the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. Up until this time, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies; and He could enter only one day a year, the Day of Atonement (Ex.26:33). Now through the body of Christ, any man can enter the presence of God. He can enter God's presence and pray any time, any place.

> **"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace" (Eph.2:14-15).**
>
> **"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb.6:19-20).**
>
> **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).**
>
> **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).**
>
> **"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:19-23).**

5 (27:51) **Earthquake**: the terrifying earthquake. The symbolism could be threefold.

1. The earth could have quaked under the weight of the sin placed upon its Architect and Creator.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

2. The earth could have quaked and torn at its rocks to symbolize the fatal blow to Satan's domain.

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:31-32).

"And having spoiled principalities and powers [upon the cross], he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

3. The earth could have quaked to symbolize that it, too, is stirred to await the glorious day of redemption.

"Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Ro.8:21).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:10-13.)

6 (27:52-53) **Believers, Resurrected**: the resurrection of many saints. Just who these saints were is not known, not for certain. But several facts mentioned in Scripture need to be noted.

1. The graves were opened during the terrifying earthquake (v.51), but the bodies did not arise until after Jesus' resurrection (v.53). Christ had to be the first to arise from the dead—the first who was never to die again (1 Cor.15:20; Col.1:18; Rev.1:5).

2. Between these two events, the cross and the resurrection, was evidently the time that Jesus bore the full punishment of death and hell for man's sins. He tasted death for every man—both physical and spiritual death (Heb.2:9, 14).

3. Peter adds, "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (1 Pt.3:19). This probably means that He confronted the lost in hell and proclaimed that the way of the righteous is now vindicated. John quotes Christ in Rev.1:18, "[I] was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and death."

Many believe that before the resurrection of Christ all dead people went to a place known in Scripture as Hades (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.16:23). Hades was divided into two areas, paradise and hell. The spirits of believers went to paradise; the spirits of unbelievers went to hell. Some commentators believe that when Christ arose He took the saints of paradise with Him to live in the presence of God forever. Now, since Christ's resurrection, all believers go immediately into the presence of God.

4. Paul adds "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive...but He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth...." (Eph.4:8-10; cp. the graves' opening in Mt.27:51 and the bodies' being raised in Mt.27:52). The idea is that Christ led captivity—sin, death and hell—captive. He conquered all the enemies of man, setting man free to arise and live forever in the presence of God.

The resurrection of these saints symbolized at least two things.

1. It symbolized the conquest of death by Christ. The sting is now taken from death; the power of death is now broken.

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor.15:25-26).

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:51-57).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14).

2. It symbolized the resurrection of believers. Believers shall arise and be recognized and know one another (Mt.27:53).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:16-17).

7 (27:54) **Centurion**: the confession of the centurion and others. A magnificent thing happened to some of those standing at the foot of the cross. When the earth quaked upon the heels of the darkness, the centurion and his soldiers feared and exclaimed: "Truly this was the Son of God." The confession was probably genuine, much more than just feeling that Christ was innocent and a special person to His God. Of course, the soldiers could not fully understand what *Son of God* meant; but they knew Christ claimed to be the Son of God. And in witnessing Christ's words and purposeful behavior on the cross, they more than likely believed His claim to be true.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

Thought 1. The magnetic power of the cross begins its work with the centurion and his soldiers.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).

Thought 2. Truly believing the claim of Christ to be the Son of God is what it takes to be saved.

8 (27:55-56) **Women**: the courage and love of the women. Note the following phrases.

⇒ "Many women": many were there. When the men fled, many women demonstrated courage.

⇒ "Afar off": some did stand far off, but some stood at the very foot of the cross (Jn.19:25). Their love ran deep and their devotion and courage clear. They triumphed over fear. They did not fear the enemies of Christ: they triumphed simply because they loved (1 Jn.4:18).

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mk.8:35).

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn.4:18).

	N. The Messiah's Burial: Reactions to His Death, 27:57-66 (Mk.15:42-47; Lk.23: 50-56; Jn.19:38:42)	Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.	
1 A secret disciple: Was stirred to step forth for Christ a. He was a disciple, but secret b. He was stirred to step forward for Christ: He requested Jesus' body c. He embalmed the body d. He buried the body 1) In his own tomb 2) Closed the entrance with a great stone	57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.	62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. 64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. 65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.	**3 Unbelievers & worldly religionists: Faced a serious problem** a. Their twofold problem 1) The Lord's claim: He would arise 2) The message of a risen Messiah b. Their request: Secure the tomb c. Their error: Believing Jesus' claims were false d. Their extensive security of the tomb[DSI] 1) A sealing of the tomb 2) A military guard
2 Two believing women: Showed loyalty & affection	61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other		

DIVISION XVI

THE MESSIAH'S ARREST, TRIAL, AND CRUCIFIXION, 26:1-27:66

N. The Messiah's Burial: Reactions to His Death, 27:57-66

(27:57-66) **Introduction**: Jesus was now dead. In this passage, there are three reactions to His death, reactions that reveal how we should and should not react to His death.

1. A secret disciple: was stirred to step forth for Christ (v.57-60).
2. Two believing women: showed loyalty and affection (v.61).
3. Unbelievers and worldly religionists: faced a serious problem (v.62-66).

1 (27:57-60) **Joseph of Arimathaea**: there was the reaction of a secret disciple. He was stirred to step forward for Christ. Several things are said about Joseph of Arimathaea that show the kind of man he was.

⇒ He was an honorable counsellor, that is, a member of the Sanhedrin (Mk.15:43).
⇒ He was a good and just man (Lk.23:50).
⇒ He waited for the Kingdom of God (Mk.15:43).
⇒ He was rich (Mt.27:57).
⇒ He did not vote for Jesus' death when the Sanhedrin voted (Lk.23:51).
⇒ He was a disciple, but a secret disciple, fearing his fellow Jews (Jn.19:38).

It is this last fact that reveals a marked change in Joseph. Up until the death of Jesus, He had been a secret disciple. He had probably had several meetings with Christ when the Lord visited Jerusalem. But after the Lord's death, he was no longer secret. He became bold.

Four acts show a remarkable boldness, a boldness that reveals the strength of Joseph's discipleship.

1. Joseph actually marched in "boldly to Pilate" and requested the body of Jesus (Mk.15:43). This was a tremendous act of courage. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. The latter served as an example of criminal punishment to the public. Joseph also braved the threat of Pilate's reaction, for Pilate was fed up with the *Jesus matter*. Jesus had proven to be very bothersome to Pilate. Pilate could have reacted severely against Joseph.
2. Joseph risked the disfavor and discipline of the Sanhedrin. They were the ruling body who had instigated and condemned Christ, and Joseph was a member of the council. Unquestionably, he would face harsh reaction from some of his fellow Sanhedrin members and from certain of his closest friends.
3. Joseph demonstrated a care, even an affection, for Jesus by giving his own tomb for the burial of Jesus. This act alone would leave no question about his stand with Christ.
4. Joseph also eliminated himself from taking part in the great Passover Feast. This was just never done, even for the most serious reasons. Joseph, by handling Jesus' body, was considered defiled for seven days for having come in contact with a corpse. Once defiled, Jewish law forbade a person from taking part in Jewish ceremonies.

The thing that turned Joseph from being a secret disciple to a bold disciple seems to be the phenomenal events surrounding the cross (the behavior and words of Christ, the darkness, the earthquake, and the torn veil). When Joseph witnessed

all this, his mind connected the claims of Christ with the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. Joseph saw the prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. He stepped forward and braved all risks: he took his stand with Christ. A remarkable courage! A courage stirred by the death of Christ.

Note that Joseph embalmed the body and laid it in *his own tomb*, and he closed the tomb's entrance with a huge stone (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66). (Cp. Is.53:9.)

Thought 1. Every secret believer needs to study the cross of Christ. Really seeing the cross will turn any secret believer into a bold witness for Christ.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Thought 2. Position, power, wealth, and fame—none of these make us bold for Christ. Only true affection for Christ will make us bold, and only as we see the cross of Christ will affection for Christ be aroused.

Thought 3. Christ identified with men perfectly.

⇒ He lived as a man, but perfectly.

⇒ He died as a man, but perfectly (as the Ideal Man).

⇒ He was buried as a man, but perfectly.

> **"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (Is.53:9).**
>
> **"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:17).**

Thought 4. God's own Son had nothing when He was on earth. This means two things.

⇒ Christ is the Savior of the poorest. He was born in a stable. He had no place of His own to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58). His tomb was a borrowed tomb.

⇒ Yet the rich can serve Him just as Joseph of Arimathaea did.

2 (27:61) **Women Believers**: there was the reaction of two believing women. They showed affection and loyalty. There are three facts to note about these women.

1. The women were loyal to Christ despite all danger. The men forsook Christ, but not the women (Mt.26:56, 69-75; cp. 27:55-56, 61).
2. The women had a deep affection for Christ. They took what they had, money to buy spices and ointments, and used it for Christ. This they did because they loved Him (Mt.27:61; cp. Mk.16:1; Lk.23:56).
3. The women had not yet understood the resurrection of Christ. They were preparing His body to lie, and eventually to decay, in the tomb. The true meaning of living forever, the human body's being remade, recreated, and becoming incorruptible, had not yet been grasped by them (Jn.5:24-29; cp. 1 Cor.15:42f. Cp. 1 Cor.15:1-58.)

Thought 1. The two women were great examples for all men. All men believers...

- should be loyal to Christ no matter how furious the danger.
- should love Christ to such an extent that they give all they are and have to Christ.
- should seek to understand and grasp the full meaning of the resurrection of Christ.

> **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).**
>
> **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).**

3 (27:62-66) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: there was the reaction of unbelievers and worldly religionists. They faced a serious problem. They were so uneasy and fearful that they went to Pilate in an attempt to prevent the disciples from stealing the body.

1. The unbelievers had a twofold problem.
   a. The unbeliever had the problem of the Lord's claim. He had said He would arise from the dead. These worldly religionists did not believe He would, but they knew He had predicted some kind of resurrection (Mt.12:40; Jn.2:19; 10:17-18). Some of them had heard Him personally talk about rising from the dead. The disciples had shared with their families and closest associates the words of Christ about His death and resurrection; and, as with all matters shared with another, the families and closest associates shared with their closest friends and the prediction had spread. Moreover, during the last months Christ had intensified

His prediction in order to drill the truth into the disciples to prepare them for what lay ahead (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 15:29; 16:21-28; 17:22).

It should be remembered that the disciples did not take Jesus' words literally. They spiritualized the prediction of His death, resurrection, and return. They probably thought Jesus was referring to some events dealing with the upcoming struggle to free Israel from Roman domination and establishing the Messiah's kingdom in glory.

> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
>
> **"She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27).**
>
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

Thought 1. Unbelievers of all generations have to deal with the problem of the Lord's claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God.

Thought 2. Many spiritualize Jesus' words even today.

b. The unbeliever had the problem of the message about the risen Messiah. What they feared was that the disciples would come during the night to steal the body and begin to preach that Jesus had arisen from the dead. Note: there was no chance of this.

⇒ The disciples were *emotionally destitute*, utterly hopeless and depressed. In addition, they were *terrorized*, thinking they were being hunted down like a pack of wolves.

⇒ The disciples, if they lied about the resurrection, would have been deceiving themselves; and above all men, they would have lost the most. They had left everything for Christ: their families, homes, and businesses. They had left all because of their faith in Christ and their hope in the next world. If there were no other world, they would be the most miserable men of all. And remember: at that particular time, they were the most miserable.

⇒ The disciples, if they lied about the resurrection, would have been deceiving others. They would have been lying and deceiving people with the very opposite of everything Christ had taught them. There was no chance the disciples could ever pull off so mammouth a deception on the world.

Thought 1. The unbeliever has to deal with the message of the risen Lord. He actually arose.

> **"But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Ro.4:24).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pt.1:3).**

2. The unbelievers requested Pilate to secure the tomb, making it as secure as was humanly possible (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66).

3. The unbelievers made one drastic mistake: they believed that Jesus' claims were false (v.64). Note the wording of what they said. They feared the last error (Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God), and they feared the possibility of a new error, the message of a risen messiah. Note: they felt the message of a risen Lord might be more powerful than the claims to deity—and it is.

4. The unbelievers planned extensive security of the tomb. Pilate gave permission to post a guard and to seal the tomb. Both measures were taken (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(27:65-66) **Jesus' Tomb**: cave tombs were closed by rolling a huge cartwheel-like stone in front of the entrance. They were almost impossible to remove. A deep slanting groove was hewn out of the rock at the base of the entrance for the circular stone to rest in. The stone usually weighed several tons. Such precautions were essential because there were so many tombs ransacked in those days of poverty.

The tomb was further secured by being sealed. When it was necessary to seal a tomb, the huge stone was cemented to the entrance walls or else some type of rope or binding was wrapped around the entrance stone and fastened to both sides of the tomb. Then the binding was cemented with a hardening clay or wax-like substance. In the case of some burials, usually political figures, the seal of the Emperor was also attached to the walls of the entrance. This was to strike fear of Roman retaliation against any intruder.

In the case of Jesus' tomb, further precautions were taken by placing a patrol to guard against any foul play. This guard consisted of a large number of men (Mt.28:4, 11f).

	CHAPTER 28		
	XVII. THE MESSIAH'S TRIUMPHANT RESURRECTION, 28:1-20		
	A. The Messiah's Resurrection: Surrounding Events, 28:1-15 (Mk.16:1-13; Lk.24:1-49; Jn.20:1-23)		
1 **The time of the resurrection**	In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.	from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.	1) He meets you 2) You shall see Him
2 **The first witnesses of the resurrection** a. Mary Magdalene b. The other Mary		8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.	3) The women obeyed: With fear and great joy
		9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.	d. Hail:[DS2] The glorious encounter with Jesus Himself
		10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.	
3 **The miraculous events of the resurrection** a. The great earthquake b. The great stone rolled back	2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.	11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.	5 **The attempt to discredit the resurrection**[DS3] a. The guards reported the resurrection
c. The radiant figure 1) Appearance: Dazzling 2) Clothing: As snow	3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:	12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,	b. The authorities were baffled: Took counsel c. The authorities bribed & assured the soldiers of protection from Pilate
d. The guards terrified 1) Shook 2) Acted as dead men	4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.	13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.	
4 **The appeals of the resurrection** a. Fear not 1) Your seeking Messiah is known 2) He was crucified 3) He is risen[DS1]	5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.	14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.	
b. Come, see: Believe and live	6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.	15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.	d. The lie was found out: The truth marched on
c. Go quickly & tell: The glorious news	7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen		

DIVISION XVII

THE MESSIAH'S TRIUMPHANT RESURRECTION, 28:1-20

A. The Messiah's Resurrection: Surrounding Events, 28:1-15

(28:1-15) **Introduction**: Matthew reports five significant events surrounding the resurrection—events that stir interest and challenge action.

1. The time of the resurrection (v.1).
2. The first witnesses of the resurrection (v.1).
3. The miraculous events of the resurrection (v.2-4).
4. The appeals of the resurrection (v.5-10).
5. The attempt to discredit the resurrection (v.11-15).

1 (28:1) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the time of the resurrection. Jesus arose after the Sabbath was over, that is, on Sunday, the first day of the week. There are four facts to note about this.

1. Matthew said, "In the end of the Sabbath" which means late on the Sabbath. Matthew was not speaking of strict Jewish time. This would mean the Sabbath had ended at 6 p.m. the preceding evening of Saturday (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.6:48). He was using the common day-to-day idea of time. He was simply adding the night time to the preceding day (cp. Mk.16:1).
2. Jesus arose before dawn, before the sun arose on Sunday morning. This was significant to the early Christian believers, so significant that they broke away from the practice of worshipping on the Sabbath or Saturday. They began to worship on Sunday, the day of the resurrection of their Lord.

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor.16:2).

3. Jesus arose on the first day of the week, on Sunday morning. This means that He arose on the third day just as He had said (Mt.12:40; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mk.9:31; 10:34; Lk.9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 46). His arising from the dead is a triumph, a conquest over death. Death reigns no more. Its rule has been broken. (See note—Ro.8:2-4.)

"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Cor.1:9-10).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man....Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:9, 14-15).

4. Again, Jesus arose on the first day of the week, Sunday morning. He was in the grave on the Sabbath, unable to observe the laws governing the great season of the Passover and the Sabbath. He was dead; therefore, the law and its observances had no authority over Him. This is symbolic of the identification believers gain in Christ. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, God identifies the man with Christ, in particular with the death of Christ. God counts the man as having died with Christ. Therefore, in Christ's death believers become dead to the law (see note—Ro.7:4; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:3; note—Mt.5:17-18 for more discussion).

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments [elements, things] of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (Col.2:20).

2 (28:1) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the first witnesses of the resurrection. Note several things.

1. The first witnesses were women, not men, not even his own disciples. The women took the lead in love and care for the Lord Jesus.
2. Two reasons are given for the women's coming to the tomb of Jesus.
   a. Matthew says the women "came...*to see* the sepulchre." The Greek word "to see" (theoresai) means to contemplate, to gaze, to observe in order to grasp. They came to be close to their Lord, the One who meant so much to them, to mourn over Him, to think through all that had happened. This is an important point, for it perhaps explains why the women were more prepared to believe the miracle of the resurrection.

"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not" (Mk.16:9-11).

"It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Lk.24:10-11).

Thought 1. Thinking and meditating upon the Lord will help us to understand the Lord and prepare us to receive the great truth of His resurrection.

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

   b. Mark says the women came to "anoint Him" (Mk.16:1). They cared, so they wanted to take care of His body as loved ones do.

Thought 1. The women are an example to us in taking care of the bodies of our loved ones.

3. Mary Magdalene stands out as the most prominent of the women who witnessed the resurrection of the Lord. Her love and devotion must have been deep, very deep. Mary had a very special quality about her, possessing a deeper love and devotion than most (cp. Mk.16:1, 9; Lk.24:10; Jn.20:11-18).

4. The other Mary was the mother of James and Joses. She just could not tear herself away from the body of Jesus which indicates a very special love and devotion for Him (Mt.27:56, 61; 28:1; Mk.15:40; Lk.24:10). She was probably the mother of Cleopas as well (cp. Jn.19:25).

3 (28:2-4) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the miraculous events of the resurrection.

1. There was the "great earthquake." Nothing more is said, only that it was *great*. The earthquake symbolized that a *historical convulsion* was taking place, an event that never before had happened: a man was rising from the dead, the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God Himself. Tragically, He had been put to death by the hands of men, but gloriously He was being raised from the dead by the power of God (Ro.1:4; Eph.1:19-20). The historical event was a picture of the unbelievable convulsion that God was planning for the end time: the resurrection of all the dead. The resurrection of God's dear Son paved the way and prefigured the resurrection of all men. History was witnessing the most convulsive event of all time; the quaking of the earth was bound to happen.
2. There was the great stone rolled back (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66). The stone was not rolled back for the benefit of Christ, but for the witnesses to the resurrection. When Christ arose, He was in His resurrection body, the body of the spiritual dimension of being which has no physical bounds. But the witnesses needed to enter the tomb to see the truth (see outline and notes—Jn.20:1-10).
3. There was the radiant figure, the angel of the Lord. Note two facts about the angel.
   a. He rolled back the stone for the sake of the witnesses. He was a ministering spirit of God's, serving by helping God's people (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.1:4-14).
   b. His appearance was dazzling:
      ⇒ just like lightning—visible, quick, startling, striking, frightening, brilliant.
      ⇒ just like snow—white, pure, glistening.
4. There were the guards and their terror. Matthew seems to indicate that the guards witnessed the flashing appearance of the angel and the rolling back of the stone. The suddenness of the event, the brilliant appearance and the enormous strength of the angel were like a volcanic eruption to them. They quaked, shook, and fell as dead men to the ground. They were either striken unconscious or were so terrified they pretended to be unconscious.

Thought 1. The power of God is awesome and terrifying. The guards had been told they were to guard a dead body against thieving men. They were totally unprepared and unable to stand against the power of God and His messenger (angel). There is a strong lesson here for every unbeliever.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:18).

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

"[God's power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).

"He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud" (Job 26:12).

"Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power" (Ps.65:6).

"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps.115:3).

"Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let [hinder] it?" (Is.43:13).

4 (28:5-10) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the appeals of the resurrection. When the women arrived at the tomb, they saw the dazzling angel sitting on the stone. Mark says they saw "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment" (Mk.16:5). Luke says "two men stood by them in shining garments" (Lk.24:4). Apparently, many angels were all about the tomb and the surrounding area attending Christ, joying and rejoicing over what God had done. At the right time, one angel appeared to the women, then two. Note that they appeared as men, that is, as messengers of God.

The appeals of the resurrection are a message within themselves.

1. Fear not. There are three reasons why the person who seeks after Christ should not fear.
   a. God knows the person who is seeking after the Messiah. He knows the movement of every heart. The person who seeks diligently shall find (Mt.7:7).

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).

"But if from thence [idolatry] thou shalt seek the LORD thy God thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go

and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:11-13).

b. Christ has been crucified to save every man.

"Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (Jn.10:32-33).

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev.5:9).

c. Christ has now risen from the dead and conquered death.

"But for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).

"[God's] power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).

2. Come, see: believe. Note that the angel reminded the women of the Lord's words: "He is risen, as He said" (cp. Mt.16:21; 17:23; 20:19; 26:32). Note also that the women were told to "come, see the place." They were eyewitnesses of His resurrection.

Thought 1. Believers can become witnesses of the Lord's death and resurrection—clear witnesses. They can see as though they were eye-witnesses—all by God's Spirit.

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" (Gal.3:1).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:16).

3. Go quickly and tell the glorious news. Sharing the glorious news is essential. It is the greatest news of all history: Christ is risen. He shall meet you and you shall see Him.

Note several things.

a. The women obeyed. They became the very first witnesses for the risen Lord.
b. The discouraged believers (disciples) were the first ones the women were to tell. The discouraged were to be encouraged and stirred to join the great force of witnesses.
c. The witnessing was to be done quickly.

4. Hail: the glorious encounter with Jesus Himself. Note what happened when Christ was personally encountered.

a. He said, "All hail"; that is, rejoice.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (Jn.16:20).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Ph.4:4).

b. There was the worship of Him: wonder, amazement, adoration, and awe.
c. He said: "Be not afraid."

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

d. Go and tell my brothers: the commission was repeated because of the extreme importance of bearing the glorious news.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"...Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Co.1:27-29).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(28:6-7) **Resurrection Predicted**: Christ predicted His resurrection time and again.

"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Mt.16:21).

"And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry" (Mt.17:23).

"And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Mt.20:19).

"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee" (Mt.26:32).

"And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead" (Mk.9:9).

"But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee" (Mk.14:28).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19).

"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(28:9) **Hail** (chairete): rejoice.

5 (28:11-15) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the attempt to discredit the resurrection. The outline above is adequate to see the event being described.

1. The guards reported the resurrection.
2. The authorities were baffled, and they took counsel to decide what to do.
3. The authorities bribed and assured the soldiers of protection from Pilate.
4. The lie was found out; the truth marched on.

Thought 1. If the guards were asleep, how would they know what happened? Deception and lying are always contradicted by the truth.

Thought 2. Truth will always prevail (v.15). It may take some time, but its triumph is assured.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:32).

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness" (Eph.6:14).

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment" (Pr.12:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(28:11-15) **Jesus—Plots Against**: note the plots against Jesus. The authorities had used treachery to arrest Him; an illegal court to try Him (Mt.26:59); false charges to accuse Him before Pilate (Mt.27:1, 2, 11f); and now they were using bribery to discredit His resurrection.

	B. The Messiah's Final Commission to His Disciples, 28:16-20 (Mk.16:15-18; Lk.24: 46-49; Jn.20:21; cp. Jn.17:18; Acts 1:8)	18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.	**2 He assured His followers of His power** a. Is a given power b. Is in heaven & earth
1 The disciples met Jesus in Galilee a. They met on a pre-appointed mountain b. They worshipped Him c. Some doubted	16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. 17 And when they saw Him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.	19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.	**3 He commissioned His followers** a. To make disciples of all nations b. To baptize c. To teach all that He had commanded **4 He promised to be with His followers**

DIVISION XVII

THE MESSIAH'S TRIUMPHANT RESURRECTION, 28:1-20

B. The Messiah's Final Commission to His Disciples, 28:16-20

(28:16-20) **Introduction**: Matthew began his gospel by proclaiming that the baby Jesus was the Son of David, the promised King of Israel (Mt.1:1-2). He now closes his gospel by proclaiming that the Lord Jesus possesses all power and authority in heaven and earth. The Lord Jesus had risen from the dead, and in the power of His resurrection His followers are to go forth proclaiming His glorious kingdom.

In this great passage, Matthew covers the great commission of the resurrected Lord, the King to whom all power and authority belong.

1. The disciples met Jesus in Galilee (v.16-17).
2. He assured His followers of His power (v.18).
3. He commissioned His followers (v.19-20).
4. He promised to be with His followers—always (v.20).

1 (28:16-17) **Disciples**: the disciples met Jesus in Galilee. Note several background facts.

1. Matthew says the eleven disciples met Christ. The eleven were the prominent ones, but apparently there were over five hundred believers present, all seeing Him at once (1 Cor.15:6). The reference to "they" and "some doubted" (v.17) seems to indicate that this was the great appearance to the mass of believers mentioned by Paul. Christ had already appeared to the eleven on several occasions. They already knew the reality of His resurrection. It is unlikely that they were the ones who were questioning at this time (Mk.16:12-14; Lk.24:13-48; Jn.20:19-25; 20:26-31; 21:1-25).

2. The disciples met the Lord in Galilee on a pre-appointed mountain (cp. Mt.26:32; 28:7, 10). The Lord had apparently instructed the apostles to pass the word along and to gather all His disciples to meet Him in a mass meeting in Galilee. A particular mountain was designated as the meeting place. Note that Galilee was where the Lord had conducted most of His ministry and where most of His disciples lived. It was also some distance from Jerusalem, a place somewhat safe from the immediate enemies of Christ.

> **Thought 1.** There are appointed places where we are to meet the Lord: in prayer, devotions, worship, and Bible study. When we meet the Lord as He says, He meets us. We must meet the Lord as He instructs if we are to know the reality of His resurrection.

3. This is significant. They worshipped Him, but some doubted. They just were not sure. Note what Jesus did: He "came and spake to them" (v.18). Apparently, His *coming and speaking to them* erased their doubt and questioning.

> **Thought 1.** When we meet Christ as He instructs, He meets us. When He meets us, all fear and doubt vanish. The person who truly seeks after Christ, who truly seeks to meet Him, will have his doubts erased. Christ will *come and speak to him.*

2 (28:18) **Power**: Jesus assured His followers of His power.

1. Jesus' power or authority is a given power. It is given by God, and it is given for one reason: to exalt Christ above and over all.

> **"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:8-9).**

2. Jesus' power is above and over all that is in heaven and in earth. His authority is over all the universe. His authority includes at least three areas.

a. The Lord's authority includes the power to rule and reign...
- to receive the worship and subjection of all men who willingly surrender to His dominion.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:12).**

- to bow the knee of all men and to receive their acknowledgement of His Lordship.

> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).**

b. The Lord's authority includes the power to govern and direct...
- the affairs of men without violating man's freedom.

> **"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mk.16:19).**
>
> **"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" (Lk.22:69).**
>
> **"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).**
>
> **"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).**

- the affairs of nature and the world without violating the laws of nature.

> **"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him!" (Mt.8:27).**
>
> **"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:22).**

c. The Lord's authority includes the power to forgive sins, to judge, receive and reject men, and to save and deliver men through life and death. (See outline and notes—Ro.8:28-39.)

> **"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).**
>
> **"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (Lk.5:20-21).**
>
> **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn.5:22).**
>
> **"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:27).**

3. Jesus' power assures the believer of deliverance. Note *when* Jesus "came and spake" of His power: immediately upon the heels of some doubting and immediately before charging His disciples to go into a hostile world. He proclaimed His power in order to erase doubt and to strengthen His disciples in going forth. His power was the disciples' assurance of victory.

Now, in dealing with the supreme power and authority of Jesus Christ, there are two points that must always be remembered.

1. The Lord's supreme reign is not yet fully seen. God has not yet revealed His Son's supremacy in an absolute sense. However, there is *a striking reason* for God's delaying the visible enthronement of His Son. God wants His Son to still be seen as the Savior of the world. He wants more and more persons to be saved before He ends the world and begins the sovereign reign of His Son upon earth.

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3-4, 8-9).

2. The Lord's supreme reign over all the universe is assured.

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:10-13).

"Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:8-10).

"Then cometh the end, when he [Christ] shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor.15:24-28).

3 (28:19-20) **Commission, Great—Disciples, Making**: Jesus commissioned His followers. He commissioned not only the eleven apostles, but all who were present, more than five hundred disciples. However, note something of crucial importance: it was impossible for that generation to reach the whole world in its lifetime. Therefore, the commission given to the first generation of believers extends beyond to all generations of believers. The very same charge given to them is given to us. Our Lord charges us with the very same words, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations...."

The Lord's commission was threefold.

1. He commissions us to "go ye...and make disciples of all nations." This is one of the crucial verses in the Bible. No verse is more important for genuine believers.

Teaching and baptizing are not enough to reach the world for Christ. Both are important, and Christ commissions both; but He says something else must precede both: discipleship. "Go ye therefore and 'metheteusate' all nations" (Mt.28:19). "Metheteusate" means to make disciples. Thus the verse accurately reads, "Go ye therefore and 'make disciples' of all nations...." Most messages that are preached on this passage stress the objective of our Lord, the reaching of all nations, as though this is what our Lord had in mind. There is no question, the great commission is what Christ had in mind. He has instructed us to go to all nations and evangelize them. But there is the strong conviction that He had more than that objective in mind, more than just an overriding purpose—much more.

Our Lord was not only telling us "to go and evangelize," He was telling us *how* to go and *how* to evangelize. He was not only giving His ultimate *objective* and overriding purpose, He was giving *the method* to use in evangelizing the world.

Think about the word "*metheteusate*" (make disciples). What does our Lord mean by "make disciples"? Does it not mean that we are to do what He did: make disciples and do things with them as He did. Is He not telling us to do exactly as He did?

What *did* He do? Christ "came to seek and save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10). He sought the lost, those who were willing to commit their lives to Him. And when He found such a person, He saved that person. When Christ found a person who was willing to commit his life, Christ attached Himself to that person. Christ began to mold and make that person into His image. The word *attach* is the key word. It is probably the word that best describes discipleship. Christ made disciples of men by attaching Himself to them; and through that personal attachment, they were able to observe His life and conversation; and in seeing and hearing, they began to absorb and assimilate His very character and behavior. They began to follow Him and to serve Him more closely. In simple terms, this is what our Lord did. This is the way He made disciples. This was His mission and His method, His obsession: to attach Himself to willing believers.

There is another way to describe what Christ did. Christ envisioned something beyond Himself and beyond His day and time. He envisioned an *extension* of Himself, an *extension* of His very being, and an *extension* of His mission and method. The way He chose to extend Himself was discipleship, attaching Himself to committed persons; and through attachment, the persons absorbed and assimilated the Lord's very character and mission. They in turn attached themselves to others and discipled them. They, too, expected their disciples to make disciples of others who were willing to commit their lives to Christ. Thus was the glorious message of Christ to march down through the centuries (2 Tim.2:2).

There is no question what our Lord's commission is: we are to go; but more than that, we are to make disciples, to attach ourselves to those persons who will follow our Lord until they in turn can make disciples (2 Tim.2:2).

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.10:7).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

2. He commissioned us to baptize all nations (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.16:16; note—Lk.3:21; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:38). Two things need to be noted here.

a. Baptism is of crucial importance. Christ says that it is as essential as teaching, despite the fact that it is a one-time act. It is as much a part of the commission of Christ as discipling and teaching. Christ is definitely teaching that baptism is to be the immediate sign and the identifying sign that a person is now stepping out of the heathen (unbelieving) ranks and taking his stand with Christ.

b. Baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" means more than just saying a formula as one is baptized, much more. It means...

- a statement of faith: of belief in God as the true Father of Jesus Christ; of belief in Christ as the true Son of God, the Savior of the world; of belief in the Holy Spirit as the Comforter of the believer.
- a commitment to follow God: to follow Him as revealed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (cp. Christ's constant references to God as His Father, to Himself as the Son, and to the Holy Spirit throughout the Gospel of John. Also cp. Mt.11:27; 24:36. Also see outlines and notes, *Holy Spirit*—Jn.14:15-26; 16:7-15; Ro.8:1-17.)

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk.16:16).

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" (Acts 10:48).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

3. He commissioned us to teach all that Christ had commanded. Teaching is just as essential as making disciples and baptizing. One is not to be emphasized over the other. All are part of the commission of our Lord. Note what is to be taught: "all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (Jn.6:45).

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col.3:16).

"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim.4:6).

"These things command and teach" (1 Tim.4:11).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim.2:24).

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:6-7).

"And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezk.44:23).

Thought 1. What Christ taught and commanded must be studied and studied, to the point of learning and knowing and practicing. The commandments of Christ will be the first things taught. They should be the rule of society.

Thought 2. Society deteriorates and crumbles when it neglects the teaching and commandments of Christ.

4 (28:20) **Jesus Christ, Presence**: Jesus promised to be with His followers—always.

1. Note the word "lo," or behold. Christ used this striking word to get the attention of His followers, to startle them to wake up and listen. He was about to encourage them in the great task He had charged to their care.

2. Note the great promise: "I am with you." He gave emphatic assurance: not "I will be with you," but "I am with you." Christ is with the believer as the believer goes forth to make disciples of all nations. Christ is with us...

- every step
- every decision
- every trial
- every joy
- every day
- every hour
- every sorrow
- when without
- when poor
- when having nothing
- when having plenty
- when abused
- when sick
- when facing death

3. Note the boundless promise: "alway, even unto the end of the world." There is not a moment when Christ is not with the believer to help him in his witness, even if his witness means abuse, persecution, and martyrdom.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:20).

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb.13:5-6).

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen.28:15).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:2).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

MARK

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INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: John Mark.

The early church fathers say that Mark was a companion of Peter. Some commentators claim that Peter furnished much of the material for the Gospel, whereas others say that Mark made notes of Peter's preaching and later used the notes to write the Gospel.

Papias says: "Mark, who was Peter's interpreter, wrote down carefully all that he remembered of what Christ had said or done, though not in order. For he had neither heard the Lord nor been His disciple; but afterwards, as I said, he had been Peter's disciple. Now Peter used to teach according to the needs, without giving an orderly summary of the Lord's sayings. So Mark was not wrong in writing down some things as he recalled them. For his one concern was this—not to omit nor to falsify anything that he had heard" (Papias, Frag.2:15. Quoted by William Barclay. *The Gospel of Mark*. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1954, p. xvii).

Scripture gives a good deal of information about Mark (see notes—Acts 12:25; 13:13).

DATE: uncertain. Probably A.D. 67-70.

The fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 had not yet occurred (Mk.13). The church father, Irenaeus, says: "Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter" (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* III.I.1).

Note the word "departure." It evidently means death. It is so used in referring to the Lord's death (Lk.9:31) and to Peter's impending death (2 Pt.1:15). The Anti-Marcionite Prologue says very clearly, "After the death of Peter himself, he [Mark] wrote down this same gospel...." (Quoted from *The Gospel of Mark*. Introduction. "The New Testament and Wycliffe Bible Commentary," ed. by Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Produced for Moody Monthly by the Iversen Associates, NY, 1971, p.113.)

The deaths of Peter and Paul are thought to have occurred around A.D. 65-70. (See Introductory Notes, Author, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy.) Therefore, Mark's writing would have taken place somewhere around A.D. 67-70.

TO WHOM WRITTEN: to the Roman world, the world at large, the Gentile mind.

Mark's recipients are not familiar with Jewish terms and customs, for he constantly explains them. However, they are familiar with Christian history and terms. He never explains them (for example, John the Baptist, baptism, the Holy Spirit).

PURPOSE: to show that Jesus is unquestionably the Son of God.

Mark states his purpose immediately upon beginning his Gospel: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk.1:1). Jesus is declared to be the Son of God at His baptism and transfiguration by the thundering voice of God, "This is my beloved Son...." (1:11; 9:7). Even demons cry out, "I know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God" (1:24). The conclusion of the Centurion is, "Truly this was the Son of God" (15:39). Throughout His ministry Jesus Himself claims to be the Son of God time and again.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

1. Mark is *The Gospel of Realism*. Mark reports Jesus' life as it was with little interpretation. It is an *on-the-spot* eyewitness account written in a fact-by-fact style. The account is unvarnished.
2. Mark is *The Gospel of Action*. The key word is "euthys" which means straightway, immediately, forthwith. It occurs well over thirty times. The Gospel paints a moving, vivid, day-to-day drama of the dramatic life of Christ. It rushes from event to event as if breathlessly moving toward one final ultimate climax.
3. Mark is *The Gospel of Humanity* or *The Gospel of Emotion*. Jesus' humanity is forcibly pictured. Jesus is the carpenter (6:3); He was moved with righteous anger (3:5; 8:33; 10:14); He became weary (4:38); He marveled at the people's unbelief (6:6); He became tired and needed rest (6:31); He was moved with compassion (6:34); He sighed (7:34; 8:12); He looked at the rich young ruler and loved him (10:21); He hungered (11:12).
4. Mark is *The Gospel of the Eyewitness*. Mark adds detail after detail to the events of Jesus' life, details that could come only from an eyewitness. During Jesus' temptation, He was with the wild beasts (1:13). Jesus named James and John "Boanerges" (3:17). "He was very displeased" with the disciples' rejection of little children (10:14). When Jesus foretold His death, the disciples "were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid" (10:32). "The common people heard Him gladly" (12:37).

OUTLINE OF MARK

THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE™ is *unique*. It differs from all other Study Bibles & Sermon Resource Materials in that every Passage and Subject is outlined right beside the Scripture. When you choose any *Subject* below and turn to the reference, you have not only the Scripture, but you discover the Scripture and Subject *already outlined for you—verse by verse.*

For a quick example, choose one of the subjects below and turn to the Scripture, and you will find this marvelous help for faster, easier, and more accurate use.

In addition, every point of the Scripture and Subject is *fully developed in a Commentary with supporting Scripture* at the bottom of the page. Again, this arrangement makes sermon preparation much easier and faster.

Note something else: The Subjects of Mark's Gospel have titles that are both Biblical and *practical*. The practical titles sometimes have more appeal to people. This *benefit* is clearly seen for use on billboards, bulletins, church newsletters, etc.

A suggestion: For the quickest overview of Mark, first read *all the major titles* (I, II, III, etc.), then come back and read the subtitles.

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I. THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

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(Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:19-28)
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(Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:29-34)
C. Jesus Christ and His Temptation: Dealing with Temptation, 1:12-13
(Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)
D. Jesus Christ and His Message: The Good News of the Gospel, 1:14-15
(Matthew 4:12-17; Luke 4:14, 19-20; John 4:1-4)
E. Jesus Christ and His Disciples: The Kind of Person Called, 1:16-20
(Matthew 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11; John 1:35-51)

II. THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

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B. Jesus' Power Over Evil Spirits and Its Impact: Delivering the Most Enslaved, 1:23-28
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C. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon Each One: Caring for the Home and the Individual, 1:29-31
(Matthew 8:14-15; Luke 4:38-39)
D. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon People in the Streets: Caring for the Whole World, 1:32-34
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E. Jesus' Source of Power and Its Impact: What is the Source of Power, 1:35-39
(Luke 2:42-44)
F. Jesus' Power Over Leprosy and Its Impact: Cleansing the Most Unclean, 1:40-45
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G. Jesus' Power to Forgive Sin and Its Impact: Forgiveness of Sin, 2:1-12
(Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26)
H. Jesus' Impact Upon Matthew and His Friends: Reaching the Outcast and Sinner, 2:13-17
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I. Jesus' Impact Upon Young Disciples and Theologians: The Kind of Life Christ Brings, 2:18-22
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J. Jesus' Impact Upon Religionists: Understanding the Sabbath (Sunday), 2:23-28
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K. Jesus' Impact Upon Authorities and Politicians: Understanding True Religion, 3:1-6
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L. Jesus' Impact Upon Crowds and Evil Spirits: Seeking and Fearing Christ, 3:7-12
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M. Jesus' Impact Upon the Twelve Disciples: Calling Choice Men, 3:13-19
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N. Jesus' Impact Upon Friends: Calling Jesus Mad and Insane, 3:20-21
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P. Jesus' Impact Upon His Own Family: Feeling Jesus Is an Embarrassment, 3:31-35
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C. The Parable of the Growing Seed: The Growth of Believers, 4:26-29
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(Matthew 27:26-56; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:16-37)
M. Jesus' Burial: A Discussion of Courage, 15:42-47
(Matthew 27:57-66; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)

X. THE SON OF GOD'S SUPREME MINISTRY: JESUS' VICTORY OVER DEATH AND HIS GREAT COMMISSION, 16:1-20

A. The Proofs of the Resurrection, 16:1-13
(Matthew 28:1-15; Luke 24:1-49; John 20:1-23)
B. The Lord's Great Commission, 16:14-20
(Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21; cp. John 17:18; Acts 1:8)

	CHAPTER 1	the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.	a. To be a voice: "Prepare"[DS3]
	I. THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20	4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.	b. To baptize c. To preach repentance & forgiveness
		5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.	d. The impact: Many respond
	A. Jesus Christ and John the Baptist: The Good News & The Messenger of God, 1:1-8 (Mt.3:1-12; Lk.3:1-18; Jn.1:19-28)	6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;	**4 The spirit of God's messenger: Self-denial**
1 The gospel of God a. Concerns Jesus[DS1] Christ,[DS2] the Son of God b. Began long ago: The prophets foretold it	The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;	7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.	**5 The message of God's messenger** a. The preeminence of Christ
2 The promise of God to send a messenger: To prepare for His Son	2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.	8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.	b. The power of Christ
3 The mission of God's messenger	3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye		

DIVISION I

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

A. Jesus Christ and John the Baptist: The Good News and The Messenger of God, 1:1-8

(1:1-8) **Introduction**: Mark begins his writing with the simple words "the beginning of." But the words that follow are not simple. They are profound and astounding: "the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." The heart of man leaps (or should leap) with a grasping, vibrant joy: for God is, and God has sent a glorious message to mankind through One who is the Son of God.

Mark wastes no time in sharing the good news about the coming of God's Son into human history. He jumps right to the subject of God's messenger whom God sent to prepare the way for His Son.

1. The gospel of God (v.1-2).
2. The promise of God to send a messenger: to prepare for His Son (v.2-3).
3. The mission of God's messenger (v.3-5).
4. The spirit of God's messenger: self-denial (v.6).
5. The message of God's messenger (v.7-8).

1 (1:1-2) **Gospel—Jesus Christ, Deity**: Mark says two things about the beginning of the gospel or *good news* (see note, Gospel—Ro.1:1-4 for more discussion).

1. The gospel concerns "Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Note Mark's exact words: "the gospel of Jesus Christ." It is not the "gospel of Mark," but "the gospel of Jesus Christ."
   a. Jesus Christ is the Subject of the gospel (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.1:1).
   b. Jesus Christ is the Author of the gospel. By Him and through Him the gospel is created and written. He brings the *good news* of God to man. He embodies and He proclaims the *good news* about God to man (see DEEPER STUDY # 5,6—Mt.1:21; DEEPER STUDY # 3—8:20).
   c. Jesus Christ is the Son of God (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34; 10:30-33; Ph.2:6; 2:7).
2. The gospel began long, long ago. Jesus Christ is the Subject and the Author of the gospel, but the gospel began long before the birth of Jesus and the ministry of John. The gospel began long ago in the *mind and plan* of God. God foretold the coming of the gospel through the prophets of old. Mark says what Paul was later to say.

> **"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26:22).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:1) **Jesus** (iesous): Savior; He will save. The Hebrew form is *Joshua* (yasha), meaning Jehovah is salvation; He is the Savior (Mt.18:11; Lk.19:10; Ro.8:3; Gal.1:4; Heb.2:14-18; 7:25).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:1) **Christ** (christos): the words "Christ" (christos) and "Messiah" are the same word. Messiah is the Hebrew word and Christ is the Greek word. Both words refer to the same person and mean the same thing: the *Anointed One*. The Messiah is the *Anointed One of God*. Matthew says Jesus "is called Christ" (Mt.1:16); that is, He is recognized as the *Anointed One of God*, the Messiah Himself.

In the day of Jesus Christ, people feverishly panted for the coming of the long-promised Messiah. The weight of life was harsh, hard, and impoverished. Under the Romans, the people felt that God could not wait much longer to fulfill His promise. Such longings for deliverance left the people gullible. Many arose who claimed to be the Messiah and led the trusting followers into rebellion against the Roman State. The insurrectionist Barabbas, who was set free in the place of Jesus at Jesus' trial, is an example (Mk.15:6f). (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; note—Lk.7:21-23.)

The Messiah was thought to be several things. (See note, Davidic Prophecies—Lk.3:24-31.)

1. Nationally, He was to be the leader from David's line who would free the Jewish state as an independent nation and lead it to be the greatest nation the world had ever known.
2. Militarily, He was to be a great military leader who would lead Jewish armies victoriously over all the world.
3. Religiously, He was to be a supernatural figure straight from God who would bring righteousness over all the earth.
4. Personally, He was to be the One who would bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus Christ accepted the title of Messiah on three different occasions (Mt.16:17; Mk.14:61; Jn.4:26). The name "Jesus" shows Him to be man. The name "Christ" shows Him to be God's Anointed One, God's very own Son. *Christ* is Jesus' official title. It identifies Him officially as *Prophet* (Dt.18:15-19), *Priest* (Ps.110:4), and *King* (2 Sam.7:12-13). These three officials were always anointed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit who was to perfectly anoint the Christ, the Messiah (Mt.3:16; Mk.1:10-11; Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:32-33). (See note—Lk.3:32-38 for more discussion, verses and fulfillment.)

2 (1:2) **John the Baptist—Prophecy**: there is the promise of God to send a messenger, a forerunner to prepare the way for His Son. God promised through Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets:

> **"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Mal.3:1; cp. Mt.11:10).**

Isaiah, the most famous of the Old Testament prophets, predicted:

> **"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Is.40:3; cp. Mt.3:3).**

Thought 1. The Old Testament and the New Testament are one in purpose. They both point toward "the gospel" of Jesus Christ.

Thought 2. A significant fact is seen here. God knows exactly what is needed to bring the gospel to man. He knew that a forerunner was needed; therefore, He planned and promised to send a forerunner. So it is with every man. God knows what is needed to bring the gospel to all of us. However, the responsibility to respond and to obey rests with us.

> **"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage" (Mt.22:2-3).**
>
> **"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready" (Lk.14:16-17).**
>
> **"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:20).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**
>
> **"I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings" (Jer.35:15).**

3 (1:3-5) **John the Baptist—Ministers—Baptism**: the mission of God's messenger was threefold.

1. John cried, "Prepare" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.1:3). Note that he was crying "in the wilderness." The world is a wilderness full of dangerous, rough, uneven, thorny, and rocky roads. It is easy to get lost in the wilderness of the world, to stumble and injure oneself (see notes—Mt.18:11; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.15:4). It was in the world where the messenger of God had to cry, "Prepare—prepare ye the way of the Lord."

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning" (Mk.13:35).

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Lk.12:35-36).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:20-21).

2. John baptized all who believed in the Messiah (see note—Mt.3:11).
3. John preached repentance and forgiveness of sins. A person was to repent, *to* turn from his sins *to* God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30); then the person was to be baptized, "fulfilling all righteousness" (Mt.3:15). *Baptism was part of the act of repentance.* There was no true repentance without it. A man was to feel sorry for his sin, turning from his sin to God. Part of his turning to God was being baptized. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. The person who truly repented was baptized, and his sins were forgiven (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Forgiveness*—Mt.26:28).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).

4. John's impact was enormous. Note the word "all" (v.5). All were flocking out to him and being baptized. This was shocking, for Jews were never baptized. Baptism was only for Gentile converts to the Jewish faith (see note—Jn.1:24-26).

Thought 1. An enormous impact will be made for God if three things are true:
- ⇒ if the messenger is truly called of God as John was called.
- ⇒ if the messenger lives for God as John lived.
- ⇒ if the messenger witnesses and preaches for God as John witnessed and preached.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(1:3) **Roads—Prepare**: this is a graphic scene. In ancient days, most roads were hardly more than dusty paths. When a king was about to visit a certain place, a runner would run some distance ahead of the king and shout, "Prepare! The king is coming." And the people would immediately begin to clean and level the road for the coming king. John was saying, "I am but a voice crying, 'Make ready! Prepare! The King is coming!'"

4 (1:6) **Self-Denial**: the spirit of God's messenger was self-denial.

1. His living quarters were in "the wilderness," that is, in the country. He deliberately chose to live away from the city with all its distractions and temptations. He chose to live where he could be alone with God in meditation and prayer.
2. His clothing was simple, made of camel's hide with a belt made of some other animal's skin.
3. His food was simple. It was locusts and wild honey (Lev.11:22-23).

Thought 1. John knew that life was more than food and clothing and housing. He knew that he must not allow anything to distract him or the people from God...
- not living in extravagant luxury.
- not being dressed in the latest and most expensive fashion.
- not eating the most tasty dainties.

Therefore, he denied himself; he actually practiced self-denial. What a lesson for all believers, preachers, and laymen alike! (Ro.14:17).

> **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt.16:24).**
>
> **"And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:27).**
>
> **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).**
>
> **"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).**

5 (1:7-8) **Preaching**: the message of God's messenger was twofold.

1. The preeminence of Christ and the *nothingness* of self. John said he himself was less than a slave. Slaves were the ones who loosed the sandals of guests and washed their feet. John said the One coming was so mighty, he was not even worthy to untie His sandals, much less wash His feet.
2. The power of Christ. John said he could minister only physical substance: water baptism, a baptism that could only point toward God. But the One coming, the Messiah, would minister spiritual reality, the baptism of the Spirit of God Himself.

Thought 1. The message of the messenger is to point to Christ and to Him alone.

Thought 2. The glorious message of the gospel is twofold.

1) The "One mightier than I" has come, the One who rises above all men and holds the answer for all men.

> **"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (Jn.3:31).**
>
> **"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (Jn.13:13).**
>
> **"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).**
>
> **"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).**
>
> **"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).**
>
> **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).**

2) The One who can "baptize [immerse] us with the Holy Spirit" of God has come. The One who can fill us with "the divine nature" and save us from "the corruption that is in the world" has come (2 Pt.1:4).

> **"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk.24:49).**
>
> **"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (Jn.7:38-39).**
>
> **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn.14:16-18).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**

	B. Jesus Christ and His Baptism: A Decision for God, 1:9-11 (Mt.3:13-17;Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:29-34)
1 A decision & a submission 2 A beginning & an identification	9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.
3 A commissioning & an empowering	10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:
4 An approval & an encouragement[DSI]	11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

DIVISION I

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

B. Jesus Christ and His Baptism: A Decision for God, 1:9-11

(1:9-11) **Introduction**: Jesus' baptism pictures what happens when a person makes a decision for God.

1. There is a decision for God and a submission to God (v.9).
2. There is a beginning and an identification with God and His people (v.9).
3. There is a commissioning and an empowering (v.10).
4. There is the approval and encouragement of God (v.11).

1 (1:9) **Decision—Sacrifice—Surrender—Jesus Christ—Baptism**: Jesus' baptism involved a decision and a surrender, a momentous decision and a total surrender. Note the words "Jesus came from Nazareth...and was baptized in Jordan." In Nazareth, Jesus had all that most people dream about: a happy home, a close-knit family, a profitable occupation (carpenter), friends, and all the fond memories that accumulate through the years of childhood and youth. Yet, He left it all; He left Nazareth to be baptized by John in the Jordan. Why? Within Jesus' mind was the call of God to launch the mission to save the world, a mission that demanded the sacrifice of everything:

- ⇒ the sacrifice of all that He had in Nazareth.
- ⇒ the sacrifice of a long earthly life. By choosing the mission of God, He was to be killed in only thirty-six months.
- ⇒ the sacrifice of His Godly righteousness. He was to become the sin-bearer for the world (see note, Justification—Ro.5:1; 1 Pt.2:21-24).
- ⇒ the sacrifice of God's presence. In death, God was to forsake Him (see note—Mt.27:46-49).

It was a *momentous decision* for Jesus to leave Nazareth and be baptized.

- ⇒ By being baptized Jesus was leaving Nazareth and *surrendering totally* to God's will and mission to save the world.
- ⇒ By being baptized Jesus was showing what is involved in paying the ultimate price: the price of sacrificing oneself totally for the will of God.
- ⇒ By being baptized Jesus was showing to the world what is involved in making a momentous decision and a total surrender to God.

Thought 1. The decision to follow Jesus is a momentous decision. It involves the total surrender of all we are and have. If we genuinely decide for Jesus, we pay the price of sacrificing self completely. However, we must remember: a decision not to follow Christ will lead to discontent and drifting, a wasted and tragic life.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).**
>
> **"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).**

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

2 (1:9) **Jesus Christ—Baptism**: Jesus' baptism involved a beginning and an identification. His baptism was a *beginning* in that it was the beginning of a new life, a new direction in His life. His baptism was launching the mission of God to save the world. It was an *identification* in that He was identifying with John's ministry. John was proclaiming the coming of the Messiah, the Lamb of God. Through baptism Jesus was identifying Himself as the Messiah, the Lamb of God (see notes—Mt.3:13; 3:15).

Thought 1. The decision to follow Jesus involves both baptism and the identifying of ourselves with Jesus the Messiah, the Lamb of God. If Jesus had not been baptized, He would not have identified Himself as the Messiah, nor would He have been known as the Messiah. Likewise, if we are not baptized, we do not identify ourselves with Jesus, nor are we known to be identified with Jesus.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk.16:16).

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" (Acts 10:48).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

3 (1:10) **Jesus Christ—Baptism**: Jesus' baptism involved a commissioning and an empowering. This is seen in the heavens' opening and the Spirit's descending upon Him.

Jesus' commissioning was a dramatic moment. The word "opened" (schizamenous) really means rent asunder or torn apart. This could mean two things.

1. It could mean a moment like the rays of sunlight breaking through the clouds ever so brilliantly after a thunderstorm.
2. It could mean a moment when God miraculously tore apart the barrier between heaven and earth, allowing Jesus to see into the glory of heaven from where He had come.

Whatever the meaning, Jesus was being commissioned and set apart by heaven itself. God was giving His Son an experience that would make the commissioning unquestionable and unforgettable.

The empowering of Jesus was also a very dramatic moment. The Spirit of God descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. This event was not only identifying Jesus as the Messiah, it was declaring that the Spirit of God and His power were upon Jesus. This man, Jesus of Nazareth, was being empowered by God's very own Spirit to do the work of God (see note—Jn.1:32-33).

There was also something else symbolized in the dove. The work which Jesus was to do would be the work of peace and purity (again, see note—Jn.1:32-33 for the symbolism of the dove). (Note: Luke 3:21 points out that the Spirit came to Jesus while He was praying *after having been baptized*. The Spirit's descending upon Him, not in Him, was definitely an empowering experience as well as an identifying experience.)

Thought 1. Every true believer is commissioned and empowered by God to do the work of God. Some commissioning experiences are dramatic (the heavens are torn apart); other experiences are not so dramatic (the still small voice of God's Spirit tugs at the heart with an awareness that one is called). Nevertheless, every true believer is commissioned and empowered by God's Spirit.

The *awareness* of the commission and power, however, is a different matter. Too many are not aware of God's commission and of the Spirit's presence within. What makes the difference? The first two points: one's decision and submission, one's beginning and identification. Too many of us lack a consistent commitment in both steps. As a result, we wander through life unaware of God's commission and the presence of the Spirit of God empowering us to do the task.

⇒ Too many of us do not make a decision to follow Christ totally; we do not surrender all we are and have to Christ. Therefore, we are not aware of the great call and commission of Christ.

⇒ Too many of us do not begin with Christ; we just never identify with Him. We may be baptized, but we never follow through with Christ. The world never knows that we are a follower of Christ, not a committed, genuine follower.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" (Acts 26:16).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:20).

"Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Is.6:8).

4 (1:11) **Jesus Christ—Baptism**: Jesus' baptism involved God's approval and encouragement. As Man, Jesus Christ needed the perfect assurance of God. So much was being required of Him, and He was to pay such an enormous price to serve God (see note, Decision—Mk.1:9). He needed some clear indication, some special strength, some encouragement from God. What God did was profound: "There came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." (See note—Mt.3:16-17.)

Thought 1. God meets the needs of His servants for assurance. He sees to it that we *know* His will and gives *assurance* that we are doing His will. He speaks to our hearts and gives signs of approval and *encouragement*.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:19-20).

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him" (Ps.28:7).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:11) **Old Testament Reference**: cp. Ps.2:7; Is.42:1.

	C. Jesus Christ and His Temptation: Dealing with Temptation, 1:12-13 (Mt.4:1-11; Lk.4:1-13)
1 Temptation follows decision **2 Temptation is used by the Spirit** **3 Temptation is a wilderness experience** **4 Temptation is of Satan** **5 Temptation is met by God's help**	12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

DIVISION I

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

C. Jesus Christ and His Temptation: Dealing with Temptation, 1:12-13

(1:12-13) **Introduction**: the importance of understanding temptation cannot be overstressed. The believer faces temptation every day of his life. For this reason, he needs to gain a thorough understanding of just what temptation is and how it is to be overcome. (See outlines and notes—Mt.4:1-11 for more discussion.)

1. Temptation follows a person's decision (v.12).
2. Temptation is used by the Spirit (v.12).
3. Temptation is a wilderness experience (v.13).
4. Temptation is of Satan (v.13).
5. Temptation is met by God's help (v.13).

1 (1:12) **Jesus Christ—Decision—Temptation**: Jesus was tempted right after making the decision to be baptized. His baptism was a momentous decision, for Jesus was declaring His total commitment to God and to God's mission. The decision was to lead to His death in less than thirty-six months. The point to see is that His decision was immediately attacked by Satan. Jesus was tempted immediately after His clear-cut decision to follow God and to launch God's great mission of salvation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.4:1-11 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Great and wonderful things happen to a person who makes a decision for God. (See Deeper Study # 1, Salvation—Ro.1:16 for discussion.) Satan, as the adversary of God and man, knows this; therefore, temptation always follows a decision for God. Satan always fights against a person when that person...

- is set free from selfishness and sin by God, when that person is set at liberty to live a life of love and joy and peace. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Eph.1:7.)

> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**

- is set free from death and the fear of death by God, when that person is set at liberty to live a life of confidence and assurance—the confidence and assurance that he has become a child of God.

> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Ro.8:15).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

- is set free from condemnation and hell by God, when that person is set at liberty to live life knowing that he will never be condemned by God, that he will live forever with God, when that person knows that nothing will ever separate him from the love of Christ.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:38-39).

Just imagine all that is involved in the above: the depth and the richness, the assurance and the confidence, the joy and the motivation that fills a life that receives so much. And not only does this happen to the person who truly makes a decision for God, but all this shows itself through the person's life to others. The family and friends of the new convert see the depth and richness of his changed life. The result is heartwarming: usually some of them also come to know Christ as their personal Savior.

The adversary to God and man is bound to tempt the new convert. Satan is bound to attack, attempting to overthrow the person's new decision for God. He attacks by causing the person to doubt, to question, to choose another way, to undertake another task, to seek something else. Satan knows that he cannot leave the new convert alone lest that person become strong in the Lord and in his witness for the Lord.

2 (1:12) **Jesus Christ—Temptation—Trials**: temptation is used by the Spirit. The words "driveth Him" (ekballei) mean to thrust, to cast forth, to drive forth, to force. Jesus is compelled with great force to go into the wilderness. He was driven by the Spirit to be tried. He was to be tried and tested *not to make Him fall*, but to make Him stronger and better prepared to do great things for God (see note, pt.3—Mt.4:1).

Thought 1. Trials and temptations are to be stepping stones, not stumbling stones. They are opportunities for the Spirit of God to use in making us *stronger* and *more able* to do greater things for God.

"We glory in tribulation [trials, temptations]...knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope [hope in receiving and doing things for God]" (Ro.5:3-4).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jas.1:2-5).

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor.12:8-10).

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.1:7).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13).

"And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted" (Rev.2:3).

Thought 2. After a significant decision or a mountaintop experience, it is very wise to get alone with God. One must be spiritually strengthened and prepared to follow through with the new decision.

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:22).

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (Ps.73:28).

"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps.145:18).

3 (1:13) **Jesus Christ—Temptation—Wilderness**: temptation is a wilderness experience. It is a discomforting, apprehensive, and threatening experience. Jesus faced all three experiences in His wilderness temptation. (See notes—Mt.4:2-4; 4:5-7; 4:8-10 for a detailed discussion of Jesus' temptation.)

⇒ He was discomforted in that His peace and security in God were disturbed. He was made immediately aware of another choice, a choice that aroused His flesh to desire the forbidden thing: bread created from rocks. (See note—Mt.4:2-4.)

⇒ He was apprehensive in that He was made immediately aware that a decision must be made, a decision that could be wrong and could result in bad consequences.

⇒ He was threatened in that if He yielded to the temptation, the consequences of sin would result and God's purpose would not be fulfilled.

Thought 1. Temptation is a wilderness experience, that is, a worldly experience. Temptation is of the wilderness and comes from the wilderness. Temptation is not civilized, comforting, peaceful, secure or safe. Note three things about the wilderness (world).

1) The life of the wilderness...
   - is covered with rocks and precipices (difficult, threatening situations) which can trip and injure.
   - is often a desert (dry, empty, purposeless times) in which a person can die from thirst and hunger.
   - is camouflaged with serpents (food and drink, worldly deceptions) which will strike and poison.
   - is filled with ravenous beasts (both people and things, whether friend or foe) which will consume.

2) The danger of the wilderness is that rocks, desert, serpents, or beasts will injure and consume us.
3) The call of the wilderness is adventuresome, stimulating, challenging, and exciting. It appeals to the *nature of man*.

> **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).**
>
> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"We all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph.2:3).**
>
> **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

Thought 2. God wills us to conquer the wild, to triumph over the wilderness experience, but His presence and power are needed to conquer and triumph. Note that God sent Jesus into the wilderness only after the Spirit had come upon Him.

> **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**
>
> **"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:18).**
>
> **"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).**

4 (1:13) **Jesus Christ—Temptation**: temptation is of Satan; it is not of God (see note—Mt.4:1 for discussion. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.4:1-2; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. So few people know and accept that temptation is of Satan. But the fact remains that temptation is a lie and a deception. It comes from the father of lies and deception. We must, therefore, reject temptation, for temptation kills a person eternally.

> **"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side" (Mt.13:19).**
>
> **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (Jn.8:44).**
>
> **"And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him" (Jn.13:2).**
>
> **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**

5 (1:13) **Jesus Christ—Temptation**: temptation is met by God's help. This is seen in three experiences of Jesus.

1. He was with the wild beasts of the wilderness, yet they did not devour Him. The beasts of the wilderness would have included the leopard, lion, bear, wild boar, jackal, scorpions, and serpents. God protected Jesus from all these for forty days.

2. He was ministered to by angels. Jesus did not have to face the temptations alone. God saw to it that He had whatever provision was necessary.

> **"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Ro.8:31).**
>
> **"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:18).**
>
> **"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (Jas.1:2-5).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas.4:7).**
>
> **"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).**

3. He relied upon God's Word to answer the temptations (see outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.4:1-11; Lk.4:1-13 for discussion).

> **Thought 1.** The armor of God is the glorious provision God provides for the believer's victory over temptation (see outline and notes—Eph.6:10-20 for discussion).

	D. Jesus Christ and His Messsage: The Good News of the Gospel, 1:14-15 (Mt.4:12-17; Lk.4:14, 19-20; Jn.4:1-4)
1 Jesus preached the gospel[DS1] a. In Galilee b. After John was put in prison **2 The time is fulfilled** **3 The Kingdom of God is at hand** **4 Repent & believe**[DS2]	14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

DIVISION I

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

D. Jesus Christ and His Message: The Good News of the Gospel, 1:14-15

(1:14-15) **Introduction**: the *good news* of the gospel includes three emphatic points.

1. Jesus preached the gospel (v.14).
2. The time is fulfilled (v.15).
3. The Kingdom of God is at hand (v.15).
4. Repent and believe (v.15).

1 (1:14) **Jesus Christ—Order of Events—Galilee**: Jesus preached the gospel. Mark says Jesus began to preach the gospel throughout Galilee when John was put in prison. This statement serves as a date to fix the approximate time that Jesus began to minister in Galilee. One year had passed between Mk.1:13 and 1:14. Mark does not cover the events that took place between the temptation of Jesus and the imprisonment of John the Baptist. They are covered by Jn.1:19-4:54. Apparently, the order of events was this:

1. Two of John's disciples, Andrew and Peter, became followers of Jesus right after Jesus' baptism (Jn.1:35-42).
2. The very next day, Jesus, accompanied by Andrew and Peter, left Judea and went into Galilee. It was there that Philip and Nathaniel became followers of Jesus (Jn.1:43-51), and that the first miracle took place at Cana (Jn.2:1-11).
3. Jesus then took His family and His followers and moved to Capernaum, which was to become His headquarters (see note—Mt.4:12-13). But He stayed there only a few days, probably just long enough to move His family's belongings.
4. The Passover was at hand, so Jesus went to Jerusalem to celebrate it (Jn.2:13). It was while there that the first cleansing of the temple and the conversation with Nicodemus about the new birth took place (Jn.2:14-3:1f).
5. Jesus then began to move about Judea and to openly preach and baptize (Jn.3:22). But His ministry posed a problem for John and aroused the opposition of the religious leaders. Consequently, He left Judea and returned to Galilee (Jn.3:23-4:3).
6. It was at this point that Mark (and also Matthew) picked up the story of Jesus' ministry. The reasons why Jesus chose Galilee to be the center for most of His ministry should be closely read (see notes—Mt.4:12; 4:12-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:14) **Gospel**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—1 Cor.15:1-11. Cp. Ro.1:1-4.

2 (1:15) **Fulness of Time**: first, the gospel declares that time is fulfilled. The time is fulfilled for what? For the coming of Christ, God's Messiah. It was time for the salvation of man to come upon the world scene. Two things were meant by "the time is fulfilled" or "the fulness of time" (Gal.4:4).

1. World and religious events were ready for the coming of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.4:4 for discussion).
   a. The law had done its educational work. It had shown through the Jewish nation that men are terrible transgressors. Despite all of God's favor and blessings, man still failed to worship God in love. The world now had a picture of the depraved heart of man. (Cp. Ro.3:10-18 for a clear description of man's sinfulness.)
   b. The world was full of people spiritually starved. The worship of self, of pleasure, of gods, of philosophical ethics left many empty and barren. The soul was now ready to have its hunger met.
   c. The world was at peace under Roman rule. The world was an open door for the spread of the gospel—without any restraint.
   d. The world spoke Greek as a basic language. This made communication possible with many from all over the world.

e. The world had a system of roads for mass travel. This allowed Christian missionaries to reach the farthest parts of the earth. It also brought commercial travellers to metropolitan centers where Christian believers were concentrated.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"[God's elect] in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Tit.1:2).

"Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb.9:26).

2. Prophetic events were ready for the coming of Christ. God had foretold that Elijah must *first* come and prepare the way (Is.40:3; Mal.3:1). Elijah came in the person of John the Baptist (Mt.11:10). But now John was passing from the scene. His ministry of preparing the way for the Messiah was completed. It was now time for the Messiah to appear in force, proclaiming the glorious gospel of God's kingdom.

Matthew and Peter, as well as Mark, stress that "the time is fulfilled" for the Messiah to appear. The fact that the time was stressed so much points to Jesus as the true Messiah and gives additional proof to His Messiahship.

"Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee....From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.4:12, 17).

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached" (Acts 10:36-37).

Thought 1. Note two significant applications.

1) God prepared the way for His Son by moving world events. He controlled history and events, and He controls all events and circumstances for the sake of His people.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

2) God fulfilled His promise to prepare the way for His Son. He will fulfill His promises to believers. He prepares the way for every genuine believer, running ahead of the believer to take care of him.

"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Ro.4:21).

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor.1:20).

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps.23:4).

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:2).

3 (1:15) **Kingdom of God**: second, the gospel declares that the Kingdom of God is at hand (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for discussion).

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk.16:16).

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk.17:20-21).

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).

"And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor [in spirit]: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk.6:20).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3, 5).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

4 (1:15) **Repentance—Believe**: third, the gospel declares that a person must repent and believe the gospel. Both repentance and belief are essential.

1. Repentance by itself does not satisfy the law which was formerly broken. A person may repent and change from his former life, but repentance is not enough. Payment and satisfaction must be made for the laws he has already broken. This is why a person must believe in the *good news* about Jesus Christ. Jesus kept the law perfectly. He lived a sinless life (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 7:26; 1 Pt.1:19; 2:22). He was perfectly righteous. As such, He satisfied God perfectly. He stood as the Perfect Man, the Ideal Man, the Pattern of what every man should be. And as the *Ideal Man He could stand for every man* and offer Himself to God as the *Ideal Payment*, the *Ideal Satisfaction* for all who had broken the law of God. This is the glorious gospel, the *good news* preached by Jesus Christ throughout Galilee. The person who becomes acceptable to God is the person who repents and believes in the gospel, who believes that Jesus is God's Son (Mk.1:1), that Jesus is the *Ideal Man* who has made the perfect payment, the perfect satisfaction for our sins. Jesus is the propitiation for sins (see notes—Ro.3:25; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Jn.2:2. Also see note, *Justification*—Ro.5:1.)

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:25-26).**
>
> **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).**
>
> **"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:22-24).**

2. Faith by itself does not satisfy the law. Faith without repentance, without a true change of life, is insincere. It is profession only. It presumes upon God, thinking He will excuse a self-centered life just like a grandfather who unwisely pampers and indulges a spoiled grandchild. Faith in Christ, in His satisfaction for sin, and repentance are both essential to enter the Kingdom of God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30 for more discussion.)

> **"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).**
>
> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:15) **Believe**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 5:32; note—Ro.10:16-17; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.10:38 for discussion.

	E. Jesus Christ and His Disciples: The Kind of Person Called, 1:16-20 (Mt.4:18-22; Lk.5:1-11; Jn.1:35-51)	fishers of men. 18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.	a. Their call b. Their response: Immediate & costly—gave up their business
1 They were industrious, hard-working men[DS1]	16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.	19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.	**3 They were cooperative men**
2 They were visionary men: Looking for the Messiah & ready to follow Him	17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become	20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.	**4 They were successful, but sacrificial & considerate men**

DIVISION I

THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL: JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, 1:1-20

E. Jesus Christ and His Disciples: The Kind of Person Called, 1:16-20

(1:16-20) **Introduction—Call**: Jesus called simple men. Note that they were *not*...

- religious leaders.
- powerful men, not the political leaders of the nation's ruling body, the Sanhedrin (see note, Sanhedrin—Mt.26:59).
- of the priestly or ministerial profession.
- students in the schools of higher learning.

Very simply, they were ordinary men, simple laymen engaged in the affairs of life just like all the laymen of their day. Having said this, however, a question needs to be asked. If these men were just ordinary people, why did Jesus call them instead of calling the more gifted? The answer lies in some very special qualities that the disciples possessed. They did have some very special qualities that made them stand out from the average layman. This passage gives a picture of these qualities, a picture of the kind of person Jesus calls. (See outline and note—Mt.4:18-22 for additional thoughts on all these points.)

1. They were industrious, hard-working men (v.16).
2. They were visionary men: looking for the Messiah and ready to follow Him (v.17-18).
3. They were cooperative men (v.19).
4. They were successful, but sacrificial, considerate men (v.20).

1 (1:16) **Believers—Work**: the disciples of Jesus were industrious, hard-working men. "Jesus saw Simon and Andrew casting a net into the sea." A little farther up the lake "He saw James...and John his brother...mending their nets" (v.19). Jesus has no use for the lazy, slow-moving, sloppy, nonchalant, disinterested, uncommitted workman. The person who Jesus calls is an industrious, hard-working person. A study of God's call to various persons throughout Scripture will make this fact crystal clear. For example:

⇒ Compare the call of Amos.

> **"Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a *herdman*, and a *gatherer* of sycomore fruit: and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (Amos 7:14-15).**

⇒ Compare the call of Elisha.

> **"So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him" (1 Ki.19:19).**

⇒ Compare the call of Saul of Tarsus, a man who was anything but lazy (Acts 9:1f).

> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**

Thought 1. Note what Jesus said:

> **"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch" (Mk.13:34).**
>
> **"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:12-13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:16) **Sea of Galilee—Lake Gennesaret—Sea of Tiberias**: a fresh water lake in northern Palestine. At its widest points, it was only about 13 miles north to south and 8 miles east to west. It would not be called a sea today because of its small size. There are several important facts to note about the Lake.

1. The Lake was known by several names: the Sea of Galilee (Mt.4:18; 15:29; Mk.1:16; 7:31); the Sea of Tiberias (Jn.6:1; 21:1); the Lake of Gennesaret (Lk.5:1); and simply the "Sea" (Jn.6:16-25) or the "Lake" (Lk.5:2; 8:22). In the Old Testament it was called the Sea of Chinnereth (meaning heart shaped, Num.34:11; Dt.3:17; Josh.13:27) or Chinneroth (Josh.12:3; 1 Ki.15:20).
2. The Lake was surrounded by some of the richest and most heavily populated areas of Palestine. Large towns flourished along its shores, towns which play a prominent role in Scripture: Capernaum (see outline and notes—Mt.4:12-13), Bethsaida (Mk.6:45), Chorazin (Lk.10:13), Magdala (Mt.15:39), Gadara (Mk.5:1).
3. The Lake was subject to violent storms. It sat 680 feet below sea level which gave the Lake a warm climate, but it was in a pocket-like basin surrounded by steep, fast-rising hills (2000 feet high) and funnel-like mountains. The funnels or deep ravines running down through the mountains have resulted from eons of erosion. When cold-fronts move in with their fierce winds, the cold whips through the funnel-like gorges and mixes with the warm temperatures of the Lake. Unpredictable and terrifying storms result (Mt.8:23-27; Mk.4:35-41; Lk.8:22-25).

2 (1:17-18) **Call**: the disciples of Jesus were visionary men, men who were looking for the Messiah and ready to follow Him no matter the cost. This was the *quality* that distinguished the disciples from many others. Some lay persons possessed the other qualities of the disciples (as they do in every generation), but this particular quality was found in few, if in any other men. The fourth quality was a willingness to sacrifice all in order to follow Christ. Many were looking for the Messiah, but few were actually ready to follow Him. Few if any others would pay the cost of giving up their businesses and of immediately following Jesus. But these men were willing to follow Jesus, and they did follow Him.

Thought 1. Few people have a strong vision—a vision so strong that they are willing to pay any price to follow Jesus. Giving up their profession or business, home or environment, family or friends is just too costly. They lack the vision.

> **"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Mt.10:37-39).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

Thought 2. Jesus calls a person to a life of work, not to a life of ease and comfort. He calls a person to invest his life, not to waste his life.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).**
>
> **"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).**

Thought 3. Note that the primary call is to become "fishers of men," not to become teachers, preachers, counselors, administrators, builders, fund raisers or anything else. Yet, how easily we obscure and camouflage the evangelistic ministry of the church.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20; cp. Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim.2:2-3).**

3 (1:19) **Call**: the disciples of Jesus were cooperative men. They were brothers, and yet they were working together. The fact that they were working together says at least three things.

1. They had *good* parents who had taught them to love and care for one another.
2. They came from a closely knit family, a family that worked together.
3. They followed in the steps of their parents' teaching, maintaining a brotherly spirit throughout life.

Thought 1. The disciples' brotherly, cooperative spirit shows us three things.

1) The need for a brotherly spirit: the kind of spirit Christ desires of His followers. The kind of kingdom Christ is building is a kingdom of followers with a brotherly spirit.

> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
>
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12; cp. Jn.13:35; 1 Pt.1:22).**
>
> **"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Ro.12:10).**

2) The need for reaching families: brothers and sisters reaching each other.

> **"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas" (Jn.1:41-42).**
>
> **"So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house" (Jn.4:53).**
>
> **"And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us" (Acts 16:15).**
>
> **"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).**

3) The need for parents to train up their children in the way they should go (see outline and notes—Eph.6:1-4; Col.3:20-21).

> **"And thou shalt teach them [God's words] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).**
>
> **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr.22:6).**
>
> **"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph.6:4).**

4 (1:20) **Call**: the disciples of Jesus were successful, but sacrificial and considerate men. Zebedee and his sons, James and John, were successful businessmen. Note: the sons left their father with "hired servants." Perhaps this is the reason John was able to enter the palace of the High Priest when Jesus was being tried for treason (Jn.18:15f). He probably provided fish for the palace. (See notes—Mk.10:35-37; Jn.18:15-18.)

Note two significant facts about what is said.

1. James and John, despite their success as fellow laborers with their father, sacrificed their part of the business. They were either present owners or would be future owners by inheritance. They gave it all up to follow Jesus. This, too, was a rare quality found in few persons.
2. James and John were considerate of their father. They did not leave him alone; they would have never done that! They cared for him; they left him with "hired servants."

Thought 1. How many would sacrifice their inheritance to follow Jesus?

> **"One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk.10:21).**
>
> **"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).**
>
> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**

Thought 2. How many adults care enough for their parents to see to it that they have plenty of help in tending their affairs? The kind of person Jesus calls is a considerate person.

> **"For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Mk.7:10).**
>
> **"But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite [repay] their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God....But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim.5:4, 8).**
>
> **"Thou shalt rise up before the hoary [aged, elderly] head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:32).**

	II. THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35
	A. Jesus' Teaching and Its Impact: Launching a New Ministry, 1:21-22 (Lk.4:31-32)
1 He began with worship: Immediately—in the synagogue[DSI,2] **2 He seized the opportunity to teach** **3 He astonished the crowd** a. His teaching (see vs.14-15) b. His authority	21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

A. Jesus' Teaching and Its Impact: Launching a New Ministry, 1:21-22

(1:21-22) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Ministry**: Jesus was now in the midst of launching His ministry in full force. It might be said that this was the beginning, the opening of His ministry. What Jesus did as He launched forth is important for the believer to see as he goes forth serving his Lord.

1. Jesus began with worship: immediately—in the synagogue (v.21).
2. Jesus seized the opportunity to teach (v.21).
3. Jesus astonished the crowd (v.22).

1 (1:21) **Worship**: Jesus began His ministry with worship—*immediately*. Note the words "straightway [immediately] on the sabbath day He entered into the synagogue." (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.1:21; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.4:23 for a discussion on the synagogue.)

This says several significant things.

1. Jesus launched His ministry in worship. A new ministry should always begin in worship. It should be bathed in worship.
2. Jesus was faithful to *weekly worship in the synagogue*. The synagogue, with its leaders and its worshippers, was far from perfect; yet on the Sabbath day, Jesus entered and worshipped faithfully. Such an example leaves all without excuse.

> **"And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue" (Mt.12:9).**
>
> **"And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught" (Mk.1:21).**
>
> **"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read" (Lk.4:16).**
>
> **"But when they [Paul and his companions] departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down" (Acts 13:14).**
>
> **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:21) **Synagogue** (synagoge): means a gathering, a community of people. It can also mean the building in which the gathering took place. Synagogues were often held in homes. In fact, if ten Jews lived in a community, they were bound by law to conduct a synagogue meeting someplace. If there were enough Jewish citizens in a place and the local laws allowed, they constructed a synagogue building. There is no sure mention of synagogues in the Old Testament, but they are mentioned over fifty times in the New Testament.

Synagogues began to rise either during or right after the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity. The leaders became convinced that the nation could never survive unless its people really knew and practiced the law of God. Therefore, it was established that wherever ten or more Jews lived, they were to meet together on a regular basis in a synagogue meeting. They were to study and practice the law of God. The growth of synagogues was staggering. The number can be imagined by keeping in mind how the Jews had been deported and dispersed all over the world and by remembering that wherever ten Jews lived, they were to form a synagogue meeting (cp. Lk.4:16f; Acts 9:2).

The head of the synagogue was the Ruler of the Synagogue. He was the administrator, handling the business affairs and overseeing the services. He arranged for speakers and readers and the men who were to pray (cp. Mk.5:22; Lk.13:14; Acts 18:8). There was also the chazzan or sexton or minister. He was in charge of the sacred scrolls or Scripture, the teaching of the law in actual class sessions, and the care and maintenance of the synagogue building (cp. Lk.4:20).

The service of the synagogue meeting was very simple. There was prayer, the reading of the Scripture (scroll), and an exposition of the Scripture. (Cp. Lk.4:16f; Acts 13:14-52 for a picture of two services.)

As one reads the New Testament, there are two important facts to remember about the synagogue. (1) Its primary purpose was to teach the Word of God. All other functions were secondary. (2) There was no permanent preacher or teacher. It was the practice to call upon both local and visiting teachers to give an exposition of the Scripture.

These two facts explain why Jesus, and later the apostles, were able to find an open pulpit in the synagogues as they carried out their mission throughout the world (cp. Acts 3:1; 10:2; 13:5; 13:14-52; 18:4). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.4:23.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:21) **Synagogue**: it is interesting to note that a Gentile centurion built this particular synagogue and gave it to the Jews as a special gift. There were both Jews and Gentile proselytes present as Jesus ministered. (Cp. Lk.7:1-10, esp.5.)

2 (1:21) **Teaching—Time—Initiative**: Jesus seized the opportunity to teach. Note the words "straightway [immediately], He entered into the synagogue, and taught." The idea is that He excitedly entered and immediately began to teach. This was the very day He was to launch His ministry; this was the first chance He had to take the podium and teach. He immediately rushed forth, seizing the opportunity.

Thought 1. Opportunities must be seized when they present themselves. We must not let them pass. Several things can make us miss opportunities.

1) Not looking for opportunities.
2) Not grasping for the opportunities at the right time.
3) Not having the initiative to grab an opportunity when it arises.
4) Not handling the opportunity properly.

Thought 2. Jesus utilized the moment. His time was short, so He seized the opportunity to teach. Time is short. We must use every minute to the fullest, for the night is coming when no man can work. There are several mistakes made with time.

1) We can lose time: just let it pass, never seize the opportunity.
2) We can ignore time: pay no attention to it, give it little if any thought.
3) We can neglect time: be unconcerned and non-caring, fail to realize its potential and exactly what could be achieved with its proper use.
4) We can abuse time: use time to do the opposite of what we should be doing; misuse time by using it half-heartedly, sloppily, inefficiently.

> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).**
>
> **"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor.7:29-31).**
>
> **"Attend upon the Lord without distraction" (1 Cor.7:35).**
>
> **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:15-16).**
>
> **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).**
>
> **"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps.90:12).**
>
> **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl.12:1).**

3 (1:22) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: Jesus astonished the crowd. The word "astonished" (ekplessonto) is a strong and expressive word. Its literal meaning is to be *struck in mind*, to *be astonished*. The people were stricken, stirred, aroused, moved by the Lord's teaching.

Jesus astonished the crowd for two reasons.

1. His message was very different (see outline and notes—Mk.1:14-15).
2. His authority was strikingly different. Note the words, "He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." Five comparisons will show this.

a. Tradition vs. authority. Other teachers relied upon esteemed men, their traditions and teachings, and quoted them as their source of authority, but not Jesus. He taught with a personal authority; He spoke independently of all others. He spoke with a certainty, a positiveness, a finality that no one else had ever done.
b. Form vs. power. Other teachers stressed ritual, ceremony, and form. Jesus stressed the need and availability of power to overcome the trials and sufferings of life.
c. Humanism (laws) vs. the spiritual (truth). Other teachers reasoned and formulated law after law, teaching that these were the way to real life. Jesus spoke about matters of the heart and life, of the soul and spirit. The answers He gave were spiritual truths, not human thought and rationalism.
d. Religion vs. life. Other teachers preached their religion; Jesus preached life—a life to be lived abundantly and eternally.
e. Profession vs. possession. Other teachers professed to follow God, but they twisted and interpreted the law of God to their own liking. What they followed was their own *man-made religion*. They were anything but followers of God. Jesus practiced and lived what He taught. His life was so different from other teachers that people sat up and took notice of what He had to say.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mk.13:31).

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Lk.4:32).

"The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (Jn.3:2).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him" (Jn.7:16-18).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).

	B. Jesus' Power Over Evil Spirits and Its Impact: Delivering the Most Enslaved, 1:23-28 (Lk.4:33-37)	saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.	**Jesus** a. Jesus rebuked the evil spirit b. The evil spirit obeyed
1 Picture 1: The need of the possessed man a. He was in the synagogue b. He raged & cried out, sensed & recoiled from purity c. He identified Jesus	23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,	27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.	**3 Picture 3: The impact upon people** a. The people were amazed b. The people questioned: What power, what new revelation (doctrine) is this? c. The people spread His fame
2 Picture 2: The Power of	24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him,	28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.	

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

B. Jesus' Power Over Evil Spirits and Its Impact: Delivering the Most Enslaved, 1:23-28

(1:23-28) **Introduction**: man can be delivered from all the forces of evil by the power of Jesus. He can even be delivered from unclean spirits that enslave him, no matter the grip of the enslavement. Jesus has the power to deliver man (Ro.8:31; 1 Jn.4:4). (See outline, notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.8:28-34; notes—17:14-21; Lk.8:26-39.)

1. Picture 1: the need of the possessed man (v.23-24).
2. Picture 2: the power of Jesus (v.25-26).
3. Picture 3: the impact upon people (v.27-28).

1 (1:23-24) **Evil Spirits**: the first picture is that of the possessed man and his need. The words "with an unclean spirit" (en pneumati akatharto) should be translated "in" (en) an unclean spirit. The man was in the grasp, in the possession of the unclean spirit. He was in the grip, captivated by the unclean spirit. He was under the spell, the will of the unclean spirit. To better understand the meaning, think of all the evil in the world, all the evil that occurs every hour and every day. Then note John's words, "The whole world lieth in the wicked [or evil] one" (en to ponero, 1 Jn.5:19). That is, the world lies under the influence, power, bondage, will, and grip of the evil one. In the very same sense, this man was possessed by an unclean spirit. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34 for a discussion of the Bible's teaching on evil spirits. Also see note—Lk.8:26-39.)

Note three things.

1. The possessed man, surprisingly, was in the synagogue. What was he doing there? Was he a regular attender or had he come just to hear Jesus? We are not told. But if he were a regular attender, then the synagogue was spiritually dead. How do we know this? Because the man could attend services time after time and never be helped spiritually.

Thought 1. How many services are *dead*, so *lifeless* that men with evil spirits can sit in the services and never be convicted or helped spiritually?

> **"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof " (2 Tim.3:5).**
>
> **"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept [tradition] of men: therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work [work of judgment] among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Is.29:13-15).**

Thought 2. How many sit in church and hear the Word of God week after week or live among believers and never make a decision to turn from their evil? They sit in service after service and brush shoulders with believers day by day, but they never decisively turn to God.

> **"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).**
>
> **"Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam.15:22).**
>
> **"For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering" (Ps.51:16).**

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

"And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction" (Jer.32:33).

"As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee" (Jer.44:16).

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zech.7:11).

2. The possessed man raged and cried out, sensed and recoiled from purity. The unclean spirit cried out in recognition of three things.

a. The unclean spirit cried, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth?" The unclean spirit was entirely different from the clean spirit of Jesus. Jesus is perfectly pure and sinless. The unclean spirit had nothing to do with the purity of Jesus. The unclean spirit was diametrically opposed to the holiness of Jesus.

Thought 1. Sin, dirt, pollution, and uncleanness do not have a part or a place with Jesus. Jesus has no uncleanness in Him whatsoever.

b. The unclean spirit recognized that Jesus had come to destroy him. Down deep within, the unclean persons know they are to judged and destroyed. They hate and despise, ignore and neglect, hide and rationalize in order to continue their unclean ways. The paradox is that they know they will be judged even while they are sinning and rebelling against God. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).

c. The unclean spirit identified Jesus. He said, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." He confessed Jesus. As James says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (Jas.2:19).

Thought 1. What an indictment against so many! They deny, while devils confess.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:22-23).

Thought 2. Knowing that Jesus is the Holy One of God is not enough. A person has to believe in Christ and love Him and live a clean and pure life.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor.7:1).

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:21).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).

3. The possessed man identified Jesus. This point is so significant it bears repeating: "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God," that is, the Holy Son of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, Evil Spirits—Mt.8:28-34; Son of God—Jn.1:34).

Thought 1. One of the major purposes of Jesus in confronting evil spirits was to prove His Messiahship (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34). He is the Messiah!

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.16:15-17).

"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mt.26:63-64).

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Lk.24:25-26).

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief " (1 Tim.1:15).

Thought 2. The world cries out, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" Why? Because He is the Son of God who demands belief and purity of life, self-denial and a life of sacrifice. "What have we to do with thee...?"

⇒ Wealth cries, "Leave us alone. Let us secure ourselves, build up, and bank more and more."

⇒ Power cries, "Leave us alone. Let us take over, exercise authority, rule and reign, dominate, manuever and manipulate as we will."

⇒ Ego cries, "Leave us alone. Let us seek recognition, attention, esteem, honor, and praise as we wish."

⇒ Flesh cries, "Leave us alone. Let us excite, indulge, stimulate, relax, release, escape, party, revel, and carouse as we desire."

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof " (Ro.13:14).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pt.2:11).

2 (1:25-26) **Jesus Christ—Power—Salvation**: the second picture is that of the power of Jesus.

1. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit. Note the words, "Hold thy peace." Jesus did not accept demonic testimony to His Messiahship. Why? Such acknowledgment was involuntary, that is, of the mind only. It was only the mental knowledge that Jesus was the Son of God. It was not of the heart nor of the will to follow Jesus. It did not come from being born again. The witness Jesus wants is the witness of a man who has made a deliberate decision to profess Him as Lord; the witness of a heart truly changed; the witness of a heart moved by the Spirit of God to confess, "Thou art the Holy One of God" (Mk.8:29; cp. Mk.1:34).

Note also the power of Jesus. He casts the unclean spirit out. How? By His Word, by simply saying, "Come out of him."

Thought 1. Just meditate for a moment upon the power of the Lord's Word. He simply spoke what He willed—for the unclean spirit to come out of the man—and what He willed happened. How we need to learn to depend upon His Word as we confront the unclean spirits of this world!

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel [the Word] of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb.4:12).

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer.23:29).

Thought 2. We must make the true confession of Jesus, the confession of a believing and clean heart.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor.6:17-18).

2. The evil spirit obeyed. Note the words "torn him" (sparasso). The words mean to be convulsed. Apparently the man had a convulsion, jerking to and fro and crying out with a loud voice.

The question is sometimes asked, Why all this? Why such a scene? Why did Jesus not calmly heal the man in a serene atmosphere? There are probably two reasons.

a. The evil and unclean spirits in the world are powerful forces, possessing enormous power to enslave and possess man. Their power could be more clearly seen in a convulsive and noisy scene. People needed to know that the evil and unclean forces of the world are the true enemies of mankind. They are the powerful forces who enslaved men with their dirty, intoxicating, and immoral habits.

b. The man was possessed by an unclean spirit. The convulsion and cry were evidence of the unclean spirit's actually being in the man.

3. The convulsion and cry demonstrated the power and Messiahship of Jesus. Jesus was actually conquering the force of evil within a man, and only God had such a power.

Thought 1. When the unclean spirit of a man is cast out, when a man really changes and is cleansed, he undergoes a convulsive experience. *Conversion* is always a convulsive experience. Change is convulsive.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Ro.6:16-18; cp. Ro.6:19-23).

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Ro.7:23-25).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps.19:7).

3 (1:27-28) **Decision—Jesus Christ, Response to**: the third picture is that of the impact upon people. The people reacted in three ways.

1. They were amazed (ethambethesan), astonished. What the people had witnessed was unbelievable. Using no charms, no invocations, no exorcising devices, Jesus simply said, "Come out of him"; and the unclean spirit was dramatically cast out of the man. The people were shocked and stunned.

2. They questioned and buzzed among themselves, "What *thing* is this? What new power or revelation (doctrine) is this? What is God showing us? Is the revelation, the doctrine, the power from and of the Messiah? 'For with authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him.'" The people were doing just what Jesus had wanted. They were questioning if He were the Messiah.

3. They spread His fame everywhere. Imagine the conversation in the stores, businesses, homes, and streets as people travelled throughout the area and throughout the world.

Thought 1. The impact upon us should be the same. All three responses should characterize us as we witness the power of God in changing and healing lives. Yet, how *gospel-hardened* so many of us become.

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

	C. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon Each One: Caring for the Home & the Individual, 1:29-31 (Mt.8:14-15;Lk.4:38-39)
1 The worship of Jesus brought His presence into a house	29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.
2 The presence of Jesus brought hope to a house	30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.
3 The presence of Jesus brought healing & help to a house	31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.
4 The presence of Jesus brought devotion & service to a house	

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

C. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon Each One: Caring for the Home and the Individual, 1:29-31

(1:29-31) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ cares for the individual and the home. In fact the whole thrust of His heart and purpose in coming to earth was "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10). His care, presence, and power are available to any individual who will invite Him into their home. This glorious truth is clearly demonstrated in this event which took place in Peter's home.

1. The worship of Jesus brought His presence (v.29).
2. The presence of Jesus brought hope to a house (v.30).
3. The presence of Jesus brought healing and help to a house (v.31).
4. The presence of Jesus brought devotion and service to a house (v.31).

1 (1:29) **Worship—Devotion—Jesus Christ, Presence of**: the worship of Jesus brought His presence into a house. It was the Sabbath, and Jesus and His disciples had gone to the synagogue to worship and teach (Mk.1:21-22). The service was now over, and Jesus had apparently entered Peter's home to have lunch. Peter had probably invited Jesus to lunch. The main meal on the Sabbath came right after worship or twelve noon, which was the sixth hour (the Jewish day began at 6 a.m.).

There is a strong picture here. Worship brought Jesus into Peter's home. Peter and the other three apostles had followed Jesus to worship. Upon leaving worship, Peter invited the Lord to be a guest in his home, and Jesus accepted the invitation to fellowship with him and his family.

Thought 1. When a person truly worships the Lord and invites Him into his home, the Lord will enter and fellowship therein. He willingly becomes a guest of anyone who extends the invitation.

> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**

Thought 2. When a person truly worships the Lord, that person is assured of Christ's presence. Christ will live with that person no matter how humble the person's home or dwelling is. If the dwelling is nothing more than a piece of ground under the open sky, the Lord will live with that person.

> **"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:20).**
>
> **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).**
>
> **"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them" (Lk.24:15).**

Thought 3. The person or family who worships is more likely to have the presence of the Lord in their home. Worship and faithfulness to God instill a sense of God's presence in the home more than any other thing.

> **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).**

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

2 (1:30) **Hope**: the presence of Jesus brought hope to a house. Peter's mother-in-law "lay sick of a fever." It was a *great fever*, a burning fever which gripped the woman (Lk.4:38). The area was known for its swamps or marshes which were infested with disease-carrying insects. Note two things.

1. The very moment that Jesus entered the home, hope was aroused. "Immediately they told Him of her." There was a life-threatening sickness, a serious need in the home. One who had the power to help was a guest in the home. Hope was bound to be aroused.
2. The family believed that Jesus cared and could help. Note something: they had not known Jesus long. He was just beginning His ministry, yet they had already learned of His immense compassion and love, and His care and interest for people. Through this experience and many others yet to come, they were to learn to bring all their problems and sufferings to the Lord. Knowing of His care for people was bound to arouse the hope that He would help.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

3 (1:31) **Jesus Christ, Presence of**: the presence of Jesus brought healing and help to a house. Note several facts.

1. Jesus' response to the request was immediate. They told "Him of her [sickness]" and He immediately went to her bedside. He did not ask questions or lay down conditions. He was a guest in Peter's home, and Peter had surrendered his life to the Lord—all he was and had, including His home. Jesus loved Peter for his surrender; therefore, when Peter had a need, the Lord *immediately came* to meet that need.
2. Jesus' touch was full of compassion and authority. He loved and cared, so "He came and took her by the hand." He touched her. (Nothing can compare to a touch given from a heart of love and care. Contrast the touch of the fist, claw, and executioner.) Jesus was full of "the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:10), so He "lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her." His authority was the authority of God, and His power was the power of God.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

Thought 1. Jesus possessed the power to meet Peter's need, that is, to heal Peter's mother-in-law. But note: He was able to help Peter because He was an invited guest in Peter's home. Think what Peter and his family would have missed if they had not invited Jesus into their home!

Thought 2. The power of Jesus' touch is enormous.

⇒ His touch has the power to cleanse from sin.

"And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (Mt.8:3).

⇒ His touch has the power to give sight to the blind.

"Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it" (Mt.9:29-30).

⇒ His touch has the power to bless.

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them....And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them" (Mk.10:13, 16).

⇒ His touch has the power to heal.

"And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue....And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain" (Mk.7:33, 35).

4 (1:31) **Jesus Christ, Presence of—Elderly—Purpose—Ministry**: the presence of Jesus brought devotion and service to a house. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law so that she might serve. He did not heal her to sit and indulge her own whims and fancies and pass the time of her later years doing nothing of real value. She was elderly, the mother of Peter's wife. Jesus healed her so that she might become devoted to Him and become a servant to all. And she fulfilled her purpose: "She ministered unto them."

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

"The aged men [must] be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things" (Tit.2:2-3).

	D. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon People in the Streets: Caring for the Whole World, 1:32-34 (Mt.8:16-17; Lk.4:40-41)
1 Jesus was and can be approached at all hours **2 Jesus was and is to be acknowledged as compassionate** **3 Jesus did and does have an open door for all** **4 Jesus did & will have compassion** a. He healed & will heal b. He restrained and will restrain evil spirits	32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

D. Jesus' Power and Impact Upon People in the Streets: Caring for the Whole World, 1:32-34

(1:32-34) **Introduction**: the world is a paradox. It is filled with both good and evil, and the good and evil are clearly seen at every hand. No matter how much men long for a perfect world, they discover that their world is desperately sick, a world...

- that is so beautiful, yet so corrupt
- that sees love, yet demonstrates hate
- that craves life, yet knows only death
- that desires more, yet deprives so many
- that has plenty, yet is starving
- that desires peace, yet is at war
- that seeks health, yet is sick

Two things are desperately needed in a sick world: (1) hearing the good news that Jesus has the power to help, and (2) coming to Jesus for help. Just imagine! The Son of God is available to help, to solve the problems of the world.

1. Jesus was and can be approached at all hours (v.32).
2. Jesus was and is to be acknowledged as compassionate (v.32).
3. Jesus did and does have an open door for all (v.33).
4. Jesus did and will have compassion (v.34).

1 (1:32) **Jesus Christ, Approachable**: Jesus was and can be approached at all hours. What happened is interesting. The people had heard about Jesus' teaching in the synagogue and the two miracles that had taken place. The news had spread like wildfire. It was also the Sabbath, and a Jew was not allowed to carry any kind of burden for any distance on the Sabbath. This included walking only a short distance; it even included carrying a sick person for medical help, unless it was a matter of life and death. Therefore, the people were forced by law to wait until the Sabbath was over to approach Jesus. The Jewish Sabbath began at 6 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m. Time was judged by sunrise and sundown. As soon as night came, family and friends brought their sick to Jesus, flocking to Him.

> **Thought 1.** Note when the people came to Jesus. It was not during the day, but at night. It was an inopportune time, yet they came. The hour of the day was not going to keep them away. Their sense of desperation drove them to Jesus.
>
> **Thought 2.** Jesus was tired, very fatigued. The day had been long and full of stress, yet He made Himself available, even at an odd hour. A person can approach Jesus anyplace, anytime—at any hour of the day or night.
>
> > **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give your rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-30).**
> >
> > **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Lk.4:18).**

2 (1:32) **Jesus Christ—Compassion—Gospel**: Jesus was and is to be acknowledged as compassionate. Note the words, "When the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased." They rushed to Him to ask if He would help.

They simply accepted the fact that He would help, believing and trusting in *what they had heard.*

1. They had heard that He had the power to help.

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

2. They had heard that He was compassionate, caring, and more than willing to help.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you"(1 Pt.5:7).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

Thought 1. What the people had heard is the crux of the gospel: Jesus has the power to help, and He cares about helping and will help. All that a person needs to do is believe the message and come to Him.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

3 (1:33) **Access**: Jesus did have and still does have an open door for all. "All the city was gathered together at the door."

1. The news of such power and compassion could not be overlooked and ignored. It had to be searched out and sought. It would be foolish to ignore the possibility for help if help were available for the asking. Jesus was present and power was available. It was simply a matter of *gathering* at His door for help.

Thought 1. How many hear and witness the power of Jesus in the lives of family and friends, yet they ignore and overlook Him?

2. The crowd in the streets included three primary groups: the desperate who needed help, the family and friends who brought the desperate, and the observer. The observer was the curious person who had heard about Jesus and wanted to see what He was like. Note he, too, was "gathered together" with those who came to Jesus for help.

Thought 1. Our imagination makes us wonder how the observer or the curious responded to Jesus. Did they, too, begin to see needs which Jesus could meet, or did they detach themselves from the power of Him who had come with the message of God? Every church has its curiosity seekers who desperately need to see what Jesus can do for them. The great tragedy is that they are detached from Jesus. They have never experienced the power of God.

Thought 2. Note that Jesus helps the person out in the street. He does not pick and choose whom He helps; He helps all. All can claim His power if they will but come to Him.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

4 (1:34) **Jesus Christ—Power—Compassion—Salvation**: Jesus did and will have compassion. He demonstrated His Messiahship by manifesting His compassion and power over all.

1. He healed and will heal. The people were gripped with troubled minds and suffering bodies, and He healed many.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).
"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps.103:3).
"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (Ps.147:3).
"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

2. He restrained and will restrain evil spirits (see outline and notes—Mk.1:25-26 for discussion).

Thought 1. The world is a diseased and suffering world brought on by a myriad of selfish sins and demon-like creatures. Is there a Savior with the power to heal and deliver, to save and set free? Yes! Jesus Christ, "the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).
"The thief [false teacher] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).
"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).
"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).

	E. Jesus' Source of Power & Its Impact: What is the Source of Power, 1:35-39 (Lk.4:42-44)	were with him followed after him. 37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. 38 And he said unto them,	**wide mission**
1 Jesus' sense of prayer a. When: Morning—a great while before day b. Where: Solitary place c. Why: Three reasons **2 Jesus' sense of a world-**	35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. 36 And Simon and they that	let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. 39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.	**3 Jesus' faithfulness** a. Preached everywhere b. Healed—cast out devils

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

E. Jesus' Source of Power and Its Impact: What is the Source of Power, 1:35-39

(1:35-39) **Introduction—Power**: Where does the servant of God get power? This passage reveals in unmistakable terms the sources of Jesus' power.

1. Jesus' sense of prayer (v.35).
2. Jesus' sense of a worldwide mission (v.36-38).
3. Jesus' faithfulness (v.39).

1 (1:35) **Prayer—Spectacular, The**: Jesus' first source of power was His *sense of prayer*. Note three facts about Jesus' prayer life in this passage.

1. When Jesus prayed. He prayed "in the morning, rising up a *great while* before day." Remember the day before had been the Sabbath, an extremely tiring day. He had taught and had expended enormous energy in teaching and ministering (Mk.5:30). He had been up late at night ministering to the whole city that had flocked to the house where He was staying (cp. v.21-34). Every muscle in His body must have ached, craving rest; yet, "rising up a great while before day, He went out into a solitary place, and there prayed."

There is another critical point of instruction here as well. Early morning prayer must have been the habit of Jesus, for the fact that Jesus prayed in the early morning hours made a lasting impression upon the disciples. Remember, this is the launch of Jesus' ministry, probably the first time the disciples had an opportunity to observe Jesus' prayer life. Mark gives a detailed description, the facts of which had probably come from Peter. Mark certainly felt that the fact was important enough to emphasize, for he not only shares what Jesus' ministry was like, he also shares what Jesus' prayer life was like.

2. Where Jesus prayed. Note the words "departed into a solitary place." The solitary place is not identified. It could have been someplace out in the countryside, a quiet orchard, or an abandoned building. The fact of importance is that He had a place where He could be alone with God. He needed to be alone with God.

> **Thought 1.** If Jesus, the Son of Man, needed so much time alone with God in prayer, how much more do we? What an indictment against so many believers and their prayer life!
>
> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).**
>
> **"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).**

3. Why Jesus prayed. At least three reasons are indicated in this passage.
   a. Jesus was tired. The day before had drained and exhausted Him, probably to the point that every muscle in His body ached. Teaching and ministering all day sapped the strength out of His body, both mentally and emotionally. In Jesus' case it actually drained virtue out of Him (Mk.5:30). Mentally and emotionally, He was utterly exhausted. At such times the body does not want to move and the mind wanders more easily, making man more subject to temptation; therefore, prayer is desperately needed.
   b. Jesus was launching His first missionary or evangelistic tour. Jesus sensed deeply that He had come forth to be an evangelist (v.38). Right before He was to launch His first tour, there was a great need to pray. The needs of people were great, and their demands would be incessant. He would be bombarded by the needs of men and by the attacks of both Satan and institutional religion. The days would be long, taxing, and exhausting. He needed the strength of God and a special anointing as He went forth launching this very special mission.
   c. Jesus was confronted with the applause and praise of men. This presented the same temptation that He had faced earlier: to secure the loyalty of men by the spectacular (see note—Mt.4:5-7). Seeing the miracles, men were ready to follow Him for what they could get out of Him. Jesus needed His purpose reinforced and a special infusion of God's strength to withstand the temptation of men's applause and loyalty—applause and loyalty that arose from shallow and surface commitments.

2 (1:36-38) **Mission—Preaching**: Jesus' second source of power was His *sense of mission*, a worldwide mission. Note what happened. When Peter and the others arose from sleeping, they discovered Jesus was missing. They asked around, found out where He was, and *followed him*. The word "followed" means strongly pursued. When they found Jesus, they were emphatic, " 'All men seek for thee.' They are ready to follow you. Let's help them" (v.37).

Luke shows just how strong the urging to stay in Capernaum was by adding: "The people [themselves] sought Him, and came unto Him, and stayed Him, that He should not depart from them" (Lk.4:42). The word "stayed" is strong. It means to hold back, to hold fast. They tried their best to detain Him. They were not going to let Him leave if they could prevent Him from doing so.

The force of the urgings by the disciples and the people shows just how strongly convinced Jesus had to be of His mission. He had it made, so to speak, in Capernaum at this point in time. Note that the people were stirred and motivated to follow God, and there were tremendous needs yet to be met in the city and surrounding area. A great ministry could be performed for God right in Capernaum. There was no need to go elsewhere, not in the people's mind. Jesus' response was forceful: "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also. For *therefore came I forth*" (v.38).

Jesus was thoroughly convinced: He must not be deterred nor sidetracked from His mission. Plenty of needs may still have existed, but two critical facts were being overlooked—facts which have been and are still being sadly overlooked by believers everywhere.

1. Capernaum and its people, at least many of its people, had already heard the gospel preached. If God's messenger (Jesus) had stayed in Capernaum, many throughout the world would never have heard the gospel.
2. The people in Capernaum could now share the message themselves. God's messenger (Jesus) was not really needed to continue the ministry. The people were much more likely to assume the responsibility to carry on if Jesus left. But if Jesus had stayed, the people would have left most of the responsibility up to Him. The people would not become the witnesses they should.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:19-20).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

Thought 1. The response of Jesus is a powerful lesson that is clear and striking, and hopefully convicting. So much change is needed in institutional religion if the world is truly to be reached for Jesus. Courageous voices need to be raised for believers to begin doing what Jesus did...

- Ministering
- Preaching (witnessing, proclaiming the gospel)
- Making disciples
- Moving on to other needful and unevangelized villages and towns

Thought 2. Note something of crucial importance: the exact words of Jesus. He stressed in no uncertain terms that His mission was primarily to *preach*. He set forth *the primacy of preaching* as the task of the minister. Physical needs *were* present. They still existed in Capernaum, and they existed in all the towns where He was now to go. He would meet as many of the needs as possible. But His primary task and mission was to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

3 (1:39) **Jesus Christ—Faithfulness—Power**: Jesus' third source of power was His *faithfulness* to His mission. He preached in the synagogues throughout "all Galilee." Galilee was densely populated. There were over two hundred cities in the district (see note—Mt.4:12-13). Note two facts. (1) Jesus went everywhere preaching; He went "throughout all Galilee." He left no place untouched. Note also that He preached in the synagogues using the structure of established religion. He did this as long as He was allowed. (2) He continued to minister as well as preach. Preaching was His primary mission, but while He preached, He also ministered to the physical needs of people. People had physical, emotional, and mental needs as well as spiritual. He validated and demonstrated both His mission and deity by healing and casting out devils.

Thought 1. Faithfulness assures power. God will continue to give His power to the messenger who continues to be faithful. Likewise, He has to withdraw His power from the unfaithful messenger. He cannot give license to disobedience. A divided house cannot stand (see outline and notes—Mt.12:25-26 for more discussion).

> **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).**
>
> **"For we are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).**
>
> **"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).**
>
> **"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Tim.6:20).**
>
> **"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (2 Tim.1:14).**

	F. Jesus' Power Over Leprosy and Its Impact: Cleansing the Most Unclean, 1:40-45 (Mt.8:2-4; Lk.5:12-15)	he was cleansed. 43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;	most unclean **3 He charged the most unclean to go—sin no more**
1 He was the great hope of the most unclean[DS1]	40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.	44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.	**4 He demanded that the most unclean witness to His Messiahship**
2 He was moved with compassion by the most unclean[DS2] a. Moved to touch b. Moved to speak c. Result: It was His Word of power that cleansed & healed the	41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. 42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and	45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.	**5 He made a great impact** a. His fame blazed abroad b. His fame forced Him to an unpopulated area

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

F. Jesus' Power Over Leprosy and Its Impact: Cleansing the Most Unclean, 1:40-45

(1:40-45) **Introduction—Leprosy**: leprosy was the most feared disease of the ancient world. The leper was considered the most unclean, revolting, and hideous person imaginable. Leprosy itself was thought to be the result of terrible sin and actually became the most dramatic type of sin in the minds of people. There was no known cure for leprosy; only God was considered powerful enough to cure the disease. Therefore, in cleansing the leper, Jesus was demonstrating His Messiahship. He was demonstrating that He had the power to cleanse the most unclean, no matter how terrible their uncleanness. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.8:1-4 for a more detailed discussion of leprosy and for more information on this event.)

1. He was the great hope of the most unclean (v.40).
2. He was moved with compassion by the most unclean (v.41-42).
3. He charged the most unclean to go—sin no more (v.43).
4. He demanded that the most unclean witness to His Messiahship (v.44).
5. He made a great impact (v.45).

1 (1:40) **Jesus Christ—Seeking**: Jesus was the great hope of the most unclean. What happened was dramatic. The man was "full of leprosy" (pleres lepras) (Lk.5:12). Apparently His whole body was full of sores, perhaps some parts even eaten away by the cancerous disease. He was hopeless, for all were powerless to help him. But somewhere, somehow, he heard about Jesus and His Godly power. Hope sprung up in his heart, and he began to search for Jesus. When he found out where Jesus was, he made his way to Him. Matthew tells us that he found Jesus on the mount where Jesus was preaching the great *Sermon on the Mount* (Mt.8:1-4). He heard Jesus preach, and what Jesus said burned in his heart and turned his hope into enormous faith. As Jesus made His way down the mountain, the leper burst forth and fell at Jesus' feet. Note three things:

1. The leper (the most unclean) was so desperate and so intent on seeking Jesus' help that he forgot everything else and everyone else. He forgot all about the law's requiring him to come no closer than six feet. He forgot all about the thronging crowd that surrounded Jesus. He saw no one and thought of no one except Jesus. It was his desperate need and the enormous hope aroused in him by Jesus that drove him to race through the crowd and fall upon his face begging for help.
2. The leper worshipped Jesus. All three gospel writers throw light upon the *intensity* of the man's act.
   - ⇒ Mark says that he knelt down (Mk.1:40).
   - ⇒ Luke says that he fell on his face (Lk.5:12).
   - ⇒ Matthew says that he worshipped Jesus (Mt.8:2).
3. The leper saw in Jesus the divine power of God Himself. This was evidenced by his worship of Jesus and the words spoken to Jesus. Note he did not say, "Thou canst ask of God and God will make me clean." He said, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He was saying that Jesus possessed the power of God to cleanse him.

Thought 1. The leper is a picture of the sinner. Jesus will heal any man who approaches Him as the leper did, even if he is the most unclean person on earth.

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:40) **Leprosy**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:1-4.

2 (1:41-42) **Compassion—Forgiving**: Jesus was moved with compassion by the most unclean. Looking down upon the leper, Jesus knew the man: his miserable condition, his heart, his hope, his faith. And Jesus was moved with compassion (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:36). Note what happened.

1. Jesus was moved to reach out and touch the man. He did not ignore the man. Jesus did not push the man back. He could have, for the man had no right to approach Jesus. But Jesus, knowing the man's heart, was moved with compassion; and He reached out and touched the man (the most unclean).

> **"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).**
>
> **"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).**
>
> **"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).**
>
> **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them" (Is.63:9).**

2. Jesus was moved to speak the most wonderful words known to man: "I will, be thou clean." He spoke His Word of power. Jesus wills to make every man clean. It is His will that every man be made whole. But what is so desperately needed is for every man to approach Jesus just as this poor sinful leper did.

Every man needs to approach Jesus...

- with an intense hope.
- with an intense faith.
- with an intense worship.

> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).**
>
> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**

3. The result was just as Jesus willed and spoke. His Word of power cleansed and healed the man. In healing the man, Jesus demonstrated three things.

a. He cares and is moved with compassion by the plight of men, even by the most unclean.

b. He is most definitely the Son of God who possesses the very power of God to cleanse men of their sin and uncleanness. Leprosy was a type or symbol of sin, so in cleansing the man's leprosy, the man was being cleansed (healed) both physically and spiritually.

c. He is superior to the law. He reached out and touched the man—which was against the law. Lepers were by law to remain at least six feet away from others, even from family members. (See notes, *Jesus Christ, Fulfills Law*—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:41) **Compassion**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:36.

3 (1:43) **Sin, Warning Against**: Jesus charged the most unclean to go and sin no more. This point is missed with a quick, surface reading. It can be seen by noticing two facts.

1. What Jesus charged the man with (v.43) seems to be different from the directions He gives the man in verse 44. Thoughtful reading of the two verses seems to indicate this.

2. The phrase "He straitly charged him" (embrimesamenos) is a threatening phrase. It is a strong, severe warning to the man. It is the same kind of charge Jesus gave to the man who had been bedridden for thirty-eight years: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worst thing come upon thee" (Jn.5:14).

> **Thought 1.** When we are forgiven and cleansed, Christ expects us to "sin no more." We are strongly and severely warned, "lest a worst thing come upon [us]." (See outline and notes—Mt.12:43-45; Heb.2:1-4; 3:7-19; 4:1-13; 5:11-6:20; 10:26-39. Cp. Eph.5:5-6; 2 Th.1:8; Heb.2:2-4 for more discussion.)

> **"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Is.1:16).**
>
> **"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor.7:1).**
>
> **"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:21).**
>
> **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).**

4 (1:44) **Witnessing—Pride—Church Attendance**: Jesus demanded that even the most unclean person must witness to His Messiahship. Jesus gave the cleansed man two different charges.

1. "Say nothing to any man": "Do not boast in your cleansing. Guard against pride, against feeling that God is partial to you and that you are a favorite of God and more special than *anyone* else." Apparently there was something within

this man that would tend toward pride (see note—Mt.8:4). His attention was not to be upon what had happened to him (his cleansing and healing), but upon Jesus, the compassionate and merciful One.

Thought 1. Too often we look at the sinner and say, "*But for the grace of God, there go I.*" Such is boastful and prideful. It is true that the grace of God has saved us, but God saved us not because we are favorites of His. We are not saved to compare ourselves with the sinner by going around saying (testifying) and thinking that we are above the sinner. We are saved to proclaim the grace of God to the man walking along the street. Our task is not to stand on this side of the street and testify: "But for the grace of God, there go I." Our task is to cross over the street and declare to the man: "The grace of God saves and cleanses from all sin. God has cleansed me, the sinner of sinners; His grace will cleanse you. There is cleansing and forgiveness for everyone."

2. "Go...show thyself to the priest...." Jesus demands this for three reasons.
   a. The man needed to obey the law, for he was not above the law. He was to live righteously just as the law demanded. Jesus did not annul or do away with the law. He fulfilled the law; therefore, He is more than the law. The man was being taught to obey the law and more: he was being taught to obey Jesus who includes the law and more (see note—Mt.5:17-18 for discussion). His righteous act was to be his primary witness, his final act of obedience.

      Thought 1. Obedience, that is, living righteously, is our primary witness for Christ. There is no real faith apart from obedience and work.

      "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).
      "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).

   b. The man must be acknowledged as *cleansed* by everyone. People would not accept him until they knew he was cleansed. The priest had to *pronounce* him clean.

      Thought 1. Every cleansed person is to go to church, profess his cleansing and become a part of God's society and family of believers.

      "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them [the church] about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:41-42).
      "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).

   c. The priest needed to testify to the divine power of Jesus. All the people knew that only God could cure leprosy. By declaring the man cleansed, the priest would be declaring Jesus to be the Son of God, the Messiah (cp.Lev.14:2-20).

      Thought 1. Every time a man is truly cleansed from sin, Jesus is proclaimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God. A cleansed man becomes a living testimony and witness to the power of Jesus.

      "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:17-21).
      "I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:13-16).

5 (1:45) **Witnessing—Disobedience**: Jesus made a great impact. His fame was blazed abroad by the man. The man disobeyed Jesus (just as many of us so often do). Because of the man's disobedience, Jesus was forced to withdraw from the area. In this particular case, He had to leave because the crowds were just too large. Note: there is also a spiritual application here. When we disobey Christ, Christ is forced to withdraw. His presence is no longer sensed by us or seen by our associates. It is as though He is forced into *a desert place*. It is interesting that nothing more is said about the disobedient leper. Imagine the people who were never helped because Jesus was forced out into a desert place!

Thought 1. We may not understand the command of our Lord, but we must obey. The consequences of disobedience are too terrible, destroying lives through our lost witness.

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

	CHAPTER 2	
	G. Jesus' Power to Forgive Sin and Its Impact: Forgiveness of Sins, 2:1-12 (Mt.9:1-8; Lk.5:17-26)	
1 Jesus returned to Capernaum many months later		
a. Jesus was in the house b. Crowds heard & flooded the house immediately	And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.	6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,
	2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door:	7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?
c. Jesus preached the Word	and he preached the word unto them.	8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?
2 The prerequisite to being forgiven		
a. Coming to Jesus	3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.	9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?
b. Possessing a sincere, desperate faith in Jesus' power—a faith that will not quit[DS1]	4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.	10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)
		11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.
		12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.
3 The reality of being forgiven[DS2]		
a. Jesus saw faith	5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.	
b. Jesus forgave sins		
4 The question aroused by being forgiven		
a. The religionists reasoned		
b. The religionists questioned: Who has the power to forgive?[DS3]		
5 The source of being forgiven		
a. Jesus revealed that He knew the hearts of men		
b. Jesus revealed His God-like wisdom & fearlessness		
c. Jesus stated His purpose: To prove His Messiahship, that He is the Son of Man		
d. Jesus proved that He had the power to forgive sins		
6 The impact of being forgiven		
a. The man walked before all—forgiven, healed		
b. The crowds marvelled		
c. The crowds praised God		

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

G. Jesus' Power to Forgive Sin and Its Impact: Forgiveness of Sin, 2:1-12

(2:1-12) **Introduction**: the man who seeks forgiveness of sins—truly seeks with a desperation that will not quit—will be forgiven. This is the great lesson learned from the man with palsy.

1. Jesus returned to Capernaum many months later (v.1-2).
2. The prerequisite to being forgiven (v.3-4).
3. The reality of being forgiven (v.5).
4. The question aroused by being forgiven (v.6-7).
5. The source of being forgiven (v.8-11).
6. The impact of being forgiven (v.12).

1 (2:1-2) **Preaching—Minister—Mission**: Jesus returned to Capernaum after many months of preaching throughout Galilee (Mk.1:39). The preaching tour had lasted about twelve months. He apparently returned to Peter's house; and as always, the news spread quickly, and the crowds began to gather and flood the house.

Note what Jesus did. He went about His *primary mission*: "He preached the Word to them." No doubt some had come for ministry, that is, to have some need met or to be healed; and some had come out of curiosity. However, note what Jesus did first of all. He did the main work of God: He proclaimed the Word of God to men who were lost eternally.

2 (2:3-4) **Forgiveness—Perseverance—Faith—Invitation**: the prerequisite to being forgiven was clearly demonstrated by what happened.

1. The man came to Jesus. Actually, this man was brought to Jesus by four other men carrying him on a cot-like pallet. Note two significant things.
   a. The man was desperate for help and very hopeful, having heard about Jesus.
   b. The man was counted as a very dear person by the four men. This is indicated by the extreme action they took to reach Jesus.

The point is clear: the first prerequisite to forgiveness is coming to Jesus. A person must come to Jesus for forgiveness, even if he has to be brought. Compare the invitation of God to "come":

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

(Cp. also Gen.7:1; Mt.22:4; Lk.14:17.)

2. The man and his friends possessed a sincere, desperate faith in Jesus' power—a faith that would not quit (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.2:4; notes—Mt.9:23-27; 11:22-23 for discussion. Also cp. Jas.2:26 where faith without works [action] is said to be dead, not really existing.)

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:4) **Houses—Persevering Faith**: many houses of Jesus' day had an outside stairway that climbed up to a second floor. The roof was easily reached from this stairway. The roof was flat and made of tile-like rocks matted together with a straw and clay-like substance. The roofs were sturdy enough for people to sit upon and carry on evening conversations and other activities (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:17). These men dug and scooped out an opening through the roof. They were so sure of Jesus' power to help, nothing was going to prevent them from getting to Jesus—they had an unstoppable faith.

3 (2:5) **Forgiveness**: the reality of being forgiven. Note what happened.

1. Jesus saw their faith—the faith of the man himself and the faith of the four men who brought him. The faith of the friends played a large part in the man's being healed and in his receiving forgiveness of sins. (See notes—Mt.9:2; Mk.11:23.)

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I search out" (Job 29:15-16).

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Pr.31:20).

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Lk.10:33-34).

2. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness of the man's sins. Forgiving the man's sins was far more important than healing him (Mk.2:10). A sound body assures life for only a few years at most; a sound soul assures life forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28).

a. Jesus forgave the man's sins first. By so doing He taught that the most important thing in a man's life is for a man to seek forgiveness of sins. A man should always seek to be forgiven before anything else. Jesus wishes man to live eternally, not just for a few short years. But before he can live eternally, man must willingly come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins.

b. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness in tenderness and compassion. When a man comes to Jesus for forgiveness, Jesus does not...

- *accuse* the man of past sins.
- *find fault* with the man: what he has done—why he has come—from where he has come.
- *begrudge* or *hesitate* in forgiving the man.

When a man comes to Jesus, Jesus responds tenderly and compassionately. This is seen in the word "son." In the Greek "son" (teknon) means child. Looking upon the man lying at His feet, Jesus saw a child, and Jesus responded to the man just as any of us would respond to a child lying helpless at our feet—tenderly and compassionately.

c. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness in His own authority. It is critical to see this. He did not say, "God, forgive this man," or "God, I wish You would forgive this man." Jesus said, "Child, thy sins be forgiven thee." He forgave the sins Himself, in His own name, by His own power and authority.

The point is unmistakable. Jesus is proclaiming to be God, the very Son of God, and the people understand exactly what He is doing (v.6-7).

Thought 1. Combine the two points: (1) Jesus proclaims forgiveness, tenderly and compassionately, and (2) He possesses the power to forgive sins because He is truly the Son of God. A man becomes a fool if he does not come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgivenesss of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(2:5) **Forgiveness**: see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28.

4 (2:6-7) **Blasphemy—Forgiveness**: the question aroused by being forgiven. Apparently, the ruling body in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, had heard about a prophet in Galilee who was carrying on an unusual ministry. Unbelievable miracles were being claimed. The prophet, who called Himself Jesus of Nazareth, needed to be checked out to make sure He was not teaching error and misleading the people; not threatening insurrection against the Jewish religion and nation which was under Roman domination. (See note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.)

The Sanhedrin sent a delegation to Capernaum to investigate Jesus. The Scribes mentioned in these verses are that delegation. When the Scribes heard Jesus forgive the man's sins, they immediately saw the point Jesus was making. They began to reason in their minds and hearts: "Why does this man blaspheme? Who can forgive sins but God only? Is He claiming to be God? The promised Messiah?" (See notes—Mk.3:1-2. See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22.)

Thought 1. The question was logical and reasonable.

1) Most people and religions in the world ask the very same question: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" They view Jesus only as a prophet or some great man. In their minds, He could never possess the right or power to forgive sins.
2) Some in the world simply ask, "Who can forgive sins?" And they rejoice when they find out that Jesus is the Son of God and that He does forgive sins.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

Thought 2. Note: If Jesus were not the Son of God, then the Scribes were correct. Jesus was speaking blasphemy. However, since He is the Son of God, He truly forgave the man's sins. The conclusion is glorious: He can forgive our sins, too.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(2:7) **Blasphemy**: see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.9:3.

5 (2:8-11) **Forgiveness**: the source of being forgiven. Jesus revealed His power to forgive sins in four strong steps.

1. Jesus revealed that He knew the human heart: exactly what man thinks, His motives and reasonings (see note, pt.1—Mt.9:4-7 for discussion).
2. Jesus revealed His God-like wisdom and fearlessness. He suggested that He be tested with the impossible (see note, pt.2—Mt.9:4-7 for discussion).
3. Jesus stated His purpose: to prove that He is the Son of Man (see note, pt.3—Mt.9:4-7; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20 for discussion).
4. Jesus proved His power to forgive sins. He must be able to forgive sins, for He healed the man and caused the man to arise and walk. His power is indisputable.

Note the proof of His power to forgive sins.

⇒ Jesus *willed* the man to walk. He simply *spoke the Word* "arise," and the man arose and walked. The power was in Jesus' *will and Word*. His will is His Word, and His Word is His will.

⇒ It follows, then, that if Jesus *wills* to forgive sins, all He has to do is *speak the Word*, "Thy sins are forgiven"; and the sins are forgiven. (Cp. Eph.1:7; 1 Jn.1:9; 1 Jn.2:1-2; Acts 5:31; 13:38; Lk.24:47.)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps.103:3).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

6 (2:12) **Witnessing—Faithfulness**: the impact of being forgiven.

1. The man walked before all as a living testimony to the power of Jesus to forgive and heal a man's *whole being*.
2. The crowds *marvelled* and *praised* God.

Thought 1. Jesus forgives the sin of any man, no matter how terrible the sin. When a man's sins are forgiven, it should dramatically affect both him and those who know him. However, the great tragedy is that few pay attention to the claim that sins are forgiven. They ignore the fact and go on their merry way, continuing to walk in the selfishness of this world (cp. 1 Jn.2:15-16).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

	H. Jesus' Impact Upon Matthew & His Friends: Reaching the Outcast & Sinner, 2:13-17 (Mt.9:9-13; Lk.5:27-32)		
1 Jesus went forth by the sea shore a. The crowds gathered b. Jesus taught them	13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.	his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.	a. Levi invited his associates & friends b. Jesus associated with them c. The impact: Many followed Him
2 Jesus called the outcast & the sinner[DS1] a. Passed by—saw Levi b. Called to abandon all c. Impact: He accepted the call; he left all	14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.	16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?	**4 Jesus answered society's attitude toward the outcast & sinner** a. The religionists questioned Jesus' associations
3 Jesus associated with the outcast & sinner	15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in	17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.	b. Jesus' reply 1) An illustration 2) His very purpose: To call sinners

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

H. Jesus' Impact Upon Matthew and His Friends: Reaching the Outcast and Sinner, 2:13-17

(2:13-17) **Introduction**: Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. No matter how lost, how outcast, or how bad a sinner a person is, Jesus came to save the person.

1. Jesus went forth by the seashore (v.13).
2. Jesus called the outcast and the sinner (v.14).
3. Jesus associated with the outcast and sinner (v.15).
4. Jesus answered society's attitude toward the outcast and sinner (v.16-17)

1 (2:13) **Faithful—Opportunity**: Jesus went forth by the lake shore, that is, by the Sea of Galilee. The mass of people now flocking to Him were so many that no building or street was large enough to hold them. The leaders of the synagogues, the religionists, were also closing the door to Him (cp. Mk.2:6-7). However, note the faithfulness of Jesus in preaching and teaching despite the closed doors. His mission and call was to preach, so preach He must. He would not be stopped or silenced no matter what the problems were. Note two things.

1. The crowds gathered. The words "all the multitude" show that a huge crowd followed and gathered around Him at the seashore.

> **Thought 1.** People should flock to the servant of God who truly teaches the Kingdom of God. Why? There is one simple reason: since Christ, all things are now ready for the Kingdom of God.
>
> **"And [God] sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready" (Lk.14:17; see outline and notes—Lk.14:18-20 for a descriptive picture of the excuses given for not coming to Christ).**

2. He taught them. When people came to hear about the Kingdom of God, He taught them. He was the faithful servant of God, the obedient servant who laid hold of every opportunity to teach (see outline and notes—Mk.1:14-15 for more discussion).

> **Thought 1.** God's servant should lay hold of every opportunity to teach and share Christ and His kingdom. Not a single opportunity should be missed. Faithfulness and obedience to one's call are the needs of the hour.
>
> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**

2 (2:14) **Tax-Collector—Outcast, The—Lost, The**: Jesus called the outcast and the sinner. At some point Jesus finished His teaching to the multitude and began walking along the seashore. As He walked along, He passed by the tax booth that had been set up to collect the taxes owed by incoming ships. Three things then happened.

1. Jesus saw Levi, the tax collector in charge of the tax station or office. All tax collectors were traitors, outcasts, and sinners in the minds of Jewish society. They were bitterly hated and ostracized. They were looked upon as having sold their souls to the Roman authorities. The vast majority were thieves, cheats, and extortioners—always adding to the legal fee in order to fill their own pockets. Most tax collectors were wealthy, and the fact that Matthew had a house large enough to accomodate a large party points toward his being rich. (See note—Mt.9:9.)

2. Jesus called Levi to abandon his profession and to follow Him. The love of money and the lust for wealth and extravagance was what made most Jewish tax collectors enter the tax-collecting service of the Romans. This tells us that Matthew, as a young man, was consumed with a greed for wealth and the so called *good things* of life. He was possessed by greed, possessed enough to betray his country and people. He was so possessed by greed that he thought he would be willing to endure a lifetime of hatred by his own people.

However in this passage, something else became evident about Matthew. The price he had paid for wealth was not worth it. His heart was cut by the piercing eyes, stinging words, isolation, and bitter hatred of the people. He ached for forgiveness and reconciliation, both with God and with his people. It is this that Jesus saw. Jesus saw hurt and the ache of it, and Jesus appealed to him to abandon his sin of greed and to follow God.

Thought 1. Note how Jesus was always looking for the opportunity to reach individuals. He had just finished teaching "all the multitude," and He was probably tired. But as He was walking away from his meeting, He saw a soul's aching and needing His attention, so He stopped to witness to the man.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-30).**
>
> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**
>
> **"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hos.6:1).**

3. The impact upon Matthew was volcanic and eruptive. "He arose and followed [Jesus]" immediately. Note two apparent facts.

   a. Matthew already knew of Jesus. Jesus had been teaching throughout all Galilee for over a year now. Like everyone else, Matthew had certainly heard of Jesus and had probably visited some of the Lord's meetings.

   b. Matthew gave up everything. In fact, the two major points to see in Matthew's call are: first, Jesus called a person who was a great *outcast* and a *sinner*; and, second, Matthew gave up everything to follow Jesus. It cost Matthew everything—his job and his enormous income. Most of the other disciples could return to their professions if things did not work out. But this was not so with Matthew. When he committed his life to Jesus, he literally committed everything. The call of Jesus disrupted his whole life (see note, *Self-Denial*—Lk.9:23 for development of this application).

> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:35-36).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:14) **Levi—Matthew**: this Levi is the same as Matthew who wrote the first Gospel of the New Testament (see note—Mt.9:9). Apparently his given name was Levi, but Jesus changed his name to Matthew. It is significant that both Mark and Luke use his name Levi (Mk.2:14; Lk.5:27), but Matthew uses the name Jesus gave him—Matthew (Mt.9:9). The name Matthew or Matthias means the *gift of Jehovah*. When referring to himself, Matthew always stressed God's great mercy upon him. He wanted people to know that it was the glorious mercy of Jesus that had saved him, the outcast and sinner.

> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**

3 (2:15) **Outcast—Sinners—Witnessing—Church**: Jesus associated with the outcast and sinner. Note three things.

1. Immediately after his conversion, Matthew invited his associates and friends to a large feast (Lk.5:29). His friends were not the respectable people of society, but other tax collectors (publicans) and sinners—the outcasts and non-religious of society. His friends were those who rejected both the restraints of society and God; they were the immoral and unjust, the thieves and the foul-mouthed, the angry and the rebellious.

Matthew had discovered something wonderful: a glorious peace and joy of heart and mind. He had found it in Jesus. In fact, *in Jesus* he had found what was actually a new life, and he desperately wanted his friends to discover the same peace and joy. So he planned a feast, and he invited all his friends to meet Jesus (see note—Mt.9:10-11).

Thought 1. Matthew did not forget his sinful friends after his conversion. He wanted them to have the wonderful, life-changing experience with Jesus that he had come to know. So he witnessed by arranging an encounter with Jesus, using the best method he knew. What a lesson for us!

Thought 2. The command of Jesus is for us to go to our families and neighbors and friends first; to go to our own *Jerusalem* (Acts 1:8. See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:6; Lk.15:8-10. Cp. Dt.6:6-7; 1 Pt.3:15.)

> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**

2. Jesus gladly accepted the opportunity to meet with these outcasts and sinners. But note two crucial points.
   a. Jesus did not meet with the outcasts and sinners to condone their sin, but to turn them from their sin. They needed to experience the same change of life that Matthew had experienced.
   b. The outcasts and sinners had needs, and they were willing to confess them. They were responsive to having their needs met.

⇒ The despised tax collecter and harlot.

> **"Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Mt.21:31).**

⇒ The immoral person.

> **"Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (Lk.7:47).**
>
> **"She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (Jn.8:11).**

⇒ The sinner.

> **"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Lk.15:2).**

⇒ The thief.

> **"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk.23:43).**

⇒ The rejected.

> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (Jn.9:35).**

Thought 1. Christ cannot help a person who is unwilling to confess his need. The self-righteous, self-sufficient, and self-dependent feel that they do not need help. Such feelings and beliefs, of course, are of a *fool*; for disease, accident, and death confront everyone. When they do, all who refused to confess their need will stand at the threshold of eternity, facing vast darkness and eternal condemnation.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:22-23).**

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

3. The impact of Jesus upon the outcast and sinner was phenomenal: "There were many, and they followed Him."

Thought 1. The outcast and sinner of Jesus' day...
- saw His interest and acceptance, His care and compassion for any and all in need.
- saw that any person with a need was not only welcomed by Jesus, but desired.
- saw that Jesus did not act above or better, aloof or separate from sinners.
- saw that, although Jesus never compromised His message of repentance, He loved and truly forgave and offered the greatest of challenges.

Thought 2. Think...
- how uncomfortable the outcast and sinner (even the poorly dressed and unclean) feel in church and among believers today.
- how uncomfortable the church feels when the outcast and sinner, the poorly dressed and unclean slip into services. Think of the enormous hesitation the poor have to overcome just to come into church! They slip in because they sense a need, yet how often they have to sit to the side by themselves.

4 (2:16-17) **Sinner—Outcast—Society—Religion—Respectability**: Jesus answered society's attitude toward the outcast and sinner. The attitude of society has too often been the same as the Scribes' and Pharisees' attitude—that of contempt and fear.

1. The religionists and respectable of society hold contempt for the sinner because he is below their standards and discipline. They feel they are above in beliefs and self-control. The sinner is thought to be either unprincipled or not disciplined enough to live by the rules.

Thought 1. Some men are more principled and more disciplined than others. They had greater opportunity and more training as children because of parents, education, genes, environment, and resources. This must always be remembered when dealing with others. So many traits and abilities, strengths and weaknesses of men differ because of heritage and childhood opportunities.

Thought 2. There is enormous hope for every man, no matter how weak, unprincipled, or undisciplined. The hope is Jesus Christ. The man can be *born again*—truly *born again*. He can be *re-created* in Christ Jesus, made into a *new man*, a *new creature*.

"Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pt.1:21).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and...put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"(Eph.4:23-24).

"Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

2. The religionists and respectable of society fear the sinner for two reasons.
   a. They fear being criticized and judged for associating with such low-caste. They fear friends and neighbors' withdrawing from them because they associated with the outcast of society.
   b. They fear being contaminated and led astray themselves. They fear becoming dirty and smelly, dulled and weakened in their own beliefs and principles.

The religionists questioned Jesus' association with the outcasts and sinners. Jesus' reply was forceful: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Jesus made two points:

1. The first point concerned the sick (sinner). The sick person is the one who needs the physician (Him, the Savior). And note: the sick knows he is sick and he asks for the physician.
2. The second point concerned Jesus Himself, His purpose as Messiah. He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Note three forceful points.
   a. The righteous (self-righteous) do not know they need repentance.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor.10:12).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother" (Pr.30:12).

b. The righteous (self-righteous) do not hear the call of Christ to repent. Sinners do hear the call.

"Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:12-13).

"Is it fit to say to a king, Thou art wicked? and to princes, Ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? For they all are the work of his hands" (Job 34:18-19).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

c. Christ declared that He is the Great Physician. He is the One who calls men to repentance. He is the Messiah, the Son of God Himself.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him, For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:12-13).

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:4-6).

	I. Jesus' Impact Upon Young Disciples and Theologians: The Kind of Life Christ Brings, 2:18-22 (Mt.9:14-17;Lk.5:33-39)	groom with them, they cannot fast.	
		20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.	**3 Christ brings a seeking life** a. He will be taken away b. His followers will then fast
1 Jesus aroused questions about fasting[DS1] a. An unusual alliance: John's disciples & the Pharisees b. A justified question	18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?	21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.	**4 Christ brings a new life**
2 Christ brings a joyous life[DS2,3]	19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bride-	22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.	**5 Christ brings an adventuresome life**

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

I. Jesus' Impact Upon Young Disciples and Theologians: The Kind of Life Christ Brings, 2:18-22

(2:18-22) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ has the power to completely change life. And He knows the desperate need and cry among men for a changed life. The changed life Christ gives is fourfold.

1. Jesus aroused questions about fasting (v.18).
2. Christ brings a joyous life (v.19).
3. Christ brings a seeking life (v.20).
4. Christ brings a new life (v.21).
5. Christ brings an adventuresome life (v.22).

1 (2:18) **Fasting—Messiahship—Judging Others**: Jesus aroused questions about fasting. In the Greek the words "*were* fasting" (esan nesteuontes) are more accurately translated "*are* fasting." The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were actually fasting when they asked Jesus this question.

What happened was probably this. Religious Jews fasted twice every week—on Mondays and Thursdays (Lk.18:12). John was strict in his observance of the law, so he had taught his disciples to observe the two fasts. But now, John's disciples had a greater reason for fasting and for seeking God's presence. John, their teacher, was in prison and facing a death sentence. Therefore, they were fasting with intense fervency, seeking God to deliver their revered prophet. They were asking every true believer (Jewish believer) to join them in their intercession and fast. Thus, they could not understand Jesus' behavior. He was claiming unmistakably to be the Messiah to whom John had pointed. The one person who should be concerned over John's fate and over religious observances should be Jesus, the Messiah. Why did He not teach faithfulness to the religious ritual of fasting? And why was he not now having His followers fast and pray for John's release? They just did not understand.

⇒ How could the *true* Messiah fail to teach faithfulness to religion?

⇒ How could the *true* Messiah not fast and intercede for God's prophet, in particular when the prophet had meant so much to the Messiah's own ministry?

The question of *Jesus' Messiahship* lay at the very root of the question. John's disciples knew that the Pharisees had also been asking how Jesus could break the rituals of religion and be the true Messiah. So they approached the Pharisees about joining them in asking Jesus the question. The two groups standing together before Jesus formed an unusual alliance. Remember, John had preached against the Pharisees and their hypocrisy, dooming them to the most horrible fate if they did not repent (cp. Mt.3:7-10. See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Pharisees*—Acts 23:8.)

Thought 1. A believer should not judge other believers for not keeping religious rituals. Censuring and condemning others are uncalled for. Religious rituals are not the standard by which believers are to be judged. Neither are believers the judge of other believers. Christ alone is the Judge (Ro.14:4).

Thought 2. Jesus does teach fasting, but there is a right and a wrong way to fast (see note—Mt.6:16-18 for more discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:18) **Fasting**: see note—Mt.6:16-18; Mk.2:20.

2 (2:19) **Joy—Jesus Christ, Presence of—Conversion**: the presence of Christ brings joy—a joyous life. This is the very reason Jesus did not teach His disciples to fast as a religious ritual. There is no need to fast when the presence and joy of Jesus fills a life. Jesus used a clear picture to teach what His mission was.

What Jesus was doing was like a wedding. He said, "I am launching a new marriage of people to God. I am the Bridegroom (the Son of God Himself) who is to wed people to God, and My chosen disciples are the friends of the Bridegroom. A wedding is a joyful, not a sad, occasion that requires fasting. My presence brings joy, not sadness, to those who will follow me." (See note—Mt.9:15.)

Thought 1. The discovery of Christ and the day-by-day consciousness of His presence do bring joy to life. Christ is the secret to life and the joy in life. No matter how gloomy life may be or how far gone a person may feel, Christ can change a person's life and bring joy to the heart. Christ can convert a person from gloom and emptiness to joy and fulfillment.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (Jn.13:17).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(2:19) **Jesus Christ, Bridegroom**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.25:1-13.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(2:19) **Wedding, Jewish**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.25:1-13.

3 (2:20) **Man—Seeking Christ—Believers—Life**: Christ brings a seeking life. Jesus was pointed and honest. Despite the joy of His presence, He was going to be taken away. The days were coming when He would be taken away from His followers. Then they would fast.

The words "taken away" refer to the cross and Jesus' death. He was saying that once He had died, the disciples would fast. They *would seek Him—seek the joy and consciousness of His presence*. This is the first time in Mark that Jesus said He was going to die a violent death.

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Lk.24:46).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

Jesus was saying there were two times when His followers would definitely want to fast.

1. When His presence was removed. There are times when the presence of Christ is dimmed in the believer's life. Christ seems far away and absent; there is no consciousness and no awareness of His presence. The believer needs to fast and seek the Lord's presence during these times.

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:22).

2. When His presence was especially needed. There are times when a special manifestation, a special empowering is needed. Fasting and intense prayer draw God close to the believer, to meet the believer who so greatly needs and desires help. (See outline and notes—Mt.6:16-18 for a full discussion on fasting.)

"Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Mt.17:21).

Thought 1. All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer in this world (2 Tim.3:12). Therefore, the godly need the very special presence of the Lord. They must fast often, ever seeking a deeper consciousness of His presence.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn.14:16-18).

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast" (Ps.57:1).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps.145:18).

4 (2:21) **Reformation—Regeneration**: Christ brings a new life. Jesus is not an old patch being sown to an old garment. He is not out to reform an old religion or an old life. His life is a completely new way of life, and His day is a completely new day. It is not the day for patching up the old; it is time to create the new. His day is a day of regeneration, not of reformation. (See outline and note—Mt.12:43-45 for more discussion.)

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

5 (2:22) **New Creation—Believers, Life of**: Christ brings an adventuresome life. New wine skins were elastic and would expand as the gas of fermenting wine built up pressure. Old wine skins were hardened and would not expand, but rather would explode under pressure. Jesus said that He was bringing a new elasticity to life: a new expansion, a new adventure, a new excitement, a new life.

Thought 1. The time for the new always comes in both life and history. The day for patching the old will not suffice. A new beginning and a new life must be launched or else the person faces uselessness, extinction, or death.

1) Man himself will die in the *old garment of his flesh* unless he comes to Christ for a new beginning.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:22-24).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

2) The programs, methods, organizations, and even religions of this world will die and become ineffective unless they are based upon Christ and His new beginning. The foundation of life is Christ and the *new garment of His righteousness* (2 Cor.5:21).

Thought 2. No greater adventure can be launched than the adventuresome life that Christ gives to a person. No greater mission can be undertaken than His mission.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

Thought 3. We are to struggle against becoming set and fixed in our *own ways*. We are to be elastic, expanding, and adventuresome in life (cp. Heb.11:1-40).

	J. Jesus' Impact Upon Religionists: Understanding the Sabbath (Sunday), 2:23-28 (Mt.12:1-8; Lk.6:1-5)	have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? 26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?	**help man** a. The illustration: David[DSI]
1 The Sabbath is not rules & regulations a. Jesus passed thru a corn field b. The disciples plucked & ate some corn c. The religionists questioned the plucking of the corn on the Sabbath	23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. 24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?	27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:	b. The point: The Sabbath was given to serve, not master man
2 The Sabbath was given to	25 And he said unto them,	28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.	**3 The Sabbath is to be governed by the Son of Man**

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

J. Jesus' Impact Upon Religionists: Understanding the Sabbath (Sunday), 2:23-28

(2:23-28) **Introduction**: the Sabbath or Sunday is often abused; in fact, it is more often abused than not. A person can abuse the Sabbath by being either too strict or too loose in observing the day. In the present generation, however, the problem is not in being too strict but in being too loose. Few ever give any thought to God's command to keep the Sabbath holy.

In this passage Jesus deals with the true meaning of the Sabbath or Sunday: a critical issue for every generation (see outline and note—Mt.12:1-8 for more discussion).

1. The Sabbath is not rules and regulations (v.23-24).
2. The Sabbath was given to help man (v.25-27).
3. The Sabbath is to be governed by the Son of Man (v.28).

1 (2:23-24) **Sabbath—Sunday—Judging Others**: the Sabbath (or Sunday) is not rules and regulations. Jesus and the disciples passed through a corn field on the way to worship. They had not eaten breakfast, so the disciples began to pluck a few ears of corn and eat them. The extreme religionists, the Pharisees, saw them and accused them of breaking the Sabbath law; that is, they were charged with working on the Sabbath. Note two facts:

1. The disciples had broken the ceremonial law. The ceremonial law did not allow work on the Sabbath. The religionists were right in their accusation. The disciples had worked and broken the Sabbath law in two areas. They had plucked the corn, and they had broken the kernels off; or as Luke says, "[rubbed] them in their hands" (Lk.6:1). (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; 12:1-3 for a more detailed discussion.)
2. Jesus judged the disciples' work on the Sabbath as acceptable. He knew the law prohibited work on the Sabbath, and He knew the disciples were breaking the law—actually working on the Sabbath. Yet He did not rebuke nor correct them. He allowed them to pluck and eat the ears of corn despite the law. Why? There was one primary reason.

Resting and worshipping on Sunday or the Sabbath is important and should be observed, but Sunday or Sabbath observance is not to be rules and regulations. Some things take precedence and are more needful than rules and regulations. Jesus simply knew that the disciples' need for food was greater than their need to keep a ceremonial rule. (In reality, Jesus is teaching that religion itself, in all its ritual and ceremony, is not to be rules and regulations.)

Thought 1. Rules and regulations, laws and commandments are made to help man, to govern his behavior and to show him the best way to live. Therefore, rules which guide men to rest and worship on the Sabbath or Sunday are good and beneficial.

1) Man should always follow the guides and the rules that point him to observe the Sabbath. Man needs a day of rest and worship. Man needs to be physically refreshed and spiritually revived every week.
2) Sometimes a need arises that is greater than the need for rest and worship. Jesus recognized this. When a greater need arises, it should be met. But note: a temporary need does not do away with a permanent need. Man is still to observe the Sabbath or Sunday. In the event surrounding the disciples, the temporary need for food was judged by Jesus to be greater than the need for rest and worship on the Sabbath. However, it was not to become the usual practice. The Sabbath or Sunday is permanent. Man's permanent need is to worship and rest one day a week.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).
"It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days" (Mt.12:12).
"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex.20:8).

"And if the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day" (Neh.10:31; cp. Neh.13:15).

Thought 2. When a person judges and censors another person for breaking the law, he is committing a much more serious sin: the sin of forgetting mercy and forgiveness, love and ministry.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Mt.7:1-5).

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Ro.2:1).

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (Jas.4:12).

2 (2:25-27) **Sabbath—Sunday**: the Sabbath (or Sunday) was given to help man. Jesus proved this point by doing two things.

1. He told the story of what David had done (1 Sam.21:1-6). David was fleeing from Saul, and he and his men were hungry, not having eaten for some time. In their flight they came upon the tabernacle in Nob. David went in and requested food from the priests, but there was no food. There was only the showbread that was forbidden to be eaten by anyone other than the priests (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.12:3-4). Despite the law, David took five loaves, and he and his men ate the forbidden or unlawful bread.

What Jesus was doing in the illustration was twofold.

a. Jesus was saying that a great man of God, a man after God's own heart, had broken the ceremonial law of God. Yet the man of God was justified because his need for bread was greater than his keeping a ceremonial law.

b. Jesus was showing that Scripture itself gives precedence for what His disciples were doing. It was the Scripture that revealed and justified David's actions.

2. Jesus stated the point that should be self-evident: the Sabbath or Sunday is to serve man, not master man. Jesus simply said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." Man and his needs take precedence over any ceremonial law—including the cermonial law governing the Sabbath or Sunday. Whatever serves man the most is exactly what is to be done on the holy day. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

But note a crucial fact. Two of the greatest needs of man are for rest and worship, a day for physical refreshment and spiritual renewal every week. So the need has to be a desperate one, a need unable to be fulfilled in any other way for it to take precedence over the law. This is critical to understand, for man does not have license to break the law at every whim and fancy. Breaking the law for selfish reasons—for fleshly desires and commercial pleasure—is not what Jesus is talking about. His point is that need, a true and real need, can take *temporary precedence* over the Sabbath or Sunday law.

The Sabbath or Sunday was made for man. It is to be used for his benefit, to gain rest and a revived sense of God's presence. But it is not the master of man. Man's rest and worship may need to be temporarily interrupted in order to meet a greater need, a need that has come upon him all of a sudden (see outline, notes and DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Sabbath—Sunday*—Mt.12:3-4).

Thought 1. Man is far more important than rules and regulations; far more important than ceremony, ritual, and religion. The first duty of man is to worship God and to meet the needs of his fellow man. Nothing should ever take precedence over this first duty.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:25-26) **Showbread**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.12:3-4.

3 (2:28) **Sabbath—Sunday**: the Sabbath (or Sunday) is to be governed by the Son of Man. Jesus, the Son of Man, gave and instituted the Sabbath. Note the two claims Jesus was making.

1. He is the true Messiah, the Son of Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20).
2. He is the One who gave the Sabbath. Therefore, He is the Lord who governs the Sabbath. Man is to do exactly what Christ says to do on the Sabbath. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sabbath*—Mt.12:1 for the Scriptural teaching on the Sabbath or Sunday.)

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:22).

"[Jesus Christ] who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and power being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

	CHAPTER 3		
	K. Jesus' Impact Upon Authorities and Politicians: Understanding True Religion, 3:1-6 (Mt.12:9-14; Lk.6:6-11)		
1 Jesus entered the synagogue a. Confronted a man with a withered hand b. Confronted the religionists	And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.	4 And he saith unto them, is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.	**3 True religion is doing good and saving lives** a. Not rules, regulations b. Not refusing to face the truth
	2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.	5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.	**4 True religion is feelings against error & evil** a. Feelings of anger & grief *DSI* b. Because of hardness
2 True religion is a willingness to stand forth	3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.	6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.	**5 True religion is restoring men to wholeness** **6 True religion is not intrigue nor is it destructive**

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

K. Jesus' Impact Upon Authorities and Politicians: Understanding True Religion, 3:1-6

(3:1-6) **Introduction**: this was a crucial event for Jesus—the climax of five conflicts with the religionists (Scribes and Pharisees). Time and again the religionists had attacked Jesus, accusing Him of teaching a false religion. In this climactic confrontation, Jesus took the man with a withered hand and demonstrated just what true religion is. The demonstration was so clear and forceful that the religionists were stunned. What is true religion? It is five things.

1. Jesus entered the synagogue (v.1-2).
2. True religion is a willingness to stand forth (v.3).
3. True religion is doing good and saving lives (v.4).
4. True religion is feelings against error and evil (v.5).
5. True religion is restoring men to wholeness (v.5).
6. True religion is not intrigue nor is it destructive (v.6).

1 (3:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Opposition**: Jesus again entered the synagogue. He confronted an individual in need and a group of men who opposed Him.

1. Jesus confronted a man with a withered hand. The Greek "which had a withered hand" (exerammenen echon ten cheira) means "which had his hand withered." That is, his hand had been injured or become diseased. He was not born with a withered hand. His plight, of course, was desperate; for he was unable to work for a livelihood with a withered hand. Tradition says he was a stone mason who beseeched Jesus to heal him so that he might not have to beg in shame (see note—Mt.12:9-13).

2. Jesus confronted the religionists, probably the same delegation who had been sent earlier from the Sanhedrin to investigate His teaching (see note—Mk.2:6-7). It was their duty to protect the people from false teachers and to protect the nation from insurrectionists. Note: they were not attending the synagogue to worship God but to watch for wrong in Jesus "that they might accuse Him" (v.2).

> **Thought 1.** How many sit in church, watching and picking out wrong in others so that they might accuse them and gossip about them? Church is the place for worship and ministering to all with "withered hands"—hands that are unable to work and serve God, hands that are withered because of...
>
> - dead spirits
> - disturbed emotions
> - unlearned minds
> - misguided lives

2 (3:3) **Religion**: true religion is a *willingness to stand forth.* The words "stand forth" (egeirai eis to meson) actually say, "Rise up, stand up in the midst." Jesus was calling for the man's will—his willingness to do exactly what the Messiah was saying. The man had to want help enough to be willing to stand before the audience and before the scornful religionists. By such a stand, he would be *confessing his faith in Jesus and in His power to save and heal.*

> **Thought 1.** Real religion is a willingness to stand forth. Christ calls every man to *rise up, stand,* repent, and confess his faith in the Lord's power to save and heal him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30.)
>
> **"The blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord" (Mt.9:28).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).**

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?" (Pr.6:9).

"Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God" (Jer.31:6).

"Arise ye, and depart [from sin], for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction" (Mic.2:10).

3 (3:4) **Religion**: true religion is *doing good and saving lives*. The problem the religionists had with Jesus was His breaking of their ceremonial law. People by the thousands were flocking to Jesus for help, and every time He broke the law, He was teaching the people to discredit the ceremonial law. Therefore, Jesus was a serious threat to the Jewish religion and nation and to the leaders of the nation—both civil and religious (their security, position, and power). (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9 for a detailed discussion.)

What Jesus did was teach and show that true religion is doing good and saving lives. True religion is not rules and regulations, not ceremony and ritual, no matter how good the rules and ceremony may be. If a man has a need, true religion meets that need. Jesus drove the point home by asking two questions.

First: "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil?" Jesus had the power to do good by healing the man. Therefore, if He did not heal the man, He would be withholding good and doing evil. Yet the ceremonial law said that no work was to be done on the Sabbath.

Second: "Is it lawful to save life, or to kill?" Jesus had the power and wanted to save the man's life; the religionists had the civil authority and wanted to kill Jesus. The religionists were actually plotting His death, and He knew it. They knew what He was asking and saying. True religion does good and saves life, it does not live by rules and regulations, ceremony and rituals; nor does it seek to isolate and cut off and kill men, even if they are judged to be threats.

Note the religionists said nothing. They refused to face the truth; they closed their minds in obstinate unbelief (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; 12:31-32 for discussion). They preferred and chose a religion of ceremony and ritual to that of doing good and saving lives.

Thought 1. True religion is doing good and saving lives.

"And to love him [God] with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Mk.12:33).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him" (1 Jn.3:16-19).

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

4 (3:5) **Religion**: true religion is *feelings against error and evil*. Note the feelings of Jesus. He was gripped by anger—an anger that involved grief. He was angered because of "the hardness of their hearts" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Grieved*—Mk.3:5. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32 for discussion.)

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk.6:46).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:5) **Grieved** (sullupoumenos): to sense grief, sorrow, empathy; to suffer with a person because they are injured. In this particular passage, Jesus' anger was combined with grief over people who harmed themselves. The anger of Jesus was a grieving anger over obstinate unbelief. The people who closed their minds—who just remained obstinate in unbelief despite the evidence—aroused a grieving anger within Him.

5 (3:5) **Religion**: true religion is *restoring men to wholeness*. True religion speaks and acts. Jesus spoke, "Stretch forth thy hand." The man did, and Jesus restored the man to wholeness. True religion does not hesitate to minister and restore men. True religion is love and service, not the keeping of rules and regulations, ceremony and rituals. Rules and ceremony are helpful; they are even necessary. But they are not true religion. The essence of religion is restoring men and making them whole in the name and power of Jesus.

Thought 1. See outline and notes—Ro.12:1-21. A quick glance at the whole chapter will give an excellent description of what true religion is.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

6 (3:6) **Religion**: true religion is *not intrigue nor is it destructive*. Note what had happened. Jesus had confronted the religionists with the truth. They had been shown unmistakably what true religion is. They were now faced with the dilemma: they had to either accept true religion, Jesus and His teaching, or else oppose Him. They chose to oppose Him, but they needed political help, so they went out and formed an alliance with the Herodians (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.22:16). Note a significant fact: despite enormous philosophical differences, there was no difference between the religious and political leaders in behavior (the Pharisees and the Herodians). Position, power, and security had corrupted their hearts and minds. They both plotted to destroy a person (Jesus) who opposed them. (See note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10 for a detailed discussion of their opposition.) True religion is not intrigue nor is it destructive.

Thought 1. Every person is confronted with true religion in Jesus Christ. Every person is faced with the dilemma of choosing to follow the true religion or opposing Christ.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).

Thought 2. How many within *religion* oppose Christ because of their position, power, and security? How many go along with questionable teachings, ideas, movements, and the religious fad of the day—all because they fear the reaction of the world and of their worldly-minded peers?

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor.6:2).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

	L. Jesus' Impact Upon Crowds and Evil Spirits: Seeking & Fearing Christ, 3:7-12 (Mt.12:14-21)	did, came unto him. 9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.	b. Multitudes thronged Him 1) Endangered His life
1 Jesus withdrew[DSI]		10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as	2) Sought to touch Him
2 His impact upon people: A true seeking a. Multitudes followed Him 1) They came from afar 2) The reason: They heard what great things He did	7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea, 8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he	many as had plagues. 11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.	**3 His impact upon evil spirits: A terrible fear** a. They were subject to Him b. They acknowledged His Messiahship c. He rebuked the evil spirit's confession

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

L. Jesus' Impact Upon Crowds and Evil Spirits: Seeking and Fearing Christ, 3:7-12

(3:7-12) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Crowds Follow**: Jesus' impact upon people was unbelievable; it was incomprehensible. In just a few months, the whole nation was aroused to seek after the One called Jesus of Nazareth, the promised Messiah. A fact that is often unnoticed is the fact covered in this passage: "A great multitude...came unto Him." The multitude is called "great" twice (v.7, 8). The crowds were enormous (remember the feeding of five thousand men, not counting the women and children). The multitudes did what we so desperately need to do: they truly sought Him, even to the point of *thronging Him* (v.9) and *pressing* or *crushing in upon Him* (v.10).

Jesus' impact upon evil spirits was just as dramatic. They were stricken to bow before Him and to acknowledge His Messiahship—two acts that desperately need to be done by men.

1. Jesus withdrew (v.7).
2. His impact upon people (v.7-10).
3. His impact upon evil spirits (v.11-12).

1 (3:7) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: Jesus was forced to withdraw to the sea of Galilee. There seemed to be two reasons for this move.

1. The leaders, both religious and political, were now plotting His death (see note—Mt.12:14-16). He still had much to teach before He could face the end. As He had said on several occasions, His hour had not yet come. He must not allow His death—not yet. Thus, He had to move out of the synagogue into the open country.
2. The crowds had become too large for the synagogues and the cities to handle. People by the multitudes were flocking to Him, even to the point of endangering His life by the crush of bodies (cp. v.8-9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(3:7) **Jesus Withdrew**: Mark says Jesus also withdrew in Mk.6:31, 46; 7:24, 31; 10:1; 14:34-35.

2 (3:7-10) **Jesus Christ, Impact**: the impact of Jesus upon the crowds was phenomenal. This fact is often overlooked or minimized. The crowds demonstrate how eagerly men should seek after Jesus. Note two eye-opening facts.

First, teeming multitudes flocked to Jesus and truly sought Him.

1. They came from all over the nation, and some even came from foreign nations.
   a. Crowds came from all over Galilee. Imagine a district so heavily populated that it embraced over two hundred cities with populations of fifteen thousand or more (see note—Mt.4:12-13). Teeming multitudes streamed to Jesus from all over the district (William Barclay. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminister Press, 1956, p.66).
   b. Crowds came from Judaea and Jerusalem. This was a hundred-mile journey.
   c. Crowds came from Idumaea which lay in the deep south, bordering Palestine and Arabia. Idumaea was the Greek and Roman name for Edom or the land of Esau (Gen.25:30; 36:1, 8). The significant point is that these people travelled a great distance to reach Jesus.
   d. Crowds came from beyond Jordan which refers to the populations who lived on the east side of the Jordan River.
   e. Crowds came from the north, from the foreign land of Phonecia and from the nation's two major cities, Tyre and Sidon.

2. The reason the crowds flocked to Jesus is given (v.8). The people heard the testimony of those who had seen and heard Jesus themselves or else had been told by others about Jesus. The testimony that the Messiah had come—the prophet who could meet the needs of mankind—spread like wild-fire. And when the people heard, many arose, packed their bags, and "came unto Him" (v.8).

Thought 1. The importance of witnessing and talking about the marvelous work of God's grace is strongly seen in Jesus' ministry. How many more would be flocking to Jesus and following Him if we were more faithful in sharing the glorious salvation in Him.

"And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mk.5:18-19).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph.5:19).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

Second, multitudes thronged Him, even to the point of crushing Him and threatening His life. They pressed "to touch Him," hoping that some *virtue* from Him might flow through their body and meet their need (v.10). Jesus had to order a small boat to sit just a short distance off shore to rescue Him in case the crushing crowd became too much for Him to handle.

Thought 1. How desperately men need the same kind of fervor to seek after Jesus today. Men desperately need to touch Jesus. Men need the *virtue, the saving strength, of Jesus*.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).

"Thence [from sin] thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

3 (3:11-12) **Jesus Christ, Impact—Evil Spirits**: the impact of Jesus upon evil spirits was dramatic. His presence struck a terrible fear within them. Yet His power over evil spirits was both comforting and assuring to the believer (see note—Lk.8:26-39).

1. The evil spirits were subject to Jesus. They "fell down before Him." They knew Him, for He had been the greater power in the spiritual world or dimension of being. They could do nothing beyond His control. "When they saw Him, [they] fell down before Him" (v.11).

2. The evil spirits acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God (see note—Mk.1:23-24 for more discussion). They acknowledged His Messiahship. The crowd had "pressed" to touch Jesus, hoping and praying for help; but the evil spirits "fell down before Him," being stricken to acknowledge His deity. But note: they did not fall down out of devotion—not because they were seeking Him—but they fell down because they...

- acknowledged Him to be who He claimed to be.
- feared Him, lest He cast them out, sending them to their destined hell before the end time.

Thought 1. Every *evil spirit*, every evil man needs to fall down before Christ—fearing, standing in awe, and confessing lest he be destined for hell.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

3. Jesus rebuked the confession of the evil spirits (see note—Mk.1:25-26).

Thought 1. The confession Christ wants is the confession of a broken and contrite heart, a changed and repentant life.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).

	M. Jesus' Impact Upon the Twelve Disciples: Calling Choice Men, 3:13-19 (Mt.10:1-4; Lk.6:12-19; Acts 1:13-14)	out devils: 16 And Simon he surnamed Peter; 17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:	**3 Men changed by Jesus**[DS4-15]
1 Men called by Jesus	13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.	18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and	
2 Men appointed by Jesus a. To be with Him b. To be sent forth c. To preach[DS1,2] d. To receive authority[DS3]	14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast	Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, 19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.	

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

M. Jesus' Impact Upon the Twelve Disciples: Calling Choice Men, 3:13-19

(3:13-19) **Introduction**: Jesus calls choice men—men with hearts that are ripe to be melted and molded. He calls and appoints men, and He changes them. This is what this passage is all about: Jesus' impact upon choice men.

1. Men called by Jesus (v.13).
2. Men appointed by Jesus (v.14-15).
3. Men changed by Jesus (v.16-19).

1 (3:13) **Ministers, Call of**: the disciples were *men called by Jesus*. Note three facts about what happened.

1. Jesus called, picked out, and chose some choice men. Many followed Him, but there were a few who showed more interest and commitment. He noticed the ones...
   - who listened with more attention.
   - who were more awake and alert.
   - who responded with a stirred heart.
   - who showed more attachment to Him after the crowds had gone.
   - who wanted to serve God with meaning and purpose.

Jesus did not look at the stature and physics of the people, not at their appearance and looks, not even at their ability and education. Jesus looked at the hearts of the people. When He saw a person listening, stirred, attached, and wanting to serve, He called that person.

2. Jesus "called...whom He would." His will was *the active power*. They did not choose Him, but He chose them. He did not call those whom the world thought more fit and educated. He called those whose hearts were right and responsive. He knew the heart, and His call was based on the principle of *heart response* (cp. Jn.15:16).

3. The disciples "came unto Him." The Greek means "they went away unto Him." There is the idea that they left, forsook, and went away from their former work to undertake the new work assigned by Jesus.

> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him....And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him" (Lk.5:11, 27-28).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me, For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or childrn, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).**

2 (3:14-15) **Ministers, Call of**: the disciples were men appointed by Jesus for four specific purposes (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.3:14).

1. The disciples were appointed *to be with Jesus*. This was the first lesson Jesus wanted to teach men: that God wants man's personal fellowship and devotion before all else. God willed men to "know Him, believe Him and understand

Him" above all else (Is.43:10). The disciples were to live in Jesus' presence, ever learning of Him and drawing their spiritual nourishment and strength from Him.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ....That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Ph.3:8, 10).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

2. The disciples were appointed to be *sent forth*. They were to be His ambassadors, His representatives who moved out into the world. They were appointed for that very purpose, to represent Him among the people of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Apostle*—Mt.10:2 for discussion).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:20).

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" (Acts 26:16).

3. The disciples were appointed *to preach*. They were to be the heralds, the messengers of Jesus Christ. He had a message for the world, and they were to proclaim His message to the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, 2—Mk.3:14; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.1:1-7 for discussion).

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.10:7).

"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Mt.10:27).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Lk.9:2).

"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:60).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer.20:9).

"The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8).

4. The disciples were apppointed to *receive power*—the power to minister and to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.3:15; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Mt.10:1 for discussion).

"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Lk.10:19-20).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10).

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:19).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:6-8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(3:14) **Ordained** (epoiese): to be made or appointed. The word is taken from the Greek word *poieo* which means to do, to make, to appoint with credentials. The word is often used to refer to a person being appointed to some high position or office. The picture is that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the future King of the universe, taking twelve men and appointing them to be His. He appoints (ordains) them to the *office* of being His ministers and representatives on earth.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(3:14) **Preach** (kerusso): to be a herald; to proclaim; to publish; to preach. The word carries with it the idea of intense feeling, gravity, and authority—so much so that it *must* be listened to and heeded. The person who preaches is the herald of Jesus Christ; that is, his message is the message of Christ, not of someone else. The herald does not share his own opinions and views; He *proclaims* the truth of Jesus Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.10:2 for more discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(3:15) **Sicknesses—Demons**: note that Mark makes a distinction between sickness and demon possession. This distinction is commonly made throughout the Gospels. Note these facts.

1. The word for power is not *dunamis*, the supernatural power of God. It is *exousia*, a delegated power or authority. The servant of God is not given the power of God to use as the servant wills, but the servant is given the authority to specifically minister by healing and casting out demons. The servant prays and speaks the word, and then God does the actual healing and casting out of the demon.
2. The emphasis of this delegated authority is casting out demons. The servant of Christ is given authority to cast out the evil spirits that rule men's lives. Note that the spiritual world or dimension of being is here acknowledged.

> **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(3:16-19) **Conversion—Transformation**: the disciples were *men changed by Jesus*. But it is critical to keep in mind that each man had to be *willing* to be changed. One was not willing, Judas Iscariot. Jesus called them all, but only the ones willing to be changed were changed. (See DEEPER STUDIES # 5-15—Mk.3:16; 3:17; 3:18; 3:19 for discussion.)

> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(3:16) **Simon—Peter (Greek, petros)—Cephas (Aramaic, kepha)**: Peter was a rough-hewn fisherman. He looked, acted, and spoke like any professional fisherman at the dock of a large lake or sea. Anyone who has been around a fisherman's dock or boat can picture Peter.

1. Peter had many commendable strengths.
   a. Peter was self-sacrificing, giving up all—even his home and business—to follow Jesus (see notes—Mk.1:16-18; Mt.8:14).
   b. Peter was spiritual minded. He was the first to really grasp who Jesus was (Mt.16:16-19).
   c. Peter was childlike and humble, often responding and leaping out to Jesus as a child does to his father (Mt.14:26-29; Mk.11:21; Jn.13:6-11).
   d. Peter was trusting, sometimes casting his whole being upon Jesus (Mt.14:26-29).
   e. Peter was tenderhearted and loving, caring deeply for his Lord (Mt.26:75; Jn.21:15-17).
   f. Peter was courageous, the only disciple who defended Jesus against arrest. He was also one of the two disciples who followed Jesus through His trials and crucifixion, although he followed *afar off* (Mt.26:51; 26:58).
   g. Peter would have been judged a hard-working, industrious man by any society.
2. Peter had some glaring weaknesses.
   a. Peter was prideful and presumptuous, a man who thought he knew best and who sometimes lorded it over others. He was always depending upon human wisdom and strength, the arm of the flesh.
      ⇒ Peter thought he knew what was best for Jesus, insisting that Jesus did not have to die (Mt.16:22-23).
      ⇒ Peter tried to prevent Jesus' arrest by drawing his sword and wounding one of the arresting party (Mt.26:51; Mk.14:47; Lk.22:50).

⇒ Peter rebuked Jesus, overstepping the limits of his rights. When the crowd thronged Jesus, Jesus simply asked who had touched Him. Peter rebuked Jesus for asking such a question when there were so many people pressing in upon them (Lk.8:45).
⇒ Peter, in a self-abasing pride, refused to let Jesus wash his feet (Jn.13:6-11).

b. Peter was slow to learn and to understand truth (Mt.15:15-16).
c. Peter was self-seeking (Mt.19:27).
d. Peter was disbelieving (Mt.14:30).
e. Peter was overbearing, even to the point of instructing Jesus (Mt.16:22-23).
f. Peter had a weak, cowardly trait, being the only disciple to vocally deny Jesus (Mt.26:69-74).

3. A chart showing some of the strengths and weaknesses of Peter can be pictured as follows.

⇒ Self-sacrificing (Mt.1:16-18; Mk.8:14)	⇒ yet self-seeking (Mt.19:27)
⇒ Spiritual minded (Mt.16:16-19)	⇒ yet slow to learn spiritual truth (Mt.15:15-16)
⇒ Childlike & humble (Mk.11:21; Jn.13:6-11)	⇒ yet presumptuous & prideful (Mt.16:22-23; 26:51; Lk.8:45)
⇒ Trusting (Mt.14:26-29)	⇒ yet disbelieving (Mt.14:30)
⇒ Tenderhearted & loving (Mt.26:75; Jn.21:15-17)	⇒ yet overbearing (Mt.16:22-23; 26:51)
⇒ Courageous (Mt.26:51; 26:58)	⇒ yet cowardly (Mt.26:69-74)

Peter was changed dramatically after Jesus' resurrection and after Pentecost. The presence of the living Lord in his life empowered him. Peter was able to take charge of the frightened band of disciples and lead them to fearlessly proclaim the glorious news of the risen Savior. (See note—Mt.8:14 and Master Subject Index for additional information on Peter.)

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(3:17) **James and John**: these two men were brothers. They were the sons of Zebedee, a prosperous fisherman who was a man of high social position. Apparently he was well acquainted with the High Priest and his household, probably providing fish for the palace (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.18:15-18). Their mother was Salome, who is thought by many to be the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus. James and John were men of *stormy tempers*, so much so that Jesus called them the *sons of thunder*. Their tempers are seen when they ask Jesus to destroy a Samaritan village with fire for rejecting Him (Lk.9:54).

The two brothers were also gripped by *worldly ambition*. They wanted the highest offices in the coming kingdom of Jesus (Mt.20:20-21). However, Jesus dramatically changed the two men. Jesus changed their stormy temper into a burning zeal and ambition for God. They became two of the greatest witnesses for God ever known. James became the first of the twelve to be martyred; and John was the longest living disciple, becoming one of the greatest literary giants of all time (*The Gospel of John, The Three Epistles of John,* and *The Revelation*). (See notes—Mk.1:20; 10:35-45; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.5:10. See Introduction—The Gospel of John and Revelation.)

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(3:18) **Andrew**: Andrew was apparently the first disciple of our Lord. He had been a disciple of John the Baptist, longing for the Messianic hope. However, when John pointed out that Jesus was the Messiah, Andrew requested an interview with Jesus. From that point on, he was convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah, and Jesus granted him a very special friendship (Mk.13:3; Jn.1:35-37). Jesus met his craving for the Messianic hope and enlarged his gifts of love and caring (cp. Jn.1:41; 6:8-9; 12:21-22). Andrew was always helping people (Jn.6:8-9; 12:21-22).

Tradition says Andrew preached in Jerusalem and was crucified for preaching against idolatry. He was hung on a cross in the shape of an X.

DEEPER STUDY # 8
(3:18) **Philip**: Philip did not seek Jesus, but Jesus sought Philip (Jn.1:43f). This indicates that Philip was slow in responding and believing, and he almost missed the opportunity to become an apostle of Jesus. In fact, being slow to respond and fearing to act seem to be the major weaknesses of Philip. He actually did miss the opportunity to demonstrate great faith when Jesus tested his faith in feeding the multitude. He was also slow in responding when some Greeks wanted to interview Jesus (Jn.12:21-22). Again, he was slow in understanding who Jesus was (Jn.14:8f). His faith and willingness to act were in constant need of being stirred and strengthened. Jesus changed him and made him a man of strong faith. This is seen in that he stood fast and fearless even in the face of martyrdom. Tradition tells us that he died as a martyr at Hierapolis.

DEEPER STUDY # 9
(3:18) **Bartholomew—Nathanael**: little is known about this disciple other than what is given by John (see outline, notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Jn.1:46-49).

DEEPER STUDY # 10
(3:18) **Matthew—Levi**: Matthew was a tax collector, an outcast of society, a traitor to the Jewish people. He felt the alienation and rejection ever so deeply. Yet Jesus took Matthew, changed His life, and met every need of his heart (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.9:9-13; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.2:14. See Introduction—The Gospel of Matthew.)

DEEPER STUDY # 11
(3:18) **Thomas—Didymus** (meaning the *twin*): Thomas was a man of courage and loyalty. This is seen in his suggestion that the disciples follow Jesus even if it meant death (Jn.11:8, 16). But he was also a skeptic, a pessimist, a doubter. He was slow to understand Jesus' Messiahship (Jn.14:5-6), and he rejected the testimony of others that Jesus had actually risen from the dead. (See outline and notes—Jn.20:24-29.) However, the resurrection of Jesus changed Thomas—changed him completely. He has given to the world one of the strongest testimonies possible (Jn.20:28).

Tradition says that Thomas went to Parthia (India), carrying the gospel to that great continent. He is said to have died a martyr's death.

DEEPER STUDY # 12
(3:18) **James, the son of Alphaeus**: little is known about this James.

⇒ His father was Alphaeus or Clopos (Jn.19:25).
⇒ His mother was one of the women who stood by the cross and visited the tomb of Jesus (Jn.19:25).
⇒ He had a brother, Joses, who was also a follower of Jesus (Mk.15:40; 16:1; Jn.19:25).

It is interesting to note that Matthew's father was also named Alphaeus. Thus, it is possible that James and Matthew were brothers. Tradition says that James was a tax collector just like Matthew. If true, this would give weight to their being brothers.

James was willing to be changed by Jesus, to become a true disciple of the Lord's. He did not forsake the disciples after the crucifixion but stayed right with them. Therefore, he was present when Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection and began transforming the disciples into dynamic witnesses for Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 13
(3:18) **Thaddaeus—Labbeus—Judas, Son of James**: little is known about Thaddaeus. His name (Thaddaeus) means *breast* or *one that praises* or *man of heart*. The fact that Matthew and Mark call him by the name Thaddaeus, the man of heart, reveals that he was a man with a big heart, one who gave of himself to help and minister to others. The presence of the living Lord in his heart and life could only enlarge such a heart.

DEEPER STUDY # 14
(3:18) **Simon the Canaanite—Simon the Zealot**: Simon was a member of the fanatical Jewish party known as the Zealots. The party held that God alone was to be the Ruler and Lord of the Jewish nation. They hated and bitterly opposed all foreign (Roman) domination. They preached and led revolutionary uprisings against the government when they could be formed.

The power of Jesus to change a man's heart is seen in Simon the Zealot. Simon's fanatical devotion turned him into a Zealot for Jesus. Note that he never changed the description of his fanatical nature. Even after his conversion and call, he still wanted his zeal to be known. He still wanted to be known as Simon the Zealot, one who was totally devoted to Jesus Christ, the true Messiah.

DEEPER STUDY # 15
(3:19) **Judas Iscariot**: Very simply, Judas was unwilling to have his heart and life changed by Jesus (see outlines and notes—Mt.26:14-16; 26:20-25; 27:3-5; Master Subject Index for discussion.)

	N. Jesus' Impact Upon Friends: Calling Jesus Mad & Insane,[DSI] 3:20-21
1 **The multitude: They were so zealous that Jesus was unable to eat**	20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.
2 **The friends: They acted the very opposite** a. Heard of His behavior b. Thought Him insane c. Sought custody	21 And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

N. Jesus' Impact Upon Friends: Calling Jesus Mad and Insane, 3:20-21

(3:20-21) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Accusations Against**: the Authorized Version is probably correct in using "friends" here instead of "kinsmen" or family. Jesus' impact upon His family is discussed in Mk.3:31.

1. The multitude: they were so zealous that Jesus was unable to eat (v.20).
2. The friends: they acted the very opposite (v.21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:20-21) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: from this point to the end of the chapter Mark shows the difference between the feelings of the crowd and the feelings of others about Jesus. In verse 20 he shows the feelings and the support of the multitude. Then he shows the enormous contrast of the feelings of three groups who should have been the very ones to support Jesus. There are the contrasted feelings...

- of His friends—who charged Him with being mad and insane (Mk.3:21).
- of the religionists—who charged Him with being demon-possessed (Mk.3:22-30).
- of His very own family—who charged Him with being an embarrassment (Mk.3:31-35).

In the present passage, the contrast between the feelings of the multitude and Jesus' friends is clearly seen. And in the contrast much is to be learned.

1 (3:20) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Zeal—Enthusiasm—Ministers, Support of**: the zeal and enthusiasm of the crowd for Christ was great, so great that He was unable to care for Himself. He could not even find time to eat. Note two points.

1. Jesus had not called for the crowd to come; they just came. They filled the house, overflowing into the street. Some had come more out of curiosity than need, but others had come to hear and learn. Still others had come to be helped and healed.

Thought 1. Zeal and enthusiasm for Christ are so desperately lacking. Men should be flocking to Him by the multitudes, but they are not. Why?

⇒ Do they love the world and the things of the world too much (1 Jn.2:15-16)?
⇒ Do they love the flesh and its feelings too much?
⇒ Do they love pride and fame and power too much?
⇒ Do they just not know? Have they not heard (Ro.10:14-15)?
⇒ Is the witness and life of believers too weak (Eph.4:17-24)?

2. The crowd was so large and pressuring. Therefore, Christ and the disciples were unable to take care of their physical needs. However, Christ did not turn the crowd away; He ministered to them.

Thought 1. Christ ministered despite enormous inconvenience and disruption. A unique opportunity presented itself and He grasped it. He denied Himself, His own need, in order to help others. What a lesson for us!

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

2 (3:21) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the treatment of Jesus by some friends differed enormously from the multitude. Whereas the multitude responded to Jesus, some friends heard of His behavior and concluded that He was insane, so they sought to take custody of Him. Apparently the friends were close to the family; therefore, they cared deeply for Jesus. They felt He was in danger and wanted to help the family and Him.

Note the words "when his friends heard *of it*." The words are in italics. In the King James Version when words are in italics it means they are not in the Greek. They are added by the translator as he believes the meaning should be. In the present passage, the Greek uses a participle meaning "having heard" (akou santes). The idea is that the friends heard not only about the enormous crowds, but they heard *all about Jesus*: His phenomenal miracles, claims, and teachings; the prophetic esteem which the people heaped upon Him; the opposition which was now threatening His life. All this led the friends of the family to think He was insane. At least seven things contributed to the charge of insanity.

1. Jesus was thought to be crazed because of the zeal and enthusiasm of the crowd. It was felt that the crowd's zeal had turned His head and caused Him to overly evaluate Himself. He was reveling in their attention and adulation. It was reported that He was so caught up in the multitude's enthusiasm that He was neglecting the care of His body, even to the point of not eating meals.
2. Jesus was thought to be crazed because of the response of the people and the esteem with which they held Him. It was thought that such esteem had twisted His mind, causing Him to think too highly of Himself. There were reports that He was claiming to be the Messiah and even the Son of God Himself.
3. Jesus was thought to be crazed because He was selecting a queer band of disciples: rough-hewn fishermen (Peter, James, and John); despised and hated sinners and publicans (Matthew and probably James, the son of Alphaeus); a revolutionary zealot (Simon the Zealot); a seeker who was spiritually troubled (Nathaniel). A sane man set on religious purposes would never choose such men, not if he wished to succeed in society.
4. Jesus was thought to be crazed because His life and behavior were so radically different from normal life and behavior. What He was doing and saying was diametrically opposed to the way anything had ever been done before. He differed so much from everyone else. His very life convicted any who confronted Him, and His words demanded either acceptance or rejection.
5. Jesus was thought to be crazed because the authorities were opposing and threatening to kill Him, yet He refused to back down or flee. He even refused to move elsewhere. A normal person who had a mission to accomplish would at least flee elsewhere until he had time to regroup and plan some other way to achieve his purpose.
6. Jesus was thought to be crazed because His healing ministry necessitated some explanation. There were so many healings, so many miraculous events that a person was forced to come up with some theory. Jesus was either who He claimed, the Son of God; or He was filled with a supernatural spirit other than God's, a spirit that made Him mad, the spirit of the devil. All kinds of theories were now running rampant. There were the theories that He was...
   - John the Baptist raised from the dead (Mt.14:1-2).
   - Elijah, Jeremiah, or some prophet sent back to life (Mt.16:14).
   - Beelzebub (Mt.12:22-32; Mk.3:22-30).
   - insane (Mk.3:21).
7. Jesus was thought to be crazed because His teaching and doctrine were so different from anyone else's. In fact, what He taught often differed radically from all that *had ever* been taught. As Festus said to Paul, "Much learning doth make thee mad" (Acts 26:24).

Thought 1. Is Jesus who He claimed? Think of the alternatives:

1) He was truly the Son of God.
2) He was devil-possessed; that is, His power came from an evil spirit.
3) He was insane, mad, mentally deceived, and deranged.
4) He was deliberately lying about being the Son of God, deliberately deceiving people in order to secure a following to boost His ego.

> **"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Mt.14:33).**
>
> **"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk.1:1).**
>
> **"And I [John the Baptist] saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).**
>
> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).**
>
> **"And straightway he [Paul] preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20).**

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

Thought 2. The call of the hour is: "Believe Jesus. Trust Him. He was not insane. He is truly the Son of the living God."

Thought 3. Friends can be wrong, no matter how much they esteem and love us. What they think and how they treat us can often be wrong: the friends of Jesus were wrong.

Thought 4. We must go against friends sometimes; we must vigorously surrender to God and do His will regardless of what our friends may think. If God calls us to serve Him, then serve Him we must. Friends can oppose God's will. They may have good intentions, but they cannot know God's will for another person's life. God deals, calls, and works with each of us individually and personally. Being strong and standing firm in God's call and will are desperately needed—always.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:66-68).

"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way [quit arguing]: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

	O. Jesus' Impact Upon Religionists: Calling Jesus Demon-Possessed, 3:22-30 (Mt.12:22-32; Lk.11: 14-20)	house cannot stand. 26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.	c. Concl.: Satan would be destroying his own kingdom
1 The Scribes, the investigative commission, gave their judgment about Jesus a. The terrible charge[DSL2] b. The rebuttal by Jesus: A logical question	22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. 23 And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?	27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.	**3 Rebuttal 2: Satan's kingdom has been breeched**
2 Rebuttal 1: Internal strife always divides & destroys a. It destroys a kingdom b. It destroys a house	24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house be divided against itself, that	28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: 29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: 30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.	**4 Rebuttal 3: God's love is universal** **5 Rebuttal 4: There is one danger—ascribing God's work to the devil**

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

O. Jesus' Impact Upon Religionists: Calling Jesus Demon-Possessed, 3:22-30

(3:22-30) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Response to**: Who was Jesus Christ? Was He really of God, or was He of the devil? That is, was He evil, an imposter, a deceiver who set out to mislead the world into thinking that He was the Son of God? Is belief in Him really the only way to God? Are His teachings the *only way* to live and to experience deliverance now and eternally?

The religionists of Jesus' day believed He was evil. In fact, they believed He was an embodiment of Satan himself. This passage discusses their charge and Jesus' answer. And it challenges us to accept the truth about Jesus.

1. The Scribes, the investigative commission, gave their judgment about Jesus (v.22-23).
2. Rebuttal 1: internal strife always divides and destroys (v.24-26).
3. Rebuttal 2: Satan's kingdom has been breeched (v.27).
4. Rebuttal 3: God's love is universal (v.28).
5. Rebuttal 4: there is one danger—ascribing God's work to the devil (v.29-30).

1 (3:22-23) **Religionists, Accusations**: the Scribes, the investigative commission from Jerusalem, gave their judgment about Jesus (see notes—Mk.2:6-7; 3:1-2).

1. Their charge was terrible: "He hath Beelzebub" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.3:22); that is, He was *possessed*, *indwelt*, *controlled*, *under the supreme power* of Beelzebub, the supernatural power of evil. Note: they were not saying that Jesus was in alliance with the devil. Their charge went much farther than an alliance. They were saying that Jesus was an incarnation of evil, of the devil himself.

The religionists and people were bitter, stinging, rough, and cutting in their accusations against Jesus.

⇒ "He hath a devil, and is mad" (Jn.10:20).
⇒ "[He is] a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (Jn.8:48).
⇒ He is born out of wedlock (Jn.8:41; Mt.1:18-19).
⇒ "[He is] a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of [co-habitor with] sinners" (Lk.7:34).

Note two things.

a. The religionists could not deny the power of Jesus: lives were being dramatically and radically changed; evil spirits were being "cast out" of people. Exorcism, the casting out of evil spirits, was not a new or unusual thing to the people of Jesus' day.
   ⇒ Jesus referred to Jewish exorcists (Mt.12:27; Lk.11:19).
   ⇒ The disciples referred to a man who professed to be a follower of Jesus and who was casting out demons in Jesus' name (Mk.9:38).
   ⇒ There was a Jewish priest who had seven sons, and each of the sons claimed to be an exorcist (Acts 19:13-16).

   The religionists were without excuse. They should have understood exorcism. The presence of evil spirits and men's attempting to cast them out were common enough occurances for them to understand (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; 12:27-28).

   The point is this: exorcism was not a *new* thing, but what Jesus was doing was new. Others were not always successful in casting out evil spirits. They failed, lacked permanent and perfect power to overcome

the world of evil—but not Jesus. His power was universal and perfect, always effective. By just speaking a simple word, the most powerful results imaginable happened. Evil spirits within men, spirits which corrupted men's lives, were cast out; and the men were dramatically and forcefully changed.

The religionists could not deny the fact. They had to deal with the matter of Jesus' power. Some explanation, some theory had to be given. Their conclusion was: "He hath Beelzebub...by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils."

b. The religionists were deliberately trying to disprove Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God. If they could prove He was an imposter, a fraud, a deceiver, an evil man misleading others, a man linked to evil and to the devil, then His claims would be disproven and the people would cease to follow Him (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; 12:9-13; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).

2. Jesus had to answer the charge. His rebuttal was a forceful argument. He asked *the logical and irrefutable* question: "How can Satan cast out Satan?" The answer was unavoidable, inevitable: Satan would never cast out evil. If he did, he would be working against himself, and that is not his purpose. He is out to build and expand evil, not to destroy it. To say otherwise is illogical; it does not make sense. Jesus used four rebuttals to prove His point (see outline and notes of this passage).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:22) **Beelzebub**: an idol god of the ancient Philistines. The name means *the god of flies*. But the Jews called the idol *the god of filth* or *the god of dung* (Beelzebub). The name was eventually ascribed to Satan as the prince of unclean spirits (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(3:22) **Religionists—Jesus Christ, Opposed**: the religionists were bitter, stinging, rough, and cutting in their accusations against Jesus. "He hath a devil and is mad" (Jn.10:20). He is a "Samaritan and has a devil" (Jn.8:48); He is born out of wedlock (Jn.8:41). He is "greedy, alcoholic, a friend of sinners" (Lk.7:34).

Why did the religionists (Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes) oppose Jesus so vehemently? There were several reasons.

1. Religion gives a sense of security. It is the opium of the people, as Karl Marx said. It makes a person secure and comfortable with himself. Therefore, a truly professional and committed religionist opposes anything that threatens the security he has found.

2. Religionists oppose change. Every true religionist believes his way is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no reason to change so long as one's needs are being met.

3. Religion can lead to position, pride, and a sense of importance. One of the most difficult things in the world is for a person to give up his position and admit he is wrong. To do so is to deny his importance. Think about it—for this is exactly what Christ demands of every man (Lk.9:23). This is the reason so many of the gifted and the powerful of the world reject Christ and become hostile to Him (see outline—1 Cor.1:26-31).

2 (3:24-26) **Strife—Division—Jesus Christ, Messiah**: the first rebuttal by Jesus was that internal strife always divides and destroys. He used two illustrations to enforce His point. (See note—Mt.12:25-26 for a more detailed explanation of this point.)

1. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Civil war, internal strife, and divisiveness will cause a kingdom to fall. It cannot last, not if its subjects fight among themselves.

2. A house divided against itself cannot stand. Constant bickering and arguing will cause the house to crumble. A house cannot last, not if its subjects strive, fuss, quarrel and fight all the time. The house will break up.

3. Satan cannot be rising up against himself. He would be casting out his own evil spirits and destroying his own kingdom of evil subjects. He would be breaking his rule and reign over lives.

There is no conceivable way Jesus is from anywhere other than from God. He had nothing whatsoever to do with evil or evil spirits, except to cast them out of men's lives. He had come to free men so that they might live righteously and godly in this present world. He is God's representative among men, not Satan's. He is exactly who He claims to be, the Son of God Himself. To argue any other position is illogical. (Again, see note—Mt.12:25-26 for a detailed discussion and application of this point. Also see note, Thought 1—Mk.3:21 for Jesus' claim to be the Son of God. See note—Jn.1:34 for most of the verses referring to Jesus as the Son of God.)

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).

3 (3:27) **Jesus Christ, Work of—Satan, Defeated**: the second rebuttal by Jesus is that Satan's kingdom had been breeched. God had broken into Satan's house and kingdom by using the power of Christ to free those enslaved by Satan. Just as an invader enters a strong man's house, binds him, and then spoils his goods, so Jesus has now invaded Satan's kingdom of evil. Christ is now setting men free, free from evil spirits. Satan is now being conquered. The power of Christ

is now delivering men from the world and enslavement of evil. Men can now be set free from evil—even from the evil of death itself (cp. Heb.2:14-15; Col.2:15; 1 Cor.15:20-58. See note—Mt.12:29 for a detailed discussion of this point.)

> **"Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:30-31).**
>
> **"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor.15:20-23).**
>
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

4 (3:28) **God, Love of—Forgiveness—Blasphemy**: the third rebuttal by Jesus was that God's love is universal. God forgives all sin—even blasphemy—that insults, curses, and reviles God (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.9:3). Men need to know this glorious truth. There is no sin that God does not forgive. A man can be forgiven anything, no matter how terrible or vile. He can be forgiven if he will turn to Christ, confess his sin, and repent (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Forgiveness*—Mt.26:28 for discussion).

The behavior of Jesus upon the cross shows just how universal God's love really is. The savage treatment and the vulgar insults inflicted upon Jesus were horrible. Such treatment shows the base, sinful nature of all men; yet Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them" (Lk.23:34).

> **Thought 1.** God's love and forgiveness are universal. God loves every man and will forgive any man no matter how much the man has sinned and blasphemed God.
>
> > **"Be it known unto you therefore, man and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).**
> >
> > **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
> >
> > **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).**
> >
> > **"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Is.43:25).**
> >
> > **"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Is.44:22).**
> >
> > **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**

5 (3:29-30) **Sin, Unforgivable**: the fourth rebuttal by Jesus was that there is one danger—the danger of committing the unforgivable sin. The unforgivable sin is ascribing God's work to the devil (see note—Mt.12:31-32 for a detailed discussion and application of the Unpardonable Sin).

The unforgivable sin is committed by the man who continues and continues...

- to reject the *promptings* of the Holy Spirit.
- to blind himself to the illumination of the Holy Spirit.
- to wilfully sin despite conviction by the Holy Spirit.
- to insist on his own way.
- to oppose the work of the Holy Spirit.
- to justify himself in his sinful behavior.

> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**

	P. Jesus' Impact Upon His Own Family: Feeling Jesus Is an Embarrassment, 3:31-35 (Mt.12:46-50; Lk.8:19-21)	thy brethren without seek for thee. 33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? 34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.	and embarrassment **2 True kinship is not just blood relationship** **3 True kinship is a common relationship with God** a. It is being a disciple of Christ b. It is seeking to do God's will
1 Jesus' family a. They were "standing without" b. They sent for Him—"calling Him" c. He was informed of the family's presence	31 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. 32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and		

DIVISION II

THE SON OF GOD'S OPENING MINISTRY: JESUS' IMMEDIATE IMPACT, 1:21-3:35

P. Jesus' Impact Upon His Own Family: Feeling Jesus Is an Embarrassment, 3:31-35

(3:31-35) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Family**: tongues were buzzing and rumors were flying about Jesus (see outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.3:20-21; note—3:22-30). The rumors reached Mary and her other children back in Nazareth. They became extremely concerned over Jesus' welfare and were somewhat embarrassed over Jesus. So they struck out to get Him and bring Him home before something terrible happened. When they arrived and Jesus was informed of their presence, He made a shocking claim: there is a greater family existing than the human family—a family that has supremacy over blood relationships. It is the family of God, the family of all those who do the will of God. (See outline and notes—Mt.12:46-50; Lk.8:19-21 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus' family (v.31-32).
2. True kinship is not just blood relationship (v.33).
3. True kinship is based on a common relationship with God (v.34-35).

1 (3:31-32) **Jesus Christ, Family**: Jesus' family came to take Him home. His family had not been with Him at this time. They had probably been back in Nazareth. Note the facts given.

1. They were "standing without," apparently embarrassed, not wishing to approach Jesus in front of the crowd lest a scene be created.
2. They "sent [someone else] unto Him, calling Him" to take Him home.
3. The crowd informed Him of the family's presence outside, and note: they added the words "seek for thee." The crowd was apparently aware of the family's embarrassment and thoughts that He was "beside Himself" and needed to be taken home (v.21).

Something significant had happened that brought Jesus' family to get Him and take Him home. What happened that caused Mary and His brothers to come for Him? What was so serious that they would send someone else inside to get Him instead of going in themselves or at least waiting until the meeting was over? What would cause them to seek to interrupt and stop the preaching of Jesus? (See outline and notes—Mt.12:46-50.) What would cause Jesus to proclaim such shocking words at this time (v.34-35)? There seem to be three reasons.

1. The public, even some friends of Jesus and the family, were saying, "He is beside Himself," mad, insane (Mk.3:20-21). Two things caused this charge.
   a. He was working very hard, in fact so hard that He "could not so much as eat bread" (Mk.3:20). He was swamped by people to the extent that He was forced to skip meals and do without rest. His refusing to leave the frenzied atmosphere in order to eat and rest—such behavior going on day after day and month after month—led some to wonder if He were mad, abnormal in craving the attention and adulation and frenzy of the crowds.
   b. He was proclaiming Himself to be the Son of God. He made many claims that were so unusual that He was thought insane (see outlines and notes—Jn.5:1-7:53. A quick glance will show just how phenomenal Jesus' claims were and why He was so opposed by many, even by His own family.)
2. The rulers, both political and religious, were increasingly opposing Jesus. The family was alarmed and feared for His life (see outline and notes—Mt.12:1-50; Mk.3:22-30).
3. The news of His *claim* to be the Son of God reached the family, and the neighbors were saying that such a claim was preposterous, utter insanity. In addition, the neighbors and friends were whispering about His insanity and about His conflict with the leaders of the nation. All this did to Mary and the family what such news would do to any family: it caused concern and stirred a mother's deep love and responsibility for her Son. She left immediately to go for Him, to bring Him home in order to save Him from harm and the family from further embarrassment (Mt.12:14; Jn.7:1f).

Thought 1. Some penetrating questions need to be asked and answered by all of us.
- ⇒ How many are embarrassed by Jesus?
- ⇒ How many are ashamed to stand up for Jesus and His claims?
- ⇒ How many fear what their neighbors and friends will say if they take a stand for Jesus?
- ⇒ How many want to take Jesus home and lock Him up in a room where His claims will not bother anyone?

At this point a legitimate question needs to be asked: How could Mary not believe Jesus' claims after her experience with God concerning the birth of Jesus? The answer is given in an honest and open-hearted study of the Scripture.

1. Mary was a wonderful woman, the woman chosen for a very special mission: to be the person through whom God would send "His only begotten Son" into the world (Jn.3:16). But it must always be remembered that Mary was *only human*. She was a very special woman, yes; nevertheless, she was still only human. Her being special was only in that she was *highly favored* by God (Lk.1:28). Her being special was not because of any virtue or merit of her own. It was because of God, because of His mercy and His grace alone.

2. Mary's deep experience with God had happened some thirty years before. Thirty or more years is a long time for human creatures to maintain the reality and meaning of a religious experience. Human emotions rise and fall almost daily.

3. As a mother, as flesh and blood, Mary had a difficult time (as anyone in her situation would) understanding the mission and Messiahship of her Son Jesus.

   a. Mary had believed God's messenger (Lk.1:45), but she had not fully understood. She apparently "kept all these things [to herself—wisely, we might add], and *pondered* them in her heart" (Lk.2:19).

   b. Thirteen years later Mary had difficulty understanding the mission of her twelve year-old Son when He was found in the temple after having been lost for two days. When they found Him, He was engaged in a most unusual questioning with the temple priests. Jesus asked His mother, "[Why] is it that ye sought me? [Knew] ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk.2:49).

   c. Some seventeen years after the temple experience, Mary called upon her Son to help at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus saw in the request an opportunity to begin familiarizing His mother with just who He really was, the Son of God. She was slow to grasp His purpose, so He gave her a mild rebuke, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come" (Jn.2:4. See note—Jn.2:3-5 for a more detailed explanation.)

4. Mary had known Jesus as one of her children and as a young man for some thirty years. She had known Jesus only in a day-to-day family setting, in a day-to-day routine environment. Then all of a sudden He pulled up stakes, left home, and left what was apparently a flourishing carpentry business. The events that occurred from the moment He left happened so rapidly over the next few months and were so dramatic that Mary was bound to feel bombarded and perplexed. She and all the others who were close to Jesus were having to learn that He was not just a man, but the Son of God Himself. (See outline and notes—Mk.3:21 for other unusual acts by Jesus that caused problems for the friends and the family. Mary was bound to be concerned because of what was happening and being said about her Son.)

2 (3:33) **Brotherhood—God, Family of**: *true kinship is not just blood relationship*. Note two facts.

1. Jesus is not downgrading the family or human ties to blood relatives (see note—Mt.12:46-47). No one was ever more devoted to the family than Jesus. This is seen in...
   - His care of Mary throughout His life (cp. Jn.19:26-27).
   - His teaching and the teaching of His disciples throughout Scripture (cp. Eph.5:22-6:4).
   - His impact upon society's treatment of women, children, and the family (see note—Mk.10:5; cp. Col.3:18-21).
   - His own half-brothers who eventually became disciples (see note—Mk.6:3-4).

2. Jesus is saying that human genes, family blood and traits, are not enough to create and make a genuine family. A *true family*, a *true kinship* does not exist just because some people have common blood and traits. This is clearly seen in the pages of family histories every day. Too many families are in turmoil, divided, and torn apart. Too many families are in constant conflict ranging from mild verbal assaults to murderous assaults. There is...
   - parent against child
   - child against parent
   - husband against wife
   - sister against sister
   - brother against brother
   - relative against relative

Now picture the scene. Jesus is standing before the crowd. He has just been told that His mother and brothers are outside "seeking" for Him. In the event He sees a unique opportunity to teach a much needed lesson. Stretching forth His arms toward the multitude, He cries out, "Who is my mother, or my brethren?" He is proclaiming that blood relationships, family genes and traits, are not enough to create true kinship. Something more is needed.

> **"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Lk.3:8).**
>
> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).**
>
> **"They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" (Jn.8:33).**
>
> **"They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (Jn.8:39).**
>
> **"Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples" (Jn.9:28).**
>
> **"Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pt.1:21).**

3 (3:34-35) **God, Family of—Believers**: *true kinship is based on a common relationship with God.* True kinship is a spiritual relationship. God is Spirit, and those who would know and follow Him must be in spiritual union with Him. True kinship is a matter of the spirit, heart, and mind (Jn.4:23-24). All who are in *spiritual union* with God become sons and daughters of God and brothers of Jesus. They comprise the true family of God (2 Cor.6:17-18; Ro.8:29).

Jesus points out two facts.

1. True kinship is based upon being a true disciple, a true follower of God. Note the words, "He looked round about on them." Matthew says that the persons Jesus was looking at were His disciples (Mt.12:49). He was saying that His true family was the disciples, those who had accepted Him as Lord and Master. It was their acceptance of Him in spirit and heart that bound them together. He was saying that all who follow Him are spiritually united. They constitute a kinship that is based upon having the same Lord and Master, a true kinship that will last forever. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Fellowship*—Acts 2:42. Also see notes—Eph.2:11-18; 2:19-22 for discussion.)

> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).**
>
> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:14-17).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**
>
> **"For through him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:18-19).**
>
> **"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph.3:14-15).**
>
> **"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb.2:11).**

2. True kinship is based upon doing the will of God. Jesus had given Himself to do God's will. The disciples had accepted Jesus as their Lord and Master. Therefore, they were committed to do exactly what their Lord did: the will of God. The will of God became the objective and drive of their lives. All true disciples of Jesus have the same objective: to do the will of God. Therefore, it is the spiritual commitment to do the will of God that binds all believers together.

All men who focus their lives upon the will of God are bound together spiritually, bound together to do the will of God. Jesus is saying no greater kinship exists.

> **Thought 1.** The will of God is the law of God (cp. the ten commandments, Ex.20:3-17).
>
> **"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps.40:8).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1 Th.4:3).**
>
> **"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).**
>
> **"[This] is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pt.2:15).**
>
> **"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1 Pt.4:2).**

	CHAPTER 4	parable.	
	III. THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY 4:1-6:6	11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:	a. The disciple accepts the parable b. The outsider rejects the parable—deliberately
	A. The Parable of the Sower: How Men Receive the Word of God, 4:1-20 (Mt.13:1-23; Lk.8:4-15)	12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.	1) Lest they hear, see, and understand 2) Lest they be converted & forgiven
1 Jesus began a new method of teaching—the parable a. The setting: By the seashore in a boat b. The crowd: Very great	And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.	13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?	**4 The meaning of the parable**
c. The parable[DS1]	2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,	14 The sower soweth the word.	a. The sower sows the Word
2 The parable: A sower sows a. Sows seed that does not take root 1) Some fall by the wayside: Devoured 2) Some fall upon stony soil: Withers	3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: 4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. 5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:	15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. 16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.	b. Some hear the Word—by the wayside 1) The Word is heard 2) Satan comes—takes away the Word c. Some hear the Word—on stony ground 1) The Word is received excitedly 2) The Word has no root
b. Sows seed that does take root, but does not yield fruit—falls among thorns	6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.	18 And these are they which are sown among thorns: such as hear the word, 19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.	3) Trial & testing come 4) They wither away d. Some hear the Word—among thorns 1) The Word is only added to life 2) The world, riches, & things choke the Word
c. Sows seed that does bear fruit d. Sows only a few seed that bear 100 percent fruit	8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.	20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.	e. Some receive the Word—on good ground[DS2] f. Some—only a few—bear 100 percent fruit
e. A message heard only by spiritual ears	9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.		
3 The response to the parable	10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

A. The Parable of the Sower: How Men Receive the Word of God, 4:1-20

(4:1-20) **Introduction—Minister—Heart—Word of God**: there are at least two great lessons in this parable.

First, there is the lesson of sowing the seed, the lesson to the messenger of God. The messenger of God or the genuine believer is to sow the seed, the Word of God, wherever he is—no matter the difficulty, the opposition, or the discouragement. When Jesus stood before people, He knew the kind of people who sat before Him. He knew…

- the hard, closed hearts of the religionists and others.
- the shallow, deceptive enthusiasm of the poor and needy and of others.
- the worldliness of the well-to-do and of others, how entangled they were in *things* and pleasure.

He knew that many would never listen, but He also knew something else: if He just kept sowing the seed, some would bear fruit. Some soil would be fertile, craving for the truth of life and eternity. Therefore, they would "hear...receive...and bring forth fruit" (v.20). This is the reason Jesus continued on. He kept sowing, never giving in to discouragement—sowing that some might be saved and bear fruit. Jesus expects His followers to do the same, to continue on no matter the discouragement or opposition. There are some soils that are fertile, ploughed, and ready to receive the seed and to bear fruit.

Second, there is the great lesson on receiving the seed, the lesson to the hearers of the Word of God. The soils, that is, human hearts, vary among men. The variance ranges all the way from hard pavement-like hearts over to soft, ploughed hearts. Just what kind of heart a man has depends upon how he has lived and responded and conditioned himself throughout life.

The condition of his heart determines how he will love God and his neighbor, whether he will be responsive or close-minded. The point is that God holds a man responsible for the condition of his heart and for how he responds to the gospel.

In this parable Jesus paints the picture of various soils (hearts) and how they receive the seed, the Word of God. (See notes—Mt.13:1-9; Lk.8:4-15 for more detailed discussion and application.)

1. Jesus began a new method of teaching—the parable (v.1-2).
2. The parable: a sower sows (v.3-9).
3. The response to the parable (v.10-12).
4. The meaning of the parable (v.13-20).

1 (4:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Teaching of**: Jesus began a new method of teaching. He began to teach by parables. Note the setting was "by the seashore," and the crowd was great. The word for "great" (pleistos) means *very great*. The multitude was so great that they overflowed the seashore, and they pressed in upon Jesus so much that He was forced into a boat.

The parable was a new form of teaching for Jesus (see outlines and notes—Mt.13:10-17; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.4:2 for a detailed discussion of the parable).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:2) **Parable** (parabole): literally means placing a thing by the side of something else for the purpose of comparing. The word *comparison* best describes a parable.

1. A parable is a comparison: it is an earthly event pointing out a heavenly truth. It is a comparison between the earth and heaven.
2. A parable is a comparison: the earthly story has to be delved into to discover the heavenly truth. The spiritual point is found only by active thought and effort, by actively *comparing* the physical world with the spiritual world. In fact, the more a man thinks and meditates upon a parable, the more he usually sees of the truth.

Jesus is the *Master User* of the parable. No man ever used the parable so effectively. Why did He use the parable so much? (See notes—Mt.13:10-17; Lk.8:9-10 for the reasons and for more discussion.)

2 (4:3-9) **Word of God, Receiving**: the parable Jesus told was a simple story, yet its meaning was profound. It was not understood by most (cp. v.10-13). It concerned an event known by practically everyone who was familiar with sowing seed. Jesus said five things in this parable.

1. The farmer sows some seed that *does not take root*. There are two kinds of soil that bear no root at all. These two soils differ from the other soils in this very fact: there is *never* any root.
   a. There is the seed that falls upon the *wayside*, the unploughed, packed down areas right outside the ploughed field. The wayside joins the field, may even be a part of the field; but it is in the corners, the hard to reach areas that cannot be reached with the plough.
   b. There is the seed that falls upon the *stony ground*, the rock that lies right under the surface of the ground. The rock holds the water and heat longer; therefore, the seed shoots its plant up almost immediately. But there is no root to the plant; consequently, the sun scorches and kills it.
2. The farmer sows some seed that *takes root*, but it does not yield fruit. This is seed that falls among thorns. The thorny soil is part of the field. It has been ploughed, but it is deceptive ground. It looks good, but lying right underneath the soil is a mass of thorn roots ready to spring up. The fact that they were not destroyed in the ploughing and that they are already in the ground means that they will spring up faster and choke the seed.
3. The farmer sows seed that *bears fruit*. This is seed that falls upon good ground. Note two things about this "good ground." It yields fruit, and when fruit appears, it increases and grows. This is the significant fact to see in the good soil.
4. The farmer sows *only a few seed that bear 100 percent fruit*. All seed in the good ground bears fruit, but each plant varies in its degree of fruitfulness. This, too, is significant. Some fruitful plants bear only 30 percent. They are very weak plants, 70 percent unfruitful. Other plants bear only 60 percent. They too are weak, being 40 percent unfruitful. There are only a few plants that bear 100 percent of their potential fruit.
5. Jesus stresses the importance of the parable. The message of the parable is heard only by the spiritual: "He that hath [spiritual] ears, let him hear" (v.9). Luke tells us that "He cried" (ephonei) out, shouted the words, which stressed the importance even more. The message was so important, so critical. Jesus wanted all to hear and understand; but He knew, brokenly, that all would not hear.

3 (4:10-12) **Word of God, Receiving**: the response to the parable is twofold.

1. The disciple hears the parable. He does not just hear the words, but he hears the message, and he hears with his heart. The disciple is receptive—willing to think and to meditate and to receive the message into his life. The disciple is willing to do exactly what the parable teaches. Thus, God reveals the mysteries of the Kingdom of God to him.
2. The unbeliever hears the parable, but not with spiritual ears. He just hears the words. Note that Jesus called unbelievers "them that are without." An unbeliever is *without*, standing on the outside; he is an *outsider*.

The *outsider* does exactly what Jesus says.

> **"Seeing, they see, yet do not perceive" (v.12).**
> **"Hearing, they hear, yet do not understand" (v.12).**

Why does the *outsider* not perceive or understand? Jesus gives the reason: "lest they be converted and forgiven" (v.12).

a. They are unwilling to receive what is taught into their lives and hearts, unwilling to change their lives, unwilling to be converted. Therefore, they shut their minds, twist the truth, and rationalize their behavior. But note: God cannot give His pearls to the swine (cp. Mt.7:6).
b. They experience the law of conditioning. The more they harden their minds and hearts to the truth, the harder they become. They become more and more conditioned against the truth. Their openness and sensitivity to spiritual truth dwindles more and more until it is gone. The law of spiritual conditioning says that the more we receive spiritual truth, the more we increase our capacity to understand and grow in spiritual truth. But the opposite is also true. The more we reject spiritual truth, the more we decrease our sensitivity and become hardened to spiritual truth (see notes—Mt.13:10-17).

Thought 1. There are many who are *outside*...

- who are hard-hearted against spiritual things.
- whose hearts are shallow or whose minds are superficial. They are rootless, having no depth—
- usually lacking depth in all areas of life.
- who are worldly-minded, interested in spiritual matters only as a little *extra* added to their lives.

4 (4:13-20) **Word of God, Receiving**: the meaning of the parable is given by Jesus Himself. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:1-9 for a discussion of this point.) Note several facts.

The emphasis is upon the kind of ground which receives the seed, that is, the kind of person who receives the Word of God. All four grounds (all four types of persons) heard the Word, but each received it in a different manner. How each received the Word depended upon the kind of *ground* they were. The following chart shows this.

The wayside ground...	...is an unploughed heart...	...which results in a hardened life.
The stony ground...	...is a rootless heart...	...which results in a superficial life.
The thorny ground...	...is a worldly heart...	...which results in a strangled life.
The fruitful ground...	...is an honest & good heart...	...which results in a fruitful life.

1. The seed by the wayside: the wayside ground is an unploughed heart that results in a hardened life. The person by the wayside does hear the Word of God. He is present in church; but he is off to the side, out of the way, not involved. He lets his mind wander, thinking little, and involving himself even less. He respects Christ and the preacher and would not miss a service, but he is on the outer circle, paying little attention to the warnings and promises of the Word.

Note what happens: before the person believes, the devil comes and snatches the Word away. It is taken from the person; the person never applies the Word to his life, never really lives sacrificially for Christ. (Cp. Judas Iscariot and cp. Herod who enjoyed listening to John the Baptist, Mk.6:20.)

> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"Who [the hard-hearted] being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph.4:19).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).**
>
> **"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).**

2. The seed on the rock: the stony ground is a rootless heart that results in a surface, superficial life. This person hears the Word and becomes excited over it. He receives the Word, professes belief in Christ, and makes a profession of faith before the world. But he fails to count the cost, to consider the commitment, the self-denial, the sacrifice, the study, the learning, the hours and effort required. He does not apply himself to *learn Christ*; therefore, he does not become rooted and grounded in the Word. He is only a surface, superficial believer.

Again, note what happens: when trials and temptations come, he falls away. His profession is scorched and consumed, burned up by the heat of the trial and temptation. (Cp. John Mark who at first failed to endure, Acts 13:13; Demas, Phile.1:24; and the men who discovered that following Christ cost too much, Lk.9:57-62.)

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).

"But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Lk.6:49).

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [the world], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pt.2:20-22).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hath left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev.2:4-5).

3. The seed among thorns: the thorny ground is a worldly heart that results in a strangled life. This is a person who receives the Word and *honestly tries* (professes) to live for Christ. Christ and His followers and the church and its activities appeal to him. So he joins right in, even professing Christ as he walks about his daily affairs. But there is one problem: the thorns of worldliness. He is unwilling to cut completely loose from the world: "[to] come out from among them and [to] be...separate" (2 Cor.6:17-18). He lives a double life, trying to live for Christ and yet still live in the worldliness of the world. He keeps right on growing in the midst of the thorns, giving his mind and attention to the *cares* and *riches* and *pleasures* of this world.

Note what happens: fruit does appear, but it never ripens. It is never able to be plucked. The thorns choke the life out of it. It never lives to be used. (Cp. the Rich Young Ruler, Lk.18:18f; Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1f.)

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Mt.6:25).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

4. The seed on good ground: the fruitful ground is an honest and good heart which results in a fruitful life. These are they who have an honest and good heart; therefore, when they hear the Word, they keep it.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:20) **Fruit-Bearing**: note the three steps involved in bearing fruit.

1. Hearing the Word.
2. Receiving the Word.
3. Bringing forth the Word, that is, doing and living the Word.

	B. The Parables Dealing With Truth: Truth and Man's Duty, 4:21-25 (Mt.5:15-16; 10:26-27; 13:12; 24:29; cp. Lk.8:16-18; 11:33)	kept secret, but that it should come abroad.	
1 Share the truth	21 And he said unto them,	23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.	c. The exhortation: A man had better hear
a. The fact: Candles are to be placed on a candlestick	Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?	24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.	**2 Mark the truth**
b. The warning: All things shall be revealed; nothing is hid—except temporarily	22 For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing	25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.	a. Take heed, make sure you hear the truth b. The reason: How much a man takes heed determines his reward 1) The reward of more truth 2) The judgment of losing all

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

B. The Parables Dealing with Truth: Truth and Man's Duty, 4:21-25

(4:21-25) **Introduction**: this passage is difficult to grasp. The light reader and surface thinker will not understand what Jesus is saying. This very fact is the point Jesus was making. Grasping and knowing the truth takes time and effort and energy, and man has a twofold responsibility toward the truth. (See outline and notes—Lk.8:16-18 for more discussion.)

1. Share the truth (v.21-23).
2. Mark the truth (v.24-25).

1 (4:21-23) **Light—Witness—Believers**: Jesus said, "Share the truth." Light is to be set in the most conspicuous place, where it can best be seen.

1. Jesus shared a very simple fact. A candle is to be placed on a candlestick. The candle or lamp is a symbol, a type of the truth. It stands for the light of the truth.

Light and truth are to be the character, the very nature and behavior of the believer. The believer is to live the truth. He is to set the candle, the truth in the most conspicuous place in his life. (See outline and notes—Mt.5:15-16 for more discussion.)

Light and truth are also to be the witness of the believer. The believer is to bear verbal witness to the truth. He is to share the candle and its light with others. He is to place the truth in the most conspicuous place.

a. A candle is not placed under a bushel basket. The basket would extinguish its light and it would no longer be able to fulfill its purpose. It could not give off its light. Its flame and light would no longer exist. However, note something: the candle would still be a candle; but it would be a candle with no purpose—hidden, as it were, under a bushel basket.

b. A candle is not put under a bed. It would carelessly set the bed on fire and destroy it. The candle would be serving the wrong purpose; it would tragically be using its flame and light for the wrong reason. It would still be a candle, but it would be a candle using its flame and light in the wrong way.

Thought 1. God gives the light of the truth to believers for a specific purpose: that it might be shared. God wants others to see and know the light, the truth and purpose of life. The believer must make sure that he does not hide or misuse the light of the truth.

> **"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid" (Mt.5:14).**
>
> **"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47).**
>
> **"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph.5:8).**
>
> **"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).**
>
> **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Th.5:5).**
>
> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).**

2. Jesus warned: all things shall be revealed; nothing is hid—except temporarily. Even if a believer hides the candle and keeps it secret, the day is coming when it will be revealed anyway. The Greek says, "There is nothing hid [ean me], unless, except it should be made manifest, nor has a secret thing taken place, but that it should come to light." This can mean two things. (See outline and notes—Mt.10:26-27 for more discussion).

a. Light and truth cannot be hid or extinguished or used for the wrong purpose forever. Both light and truth will break forth some day. The bushel will be lifted and the bed consumed, and the light and truth will be seen and will fulfill their original purpose.

b. If a man hides or misuses the light and truth given him, then what he has done will be revealed someday. He cannot hide and misuse the light and truth forever. A day of judgment is coming.

Thought 1. Every man is given some light, some truth (cp. Ro.1:20-23; 1 Cor.2:12; Jn.8:32; Ro.12:3-8; Eph.4:7; 1 Cor.12:7f). Each man is responsible to use what light and truth he has. He is not to hide or misuse it. He is held accountable for what he has, for what God has given him (2 Cor.5:10).

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence" (Is.62:6).

"The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God" (Jer.51:10).

2 (4:24-25) **Truth**: Jesus said mark the truth. Take heed, make sure you hear the truth. Jesus is still talking about the responsibility of the hearer: the hearer is responsible for *hearing* the truth. He is also responsible for *what* he hears and how he interprets what is being said. A man is responsible for making sure that he *has* the truth, that he possesses and knows the truth. He is responsible for *what* he hears, possesses, and knows.

Thought 1. If a man is filled with *junk*, he is responsible for the *junk*. If he is filled with the knowledge of real truth, then he is also responsible for the truth. A man is accountable for what fills his heart and mind. A man is to "take heed," keep guard, watch, make sure he hears the truth.

Jesus states why a person must take heed and make sure he hears the truth. There is a principle of truth that takes effect in every person's life, and it is pointedly clear: the measure to which a person gives himself to know the truth determines his reward. The energy, effort, and degree of commitment, the time and depth of thought—all that a person gives to know the truth—determines his reward. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:12 for more discussion.)

1. The person who gives himself to know the truth shall be given *more* truth (v.24). He shall have the truth, and he shall be given more truth (v.25).
2. The person who does not give himself to know the truth shall lose all. Everything will be taken away from him (v.25).

Thought 1. The commitment, the energy, the effort, the work, the knowledge, the degree to which a man gives himself to the truth (to God)—all determine how much God is able to entrust and give to the man. Common sense tells us this.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so....That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:11, 27).

"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Pr.23:23).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

Thought 2. God expects a man to seek after the truth. He abhors laziness, selfishness, indulgence, uselessness, worldliness, and ignorance. He holds a man responsible for hearing the truth. He expects a man...

- to look around and observe and subdue the world (Gen.1:28).
- to get up and go hear a man who knows and teaches the truth (2 Tim.1:13).
- to sit down and study the truth (the Word, Jn.17:17).
- to learn and know Christ, Who is the truth (Jn.14:6; cp. Eph.4:20).

Thought 3. A man is to be judged for what he has heard. He is to "take heed," to govern what he hears. He is to give himself to hear the truth.

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).

	C. The Parable of the Growing Seed: The Growth of Believers, 4:26-29	rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.	
		28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.	**4 The growth is sure and constant, but gradual**
1 The parable: Describes the kingdom	26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man	29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.	**5 The growth is consummated & harvested**
2 The seed is sown by a man	should cast seed into the ground;		
3 The growth is not of man	27 And should sleep, and		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

C. The Parable of the Growing Seed: The Growth of Believers, 4:26-29

(4:26-29) **Introduction—Believer, Growth**: this parable tells what happens to the fruitful seed in the Parable of the Sower or Soils (Mk.4:1-20). It describes how the seed goes about growing, and the process through which it passes. The seed is the gospel and the ground is the *good ground*, either the believer individually or the church collectively. There are four things said about the fruitful seed once it has taken root, but the major point is that growth is sure; it is inevitable. Once the gospel has taken root in the heart of a believer, growth will take place. The believer will grow spiritually. This is the great promise of God, the great assurance and confidence, the great hope and encouragement to every believer.

1. The parable describes the kingdom (v.26).
2. The seed is sown by a man (v.26).
3. The growth is not of man (v.27).
4. The growth is sure and constant, but gradual (v.28).
5. The growth is consummated and harvested (v.29).

1 (4:26) **Kingdom of God**: Jesus is describing one aspect of the Kingdom of God in this parable. The kingdom (church) and its citizens will and do grow. The kingdom is looked at in its *present state* here on earth. The Kingdom of God is growing: more and more people are being reached for God, and as they are reached, they are growing just as God wills them to grow (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24 for discussion).

2 (4:26) **Gospel—Seed**: the seed is sown by a man. Note several things.

1. It is man who sows the seed. The seed has to be sown by a man; there simply is no other way it can be sown. Man is the person, the being, the means, the instrument God has chosen to share the gospel with the world.
2. It is the ground, the earth, where the seed is sown. It is the earth that God wants to reach; the earth that God wants to hear His good news. God has sent His followers out into the earth to cast forth the seed of the gospel.

> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:19-20).**
>
> **"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand....What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Mt.10:7, 27).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**

3 (4:27) **Gospel—Spiritual Growth—Believers**: the growth is not of man. The sower or farmer plants his seed, then he goes about his regular affairs. He sleeps and rises day by day. And while he carries on the routine of his life, the seed germinates, springs up, and grows. The point is this: the seed grows by its own virtue. The seed uses the sun, water, air, and earth to grow; but the power to germinate, to break forth and grow is of the seed itself, by its own virtue. It is not man who makes the seed grow. Man does not even know how the mysterious growth takes place. The secret of life and of growth is beyond him. He discovers, he rearranges, he develops; but he does not create, not in the real sense of *creation* (ex nihilo, out of nothing).

It is the same with the Kingdom of God, with the growth of believers both individually and collectively. Growth is not of man; growth is of God. It is the Spirit of God that takes the gospel and changes a man's heart and causes him to grow.

It is the Spirit of God that recreates a man spiritually, that causes a man to be *born again* and to grow in grace (cp. Jn.3:3-8; Eph.2:8-9).

> **"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...preached...believed on in the world" (1 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:5).**
>
> **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).**
>
> **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).**
>
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**

Thought 1. The ground or seed can hinder and slow the process of growth. Some ground or seed bears only 30 percent fruit, some only 60 percent fruit. Very few seed bear 100 percent fruit (see outlines and notes—Mt.13:8, 23; Mk.4:13-20 for discussion).

4 (4:28) **Spiritual Growth**: the growth is sure and constant, but gradual. The words about the earth's bearing fruit "of herself" (automate) mean automatically, spontaneously, of necessity, self-moving. The idea is that the earth brings forth fruit automatically, by its very nature.

Note two facts.

1. Growth is sure, inevitable. But two conditions are essential. The ground must be "good ground," (Mk.4:20) and the seed must be sown in the ground. If these two conditions exist, then growth is both *inevitable* and unstoppable. Even a small blade of grass will find a crack in the pavement. Nothing can stop the seed from growing. (See outline and notes—Ro.8:28-39 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. The genuine believer (good ground) can rest assured: he is truly God's child, and God will complete the work of grace in his life. The grace of God planted in a person's heart is unstoppable. The believer's confidence is in God, not in his own flesh and weak efforts. Therefore, there is no reason for being down and discouraged, withdrawn and depressed.

> **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).**
>
> **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Ph.2:13).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).**
>
> **"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).**
>
> **"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor.4:16).**
>
> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).**

2. Growth is constant, but it is gradual, ever so gradual. The seed is sown, and then day after day and night after night passes before the blade ever springs up. Then many more days and nights pass before the ear forms. It takes weeks before the full ear of corn appears. Growth does take place; it is constant—but growth is gradual. It does take time; it does not happen overnight.

Thought 1. Growth is of God, and the believer is to trust and to wait upon God for growth. But the trust and waiting are to be active—a working trust and waiting. There is no such thing as inactive faith and waiting—not to God. Faith and waiting upon God are active; they both serve and work (cp. Jas.2:14-18).

Thought 2. There is great abuse of this glorious truth, the truth of sure growth, of being secure in God's promises. Man has used the fact...

- to say I am secure, no matter what I do, so I can go ahead and live as I wish (cp. Ro.6:16, 23).
- to say God assures His kingdom and its growth, so there is no need for me to sacrifice to meet the needs of the world. (See outlines and notes—Mt.19:16-22; 19:23-26; 19:27-30.)
- to say believers and the church will grow without me, therefore I do not have to go or serve, not personally.

Thought 3. Growth requires much patience and trust.

"Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (2 Cor.9:10).

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph.4:15).

"And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith" (1 Th.3:2).

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Th.1:3).

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim.4:15).

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God" (Heb.6:1).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Pt.3:18).

5 (4:29) **Spiritual Growth**: the growth is consummated and harvested. The fruit does ripen; the day does come when the corn is *fully grown* and is ready to be harvested. This can mean at least two things.

1. The believer's sowing does bear fruit. Jesus does honor His Word, and it never returns to Him void. The believer can rest assured of reaping some harvest.

Thought 1. What an encouragement to believers! How we should be challenged to work and work for our Lord! We are assured of results before we ever labor. God assures that fruit will be borne.

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:8-9).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-36).

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Is.55:11).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

2. The believer himself is harvested, taken on to heaven when his growth is completed. When the believer has done all that God wills for him or all that he is going to do, God then escorts the believer home forever. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.5:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Jn.5:16.)

"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Mt.25:33; cp. Mt.25:34; Mk.9:41).

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev.14:13).

"The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward" (Pr.11:18).

	D. The Parable of the Mustard Seed: The Growth of God's Kingdom,[DS1] **4:30-32** (Mt.13:31-32; cp. Lk.13:18-19)	31 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: 32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.	**2 The seed is sown**[DS2] a. It is sown in the earth b. It is the smallest of all seeds **3 The seed does grow** a. The reason: It is sown b. The result: It is greater than all the plants **4 The birds do nest under its shadow**
1 The parable describes the kingdom	30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

D. The Parable of the Mustard Seed: The Growth of God's Kingdom, 4:30-32

(4:30-32) **Introduction—Christianity—Church**: Jesus is describing the growth and greatness of His kingdom, that is, of Christianity. He shows how Christianity begins as the smallest of seeds and grows into the greatest of movements.

The message of the parable is a powerful message to individual believers and congregations as well as to the world-wide church. The seed of faith begins ever so small, but it grows into the greatest of bushes as it nourishes itself day by day. Mature (grown, v.32) believers and congregations alike provide lodging for the people of a turbulent world.

1. The parable describes the kingdom (Christianity) (v.30).
2. A seed is sown (v.31).
3. The seed does grow (v.32).
4. The birds do nest under its shadow (v.32).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:30-32) **Christianity—Church**: there are two interpretations of this parable.

1. Some say the birds are those in the world who find their lodging in the kingdom (the church, Christianity). The kingdom had a small beginning, but it is now growing into a stately movement. Many in the world, believers and non-believers alike, have found help and safety under its branches. Laws and institutions of mercy, justice, and honor have to a large extent evolved from this magnificent movement. This interpretation relies heavily upon the picture painted by the Old Testament. A great empire is said to be like a tree, and conquered nations are said to be like birds who lodge under its shadow (Ezk.17:22-24; 31:1-6; Dan.4:14).
2. Others say the birds are the children of the evil one (Satan) who see the protective covering of the kingdom and seek lodging therein.

Neither interpretation need exhaust the meaning. However, two facts should be noted.

1. Jesus was speaking to the multitudes in the first four parables. His purpose was to teach what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. It is a mixture of good and evil. He had just been vindicating His Messiahship to the Pharisees, who were set upon destroying Him ((Mt.12:1-50; 12:14). It was the same day that He began to speak in parables. His purpose was to hide the mysteries from unbelievers and to protect Himself from those who would destroy Him (Mt.12:10-17). They were the evil ones who had penetrated the kingdom. However, this needed to be known only by the true disciple, not necessarily by those who were evil.
2. The birds are used to describe the evil one in the Parable of the Seed.

1 (4:30) **Kingdom of Heaven**: Jesus described the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the kingdom's *present state* on earth. He revealed how the kingdom, Christianity, was to begin as the smallest movement and grow into the greatest movement.

2 (4:31) **Gospel—Witnessing—Evangelism—Commitment**: the seed is sown. The words "in the earth" are significant. The earth or the world is where the seed is sown. It is the earth, the world, that needs the seed, that is, the gospel of God. And God has ordained the good news of His love to be sown upon the earth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—1 Cor.15:1-11. Cp. Jn.3:16; 1 Jn.2:1-2.) (See note 2, *Christianity*—Mt.13:31.)

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the father, and was manifested unto us)" (1 Jn.1:1-2).**
>
> **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).**

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).

Thought 1. The farmer has to have a commitment of heart, mind, and body to sow the seed. All three are essential. Without any one of the commitments, the sowing does not get done or else it is done haphazardly. He must have...

- commitment of heart for motivation.
- commitment of mind for planning.
- commitment of body for planting.

> **"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mk.12:30).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:34-35).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).**
>
> **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**

Thought 2. The earth is fruitless, sterile, empty, barren without the mustard seed of God. The earth becomes a wasteland; it ends without the mustard seed of God.

> **"Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man; to satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?" (Job.38:25-27).**
>
> **"For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Is.60:12; cp. Joel 1:10-13).**

The fact that the mustard seed is the smallest of seeds is also significant (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Mustard Seed*—Mk.4:31). Just because a seed is small does not discourage or keep the farmer from sowing. He knows the enormous potential of the seed for growth and fruitfulness, so he plants. Note that the power for reproduction and bearing fruit is in the seed, not in the farmer. All the farmer has to do is sow the seed. But again, someone has to sow the seed if there is to be fruit.

Thought 1. What a lesson for believers and churches! The seed of the gospel, though ever so small, is enormously powerful.

⇒ No matter how insignificant or small we may feel in reaching others, we need to sow the gospel.

⇒ No matter how insignificant or small we may feel our church witness is, we need to sow the gospel. (See note 2—Mk.4:26 for discussion and verses of application.)

> **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:5-6).**
>
> **"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:31) **Mustard Seed**: its seed was not actually the smallest seed known in Jesus' day. But the seed was small, and the mustard bush grew as large as some trees. It has been reported that a rider on horseback could find shade under its branches. The fact that such a small seed could produce such a huge bush caused people to use the mustard seed as a proverbial saying to describe smallness.

3 (4:32) **Christianity—The Church**: the seed does grow. Note the words "when it is sown." Again, the critical point is this: the seed has to be sown. Someone has to sow the seed if the church (Christianity) is to continue to grow. *Growth follows sowing. If there is no sowing, there is no growth. This is the law of reproduction, of fruitbearing.* The seed grows "when it is sown."

The result of sowing is growth. In dealing with Christianity and the church, the result of sowing is to see the greatest of movements (see note, *Christianity*, pt.2—Mt.13:32. Also see note—Mk.4:28 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. The growth of a tree from a small seed is nothing compared to the growth of a person who truly comes to know Christ nor to the growth of a church that is truly committed to the mission of Christ (Jn.12:24).

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Acts 28:28).

"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name" (Ro.15:9).

"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal.3:14).

"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs [with Jewish believers], and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph.3:6).

"There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth" (Ps.72:16).

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:7).

"For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (Is.54:3).

"Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee" (Is.55:5).

"Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee" (Is.60:5).

"A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time" (Is.60:22).

4 (4:32) **Christianity—Church**: the birds do nest under its shadow. Many commentators make this point: birds feast on the seeds of the mustard bush. The very fact that the bush (the church) is present with *so much good* to be feasted upon means that many will come to its shadow (see note, *Christianity*, pts.2, 3—Mt.13:32 for discussion).

	E. The Use of Parables by Jesus: Why Christ Used Illustrations, 4:33-34 (Mt.13:34-35)
1 To illustrate the Word **2 To teach step by step**	33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.
3 To enforce the lesson in private	34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

E. The Use of Parables by Jesus: Why Christ Used Illustrations, 4:33-34

(4:33-34) **Introduction**: the wisest of all teachers used illustrations; more specifically, He used parables. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Parable*—Mk.4:2 for a detailed discussion.) This passage gives three very practical reasons why Jesus used illustrations in His teaching (see outline and notes—Mt.13:10-17 for a detailed discussion of the reasons Jesus spoke in parables).

1. To illustrate the Word (v.33).
2. To teach step by step (v.33).
3. To enforce the lesson in private (v.34).

1 (4:33) **Word of God—Parables—Jesus Christ, Teaching**: first, Jesus used parables to illustrate the Word. Note the clause "spake He the *word* unto them." What *word* was preached? What is meant by *the word*?

⇒ It is "the Word of the kingdom" (Mt.13:19-20, 22-23; cp. Mk.4:16, 18, 20; Lk.8:15).
⇒ It is "the Word of God" (Mk.7:13; Lk.3:2; 4:4; 5:1; 8:11, 21; 11:28; 1 Th.2:13).
⇒ It is "the Word of this salvation" (Acts 13:26).
⇒ It is simply "the Word" (Acts 17:11; Gal.6:6; Ph.1:14; 1 Th.1:6; 1 Tim.5:17; 2 Tim.4:2; Jas.1:21; 1 Pt.2:2, 8).
⇒ It is "the Word of His grace" (Acts 20:32).
⇒ It is "the Word of faith" (Ro.10:8).
⇒ It is "the Word of reconciliation" (2 Cor.5:19).
⇒ It is "the Word of life" (Ph.2:16; 1 Jn.1:1).
⇒ It is "the Word of the truth" (Col.1:5).
⇒ It is "the Word of Christ" (Col.3:16).
⇒ It is "the faithful Word" (Tit.1:9).
⇒ It is "the Word of righteousness" (Heb.5:13).
⇒ It is "the Word of exhortation" (Heb.13:22).
⇒ It is "the engrafted Word" (Jas.1:21).
⇒ It is "the sure Word of prophecy" (2 Pt.1:19).
⇒ It is "the Word of my patience" (Rev.3:10).
⇒ It is called "the Word of their [Christian brothers] testimony" (Rev.12:11).

Jesus used the parable to illustrate the great truths of the Word. What is there about illustrations or parables that caused Jesus to use them so much? (The reasons Jesus used parables is spelled out in much more detail in Mt.13:10-17.)

1. Stories and pictures are more interesting and tend to *draw* a person's attention more readily.
2. Some believe a person thinks only in pictures; others believe abstract thought apart from pictures is possible. No matter, it is certainly easier to see and remember pictures than statements, principles, rules, or dogma.
3. Parables usually require more thought to see the comparison between the story and the truth. Parables are not for the lazy and non-thinking person.

2 (4:33) **Parables—Jesus Christ, Teaching**: second, Jesus used parables to teach step by step. He taught the people "as they were able to hear it." This means at least three things.

1. Jesus drew comparisons from the daily life of the people, from things and events with which they were familiar.
2. Jesus spoke in the language of the people, using simple and plain words. He did not seek to show a superiority over the people: a superior education, vocabulary, speaking ability, or anything else. He never acted above the people.
3. Jesus taught the people *progressively*. He moved them along step by step "as they were able to hear it." The point of the spiritual truth was not available to all, but the story itself was understandable to all. It could easily be recalled in the future for spiritual growth if the person were stirred to seek for the truth.

It should always be remembered that the lazy and non-thinking person seldom learns or achieves, and the unbeliever never succeeds spiritually. Matthew discusses this in some detail (see outline and notes—Mt.13:10-11; 13:12; 13:13-15).

3 (4:34) **Parables**: third, Jesus used parables to enforce the lesson in private. It was now time to give some very special lessons to His close associates, the apostles. They needed to know *the mysteries of the kingdom*. (See notes, *Parable*, pts.2, 3—Mt.13:10-17; Mt.13:10-11; *Believers*—Mt.13:16-17 for discussion and application.)

	F. The Authority of Jesus Over Nature: Rest & Peace, 4:35-41 (Mt.8:23-27; Lk.8:22-25)	38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?	a. Ship filled with water b. Jesus slept
1 Rest & peace are sought after a tiring day a. At evening—Jesus was fatigued b. Pressure had come from the crowds c. He was so fatigued, He went as He was—without any preparation d. Other ships went also	35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.	39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.	**3 Rest & peace are a concern to Jesus** a. The disciples feared lest they perish b. The power of Jesus to control the situation
2 Rest & peace can be experienced despite a great storm	37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.	40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?	**4 Rest & peace come through two sources** a. Through faith b. Through Jesus, His power & His Word, cp. v.39

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

F. The Authority of Jesus Over Nature: Rest and Peace, 4:35-41

(4:35-41) **Introduction—Messiahship—Trials**: what was the purpose of this experience? Why was a storm allowed to arise on the sea with Jesus in the boat? The answer is given in v.41. And what a marvelous purpose it was: to stir His people to ask, "What manner of man is this?" Jesus proved again that He is the Messiah! Calming the storm would do three things.

1. It would demonstrate who He is: the Sovereign Lord who has all power—even power over nature.
2. It would strengthen the belief of His followers, belief in Him as the Messiah and in His personal care as their Savior.
3. It would give to all generations a picture of His care and power to deliver through all the storms of life (trials and fearful experiences).

It does not matter what the storm or trial is nor how terrifying it may be—Jesus is able to deliver and bring about the most assuring calm. Few trials could be as terrifying as being caught in a life-threatening storm at sea. In this experience, God has demonstrated His wonderful care and power to deliver the believer through all the storms of life.

1. Rest and peace are sought after a tiring day (v.35-36).
2. Rest and peace can be experienced despite a great storm (v.37-38).
3. Rest and peace are a concern to Jesus (v.38-39).
4. Rest and peace come through two sources (v.40-41).

1 (4:35-36) **Rest—Peace**: rest and peace are sought after a tiring day. Note it was evening of the same day when Jesus sought rest and peace. He had been teaching all day to a multitude of people. The crowd had been so massive and pressing that they had forced Him off the shore into a boat (cp.Mk.4:1). As anyone knows, just being in such a massive throng of people struggling for space is tiring. It strains and taxes the strongest nerves. Imagine the fatigue of Jesus, having been responsible for the crowd, controlling and teaching them all day long. The fatigue and exhaustion of His body were seen in the fact that He left immediately for the other shore. He made no preparations whatsoever. Note the words, "they took Him even as He was" (v.36). Provisions, a change of clothing, notifying His family that He would be gone a while—nothing mattered but rest and peace. He was so fatigued He even slept through the storm (v.38). He just had to get away.

An interesting note that is not commented on by the other gospel writers is the simple statement: "There were also with Him other little ships" (v.36). Mark mentions this to stress His deity, His being the Son of God. There would be other witnesses to His great power and control over nature.

> **Thought 1.** Jesus sets a dynamic example in laboring to the point of fatigue and exhaustion. How many of us labor to the point that we just collapse, being unable to shower or change clothes, being so tired that we even sleep through violent storms?
>
> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).**

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

Thought 2. There are times when rest and peace are desperately needed and nothing should be allowed to interfere.

Thought 3. Note those who followed in the "little ships [boats]." Others had gone away, but these wanted more of His presence and teaching. They followed Him out of town, booking passage across the lake. Just think what they would have missed if they had turned away and not followed Him. A storm, yes! But they would have also missed experiencing His salvation and power over the storm. They would also have missed the enormous opportunity for growth in learning to trust God more and more.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).
"For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him" (Ps.32:6).

2 (4:37-38) **Rest—Peace**: rest and peace can be experienced despite a great storm. Note the words "a great storm." The idea is a severe storm with...

- rolling black clouds thundering and tumbling in upon one another.
- gusts of wind slamming into everything standing in the path of the wind's force.
- heavy drops of rain falling like pellets upon the earth.

The idea in the Greek is something like the fury of a hurricane. Such violent storms were regular occurances on the Sea of Galilee (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.1:16).

"The ship was covered with the waves" (Mt.8:24).
"They were filled with water, and were in jeopardy" (Lk.8:23).

But note something: while all the turmoil was going on, Jesus was in the back of the ship sleeping. He was, so to speak, at rest—at peace with Himself and with others and with nature itself. He was completely without guilt or shame, completely at peace with God. He rested perfectly in the care of God. Therefore He was able to rest through the storm. (See note—Mt.8:24 for more detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. The storms or trials of life often come suddenly and violently. And too often Christ seems to be far away, asleep. What we need during the storms of life are the same rest and peace, trust and confidence in God, that Jesus had.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 Jn.5:4-5).
"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).
"The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy" (Ps.145:8).

3 (4:38-39) **Rest—Peace**: rest and peace are a concern to Jesus. Note something: the disciples were seasoned fishermen. No doubt they had been caught in storms before, but this storm was more violent. They feared that they were perishing. They had tried to handle the situation themselves, but the situation had gotten out of hand. They had thought Jesus would awaken on His own, as any man would; but they were wrong, and they could wait no longer.

Note the exact words of the disciples: "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" (v.38). They confessed they were perishing. They were prideful men, well-built, and very capable in their profession. They had always handled every situation before; and they had started out handling this storm. But there they stood confessing their *human inability* and their *need* for His help, the help of God Himself. (See note—Mt.8:25 for detailed thoughts.)

The response of Jesus to the plea of His disciples was dramatic. Note what Jesus did and what happened:

⇒ "He arose."
⇒ "He rebuked the wind...and the wind ceased."
⇒ "He spoke to the sea...and there was a great calm."

The words "peace, be still" (siopa pephimoso) mean literally to *be muzzled*. The use of this word *muzzled* shows the fury and violence of the storm and stresses the dramatic act of Jesus.

Thought 1. The power of Jesus to control the sea and its storms, to control nature itself, demonstrates three facts (see note 6—Mt.8:26 for more detailed thoughts).

1) Christ is the Son of God, the Sovereign Lord over all nature and life. He not only possesses the authority of God; but, as Mark sets out to prove, He is the Son of God Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.1:1).
2) Christ can calm any storm of life for us.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

3) Christ can strengthen us to go through any trial.

"There hath no temptation [trial] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor.1:3-4).

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (2 Cor.2:14).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2 Tim.4:18).

"Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence" (Ps.91:3).

4 (4:40-41) **Rest—Peace—Faith**: rest and peace come through two sources.

1. Through faith (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:26 for detailed discussion and thoughts. Also see notes—Mk.11:22-23; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.2:15-16.)

"And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (Mt.8:13).

"Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it" (Mt.9:29-30).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

2. Through Jesus, His power and His Word (see note—Mt.8:27 for discussion).

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:19-22).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

	CHAPTER 5	
	G. The Authority of Jesus to Banish Demons: Hope for the Most Wild & Mean,[DS1] **5:1-20** (Mt.8:28-34; Lk.8:26-39)	
1 An eerie event a. At night, cp. 4:35,41 b. On the seashore—among the tombs	And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.	11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.
2 Scene 1: A man hopelessly possessed—without Jesus a. He had an evil spirit	2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,	12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.
b. He lived among the tombs[DS2]	3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:	13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.
c. He was cut off from society d. He was uncontrollable, unrestrained, untamed, wild, mad, violent tempered e. He was naked, v.15	4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.	14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.
f. He was always inflicting wounds upon himself	5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.	15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.
3 Scene 2: A man desperately aroused by the Son of God a. He worshipped Jesus b. He acknowledged the deity of Jesus c. He begged not to be tormented	6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him. 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.	16 And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine. 17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.
4 Scene 3: A man miraculously cleansed by the authority of Jesus a. Jesus spoke the word of power, v.8 b. Jesus showed the man's great need c. Jesus showed the nature of evil spirits	8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. 9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many. 10 And he besought him much that he would not send	18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. 19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. 20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

1) Were subject to Christ 2) Desired a body to indwell & influence 3) Were malicious & violent—destroyers[DS3]
5 Scene 4: A people callously rejected Jesus—by begging Him to leave their presence a. A logical action: Ran to tell b. A logical investigation: Came to Jesus c. A logical account: Told of the healing & also of the pigs d. An illogical request: Asked Jesus to leave e. A tragic end: He left
6 Scene 5: A man deliberately commissioned by Jesus a. He requested discipleship b. He was sent to be a disciple at home[DS4] c. He was faithful d. He was successful

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

G. The Authority of Jesus to Banish Demons: Hope for the Most Wild and Mean, 5:1-20

(5:1-20) **Introduction**: the Spirit of God controls people to varying degrees; evil also controls people to varying degrees. Some persons are extremely controlled by evil; others are just slightly controlled.

⇒ Some men are said to be controlled by *demons*.

⇒ Mary Magdalene is said to have been possessed by seven devils (Mk.16:9).

⇒ Jesus referred to one devil's being replaced by seven devils and the last state of the man being far worse (Lk.9:26).

⇒ The man in the present passage is said to have been possessed by a Legion, that is, hordes of demons.

No matter how much a man is possessed and controlled by evil, no matter how wild and mean he is, Christ can deliver him. The man can experience a *great deliverance*. There is wonderful hope for all—even for the most wild and mean. This is the message of the present passage. (Also see note—Mt.8:28-34.)

1. An eerie event (v.1).
2. Scene 1: a man hopelessly possessed—without Jesus (v.2-5).
3. Scene 2: a man desperately aroused by the Son of God (v.6-7).
4. Scene 3: a man miraculously cleansed by the authority of Jesus (v.8-13).
5. Scene 4: a people callously rejected Jesus, begging Him to leave their presence (v.14-17).
6. Scene 5: a man deliberately commissioned by Jesus (v.18-20).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:1-20) **Evil Spirits**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34.

1 (5:1) **Evil Spirits**: this was an eerie event. Note the words "immediately there met Him out of the tombs," and imagine the scene.

It was a stormy night, pitch dark (cp. Mk.4:35, 37). The boats pulled up on shore right in the midst of a seashore graveyard, and immediately a wild-acting man came running out from among the tombs. The picture was definitely eerie and scary. Five scenes are painted in the event.

2 (5:2-5) **Demon Possession—Evil Spirits**: the first scene is that of a man hopelessly possessed. He was without Jesus. The wretched condition of the demon-possessed is described in detail. Mark's purpose is to show that the man was as possessed with evil as any man could be. He had reached rock bottom. But Jesus is God, and as God He cares and has the power to deliver even the most wild and mean. (See outline and notes—Mt.8:28-31; Mk.1:23.)

1. The man had an unclean or evil spirit. Some evil, spiritual power dwelt within his body; some alien, foreign, outside power possessed and controlled the man. He represents the man who is not spiritual, the man who is not possessed and controlled by God and His Spirit (Ro.8:14).

> **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).**

2. The man lived among the tombs. These were lofty, vault-like tombs, hewn out of the limestone hills (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.5:3). The evil spirit caused the man to dwell in the darkest, most eerie place imaginable. and living in the dark and eeriness aggravated his condition. He represents the man who loves darkness because his deeds are evil.

> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**

3. The man was cut off from society. He did not live among the living; he lived among the dead. He represents *the living dead*; that is, all men without Christ are "dead in their sins" and are cut off from the *society of God*.

> **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph.2:2-3).**

4. The man was uncontrollable, unrestrained, untamed, wild, mad, violent tempered, often possessing super-human strength. All human efforts to help him had failed. He could not be helped, nor controlled, nor tamed. He represents the uncontrollable evil or depravity of man and the helplessness of man to deliver or save himself (cp. Ro.1:20-32; 3:10f; Eph.2:8-9; Tit.3:3-7. Cp. 2 Pt.2:10-12.)

> **"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Ro.1:29-32).**

5. The man was naked (cp. v.15), stripped of all decency and all acceptable and righteous behavior. He represents the old man who stands naked before the eyes of God and who desperately needs to be clothed with the righteousness of God and with the garments of the new man (2 Cor.5:1-2, 21; Ro.13:14; Gal.3:27; Eph.4:24; Col.3:10).

> **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Ro.13:14).**

6. The man was a threat to himself and to others, inflicting harm upon himself. He represents the man who has become dangerous, so given over to evil that he is a threat to all. He represents the man who is totally depraved, the man who is so far gone he no longer has respect for human life, even his own; the man whose "mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" and whose "feet are swift to shed blood" (Ro.3:15). He represents the man who has fallen to the depths of the pit—so deep he can fall no further. He is hopeless in an absolute sense. No one but God could ever save him. (Now note. Jesus saved him, and this is the point. By saving the man, Jesus is saying that He is God and that, as God, He is able to save the most wild and mean, even those who are totally hopeless.)

"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes" (Ro.3:10-18).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(5:3) **Tombs—Graveyards**: Jewish cemetaries were always located outside the city or town. This was necessary because Jewish law said that a person became temporarily defiled if he touched a grave. Some of the cemetaries were located around limestone hills or mountainous terrain. This enabled men to find caverns or else to hew out tombs in the limestone facing. The tombs were often large enough for a man to stand in (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66).

3 (5:6-7) **Demon Possession—Evil Spirit, Fate of**: the second scene is that of a man desperately aroused. He was fearfully aroused by the Son of God. The man saw Jesus afar off, probably while Jesus was in the boat approaching the shore. The man ran and worshipped Jesus. Note what happened: the man acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God, and he begged Jesus not to torment him, that is, not to send him to the abyss or to hell (cp. Lk.8:31). These two facts show that the man was under the control of an evil spirit. The *man* had no way to know that Jesus was the Son of God, and no *man* is sent to hell by Jesus—not in this life, not while still living.

Scripture teaches four facts about the devil and his angels (messengers, demons, evil spirits) that should always be kept in mind.

1. They believe there is One God and they tremble (Jas.2:19).
2. They have nothing to do with Jesus; that is, their nature is entirely different from the clean spirit of Jesus. Evil and evil spirits are diametrically opposed to the purity and holiness of Jesus.
3. The Son of God has come to destroy the works of the devil. All evil and evil spirits are to be destroyed (1 Jn.3:8; cp. Heb.2:14-15).
4. They are doomed to everlasting torment (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Everlasting Fire*—Mt.25:41).

All four of these facts were involved in the behavior of the demon-possessed man. The evil spirit was trembling before the Son of God. He cried out, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of...God?" He was stricken with the purity and the holiness of Jesus. He was forced to bow in reverence and to beg Jesus not to doom him—not yet. (See note—Mk.1:23-24 for detailed discussion and thoughts.)

Note something: the evil spirit knew that Jesus had come to destroy evil. He knew that Jesus was going to cast him out and free the man, despite the man's utter, hopeless depravity. How marvelous the love and power of Jesus, that He frees even the most defiled!

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

4 (5:8-13) **Evil Spirits—Spiritual Cleansing**: the third scene is that of a man miraculously cleansed. He was cleansed by the authority of Jesus. Jesus did three things in this scene.

1. Jesus spoke the word of power. He commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man.
2. Jesus revealed the man's great need, how *utterly possessed* by evil he was. Jesus led the evil spirit to identify himself. His name was Legion, referring to the Roman military legion that included over six thousand men. The point is this: the man was as desperate as a man could be, but Jesus' power was more sufficient, eternally so. He is definitely the Son of God. He could cast a legion of evil spirits out of a man.
3. Jesus revealed the nature of evil spirits. He used this occasion to teach and warn men of evil spirits. There are degrees of control by Satan just as there are degrees of control by God.
   a. The evil spirit was subject to Jesus. No evil can stand up to Him. The evil spirit asked to remain in his present country. Apparently the country and its life-style were more evil and more subject to evil than other countries.
   b. The evil spirit desired a body to indwell and influence (see note, pt.5—Mt.8:28-31). He asked to enter the bodies of a herd of swine. Note the plural, "devils," and the fact that there were about two thousand swine. This again stresses the enormous evil within the man, his desperate, hopeless plight.
   c. The evil spirit was malicious and violent; he was a destroyer. He destroyed the herd of swine (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:32).

Thought 1. Jesus Christ has the authority to cleanse man, no matter how mean and evil.

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26; Mk.14:36; Lk.1:37).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power,

and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:19-22).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(5:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Judgment**: the question as to why Jesus would allow a herd of swine to be killed is discussed in the note Mt.5:32.

5 (5:14-17) **Jesus Christ, Response**: the fourth scene is that of a people who callously rejected God by begging Jesus to leave them. Five acts are seen here (see note—Mt.8:33-34).

1. There was the logical action: the swine keepers ran into the city to the owners of the swine to relate what had happened. The whole herd had been destroyed; it was a huge and devastating loss financially. They had to make sure the fault was not laid at their feet.
2. There was the logical investigation by the owners and city folk: they came to Jesus to investigate the loss. They saw the man's sitting before Jesus—clothed and in his right mind. (Note: when Jesus cleanses a man, the man comes to his *right mind*. He is truly cured.) They were stricken with fear of Jesus' power, for they had known the man and his hopeless condition. What power this Jesus must have!
3. There was the logical account by eyewitnesses: they shared with the owners and city folk. Note: they told the good news of what had happened to the man, but they also added what had happened to the swine. They could not get over the financial loss. They thought more of the world and its money than of God's meeting people's needs.
4. There was the illogical request: they asked Jesus to leave. "They were taken with great fear" (Lk.8:37). They were gripped with fear, not a fear of reverence and humility, but a fear of dread and hatred that He had caused so much loss and that He might punish them even more.
5. There was the tragic end: Jesus left. He did exactly what the people requested Him to do.

Thought 1. Note the devils had just what they wanted. They had caused the people to reject Jesus, choosing the riches of the world rather than Him. (Contrast the spirit of Moses, Heb.11:25-26.)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:2).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:12).

Thought 2. Jesus granted their request: He left them. Jesus will grant our request to be left alone and to go our own way, but the result will be "leanness of soul" and rejection by God (Ps.106:15).

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).

6 (5:18-20) **Witnessing**: the fifth scene is that of a man deliberately commissioned by Jesus. The man was naturally thankful, very appreciative. He immediately wanted to become a follower of Jesus, but Jesus saw something unique in the man, something that would make him a dynamic evangelist among his own people. Consequently, Jesus commissioned him to be a disciple at home. Two significant things are said about his witness: he was faithful and he was successful.

A believer must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" (1 Tim.3:4-5).

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim.5:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(5:19) **Witnessing**: Why would Jesus tell this man to proclaim the *good news* when He had instructed the leper not to spread the Word (Mk.1:44)? Jesus had just been forbidden to continue His ministry among the Gadarenes. He needed someone to carry on the work, so He commissioned this new believer.

	H. The Approaches That Lay Hold of Jesus' Authority: How to Approach Jesus,[DS1] **5:21-43** (Mt.9:18-26; Lk.8:40-56)	about to see her that had done this thing. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.	3) The confession of the woman
1 **The crowds gathered around Jesus**	21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.	34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.	e. The result: Jesus grants the hopeless request
2 **Scene 1: A ruler's desperate approach** a. A selfless attitude b. A humble attitude c. A pleading attitude d. An expectant, believing attitude e. The result: Jesus grants the desperate request	22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, 23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. 24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.	35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? 36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. 37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.	4 **Scene 3: A ruler's believing approach** a. Not a fearful, despairing attitude 1) Devastating circumstances 2) The answer to the terrible circumstances: Jesus' challenge[DS2]
3 **Scene 2: A woman's hopeless approach** a. A last-resort attitude b. A shy, embarrassed, unworthy attitude c. An expectant, believing attitude d. A confessing attitude 1) The cost of service to Jesus 2) The insensitivity of the apostles	25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, 26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, 27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. 28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. 29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. 30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? 31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? 32 And he looked round	38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. 39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. 40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. 41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. 42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. 43 And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.	b. Not a wailing, whining attitude 1) Social customs & influences: To express hopelessness 2) The answer: Jesus' comfort & assurances c. Not a scornful, skeptical attitude d. An obedient attitude: The parents follow Jesus despite the scorn e. Jesus grants the believer's request 1) The power of Jesus 2) The amazement of the family 3) The thoughtfulness of Jesus

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

H. The Approaches That Lay Hold of Jesus' Authority: How to Approach Jesus, 5:21-43

(5:21-43) **Introduction**: How can a person lay hold of Jesus and His power? This passage deals specifically with the desperate and hopeless person; it shows how the desperate person can approach Jesus and secure His help in any situation.

1. The crowds gathered around Jesus (v.21).
2. Scene 1: a ruler's desperate approach (v.22-24).
3. Scene 2: a woman's hopeless approach (v.25-34).
4. Scene 3: a ruler's believing approach (v.35-43).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:21-43) **Faith—Believe**: the one thing that lays hold of Jesus and His power is faith (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.9:18-34. Also see notes—Mk.11:22-23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.2:16; cp. Jn.2:24; Heb.10:38.)

1 (5:21) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: crowds gathered around Jesus again. He had crossed back over the Sea of Galilee, apparently near Capernaum, His headquarters. The events that follow happened near the Sea of Galilee.

2 (5:22-24) **Desperation—Attitude—Seeking Jesus**: the first scene is that of a ruler's desperate approach (see note, *Jairus*—Mt.9:18-19). A desperate approach always lays hold of Jesus. Jesus sees and answers a person who comes to Him in desperation. A desperate approach involves four attitudes.

1. There is a selfless attitude. Jairus was a ruler, one of the most important men in the community (see note—Mt.9:18-19). The rulers were now violently opposed to Jesus and were publicly expressing their opposition. By coming to Jesus, Jairus was running the risk of arousing the hostility of his peers and of being censored. He could have easily lost his position and profession.

Something else is also noticable. Jairus himself was approaching Jesus. Why would he leave his dying daughter's side to seek Jesus' help instead of sending someone else? Could it be that even they of his own household feared approaching Jesus because of the heated opposition? Jairus would most likely not have left his daughter's side if there had been another person willing to come to Jesus.

The point is that Jairus was desperate for help. No man could help him; this much he knew. But he had heard that Jesus could help; therefore, he set aside everything—profession, friends, family—he forgot self completely; and he went to Jesus for help.

> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**

2. There is a humble attitude. Note the words, "he fell at His feet" (v.22). Jairus pushed and shoved his way through the crowd as rapidly as he could. When he caught his first glimpse of Jesus, his pace quickened; and when he finally reached Jesus, he "fell at Jesus' feet." This is humility at its height. The ruler willingly humbled himself and willingly...

- laid aside all his pride and dignity.
- laid aside his family and friends in all their prejudice and opposition.
- laid aside his profession with all its security, fame, and authority.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).**
>
> **"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).**
>
> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**

3. There is a pleading attitude. The word "besought" (parakaleo) means to call to one's side for help, to plead, to entreat, to beg. The ruler pleaded and begged Jesus to help him.

> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

4. There is an expectant, believing attitude. The man had a little daughter twelve years old, and she was dying—"at the very point of death." Note the man's great faith: if Jesus would come and lay His hands upon her, she would be healed and live.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).**

5. The result and the impact of these four attitudes were powerful. Jesus granted the request of the desperate approach. Desperation—a selfless, humble, pleading, believing desperation—gets help. Jesus meets the need of the desperate who come to Him with...

- a selfless attitude.
- a humble attitude.
- a pleading attitude.
- a believing attitude.

3 (5:25-34) **Hopelessness—Attitude**: the second scene is that of a woman's hopeless approach (see note—Mt.9:20-22). This approach always lays hold of Jesus. Jesus senses the touch of the hopeless and always helps the hopeless who come to Him. A hopeless approach involves four attitudes.

1. There is the last resort attitude. The woman had been hemorrhaging for twelve years; it was uncontrollable. No one could touch her nor anything she had touched. By law she was considered unclean, so unclean that she was to be divorced by her husband (Lev.15:25-27). She was to be totally cut off from society and religious worship. This particular woman had tried all she knew. She had seen "many physicians" and "spent all that she had," and yet she "grew worse." There was nowhere else to turn except to Jesus. (See note—Mt.9:20-22 for more detail of her condition.)

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**

Thought 1. When all else fails, there is Jesus. However, most people try all else before Jesus. Nevertheless, He loves us and He cares for us—enormously so. We should turn to Jesus, for He is always waiting for us—waiting even if we turn to Him as a last resort.

Thought 2. A person who has been brought to the point of helplessness and hopelessness can be helped. When there is no hope anywhere else, there is hope in Christ.

Thought 3. There is no need to reach the point of hopelessness; no need to reach the *end of our ropes*; no need to become utterly depressed. Circumstances should never be allowed to destroy us, not to the point of utter hopelessness. Nevertheless, many reach that point. The one thing to remember is that Jesus does care and will never turn away from the hopeless. He opens His arms to all who come—even to the hopeless.

2. There is the shy, embarrassed, unworthy attitude. Note the woman elbowed her way through the crowd and came up behind Jesus. She wanted to touch Jesus without being seen or noticed. Why? She was embarrassed and felt unworthy. Her hemorrhaging was a personal, intimate matter for her, something she did not want to be known and discussed. She was considered unclean; therefore, she felt unworthy to approach Jesus.

Thought 1. It is the sense of unworthiness and hopelessness that touches the heart of Jesus; it is not being shy and fearing embarrassment. Being shy and fearing embarrassment are only the attitudes that create a sense of unworthiness and hopelessness. Jesus accepts any of the hopeless who truly come to Him, no matter what causes their sense of unworthiness.

Thought 2. Embarrassing matters, personal matters, secret matters—all are understood by Christ. He wishes no one to suffer ridicule or shame. He will accept the shy, quiet approach that comes to Him.

Thought 3. There are personal, embarrassing matters that we all wish to keep secret. These sometimes cause problems for us, serious problems that drive us to the point of hopelessness. Even a shy, embarrassed attitude that approaches Jesus will be acceptable. A sense of unworthiness and hopelessness touches His heart.

> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).**

3. There is the expectant, believing attitude. Note that the hopeless woman believed what "she had heard of Jesus." She believed the gospel, that Jesus loved and cared and would make her whole. Note the thoughts of her mind, "If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole" (v.28). She believed in her thoughts, in her heart. She believed two things: the gospel (what she had heard about Jesus) and the power of Jesus to make her whole.

Thought 1. The same expectant, believing attitude is essential for any person to come to Christ, whether hopeless or not. One must believe in the gospel and in the power of Jesus to make one whole.

> **"Repent ye and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15).**
>
> **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Ro.1:16).**
>
> **"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).**

4. There is the confessing attitude. Jesus had made the way easy for her. He had allowed her to be healed without embarrassment, but it was not enough to believe in secret. The secret disciple had to be brought to the point of confessing her faith.

a. The healing had cost Jesus. Spiritual virtue had flowed out from Him into the woman. The expenditure of virtue took its toll, sapping His physical strength. Jesus felt virtue drain from His body. He turned and asked the pressing throng surrounding Him, "Who touched my clothes?"

Thought 1. Imagine the enormous amounts of virtue that flowed out from Jesus from the day of His baptism to the cross! Imagine the fathomless flow of virtue that flowed from the cross, covering believers of all generations. It is incomprehensible! Yet it is a fact—a fact that proclaims the love of the Son of God. He poured out all the virtue within His eternal being for mankind.

b. The disciples were unaware of what it cost Jesus to minister. They were insensitive to the spiritual energy He was exerting. They were ignorant of what Jesus was doing:

⇒ "Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses" (Mt.8:17; cp. Is.53:4).

⇒ He was teaching that public confession of Him was essential.

The disciples were somewhat surprised at Jesus' question: "Who touched me?" He was completely surrounded by a mass of people. In their surprise, they asked Him why He was asking such a question in the midst of so many people. How could He possibly expect not to be touched?

c. The woman confessed. When Jesus asked the question, the woman came up to Jesus "fearing and trembling." She had approached Him *being unclean* and had not requested permission to touch Him. But she had still been healed. Now she felt that she must respond to His question and identify herself lest He rebuke her and reject her faith. She feared that somehow her healing might be reversed if she did not confess that she had touched Him. So "knowing what was done in her, [she] came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth." It was difficult and embarrassing, but she did it.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).

5. The result is glorious. Jesus granted the request of the hopeless. "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace, and be whole" (v.34). The result was twofold. She received peace. The fear and trembling were taken away and she was flooded with peace. Second, she was made whole both physically and spiritually.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour" (Mt.8:13).

"Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it" (Mt.9:29-30).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

4 (5:35-43) **Faith**: the third scene is that of a ruler's believing approach. This approach always lays hold of Jesus. Jesus knows when a person truly believes. A believing approach involves one simple attitude, but there are also several attitudes that it does not involve.

1. There is not a fearful, despairing attitude in faith. Believing has nothing to do with fear or despair.

a. Note the devastating circumstance that occurred. While Jesus was still talking with the woman, someone came from Jairus' home with terrible news: his daughter was dead. Imagine the trauma—how Jairus felt. How anxious he must have felt with the pushing and shoving and slow movement of the crowd. How nervous he must have become as Jesus stopped to handle the matter with the hemmorhaging woman. If Jesus had just hurried, He could have reached his daughter in time. Jairus was devastated, crushed, fearful, and despairing. Now it was too late. He was helpless; all hope was gone.

b. Note: the challenge of Jesus is the answer to all fear and despair: "Be not afraid, only believe." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.5:36.)

2. There is not a wailing, whining attitude in faith. Believing has nothing to do with such an attitude. Society and others may engage in and encourage wailing and whining; they may feel and say that nothing can be done now, that all one can do is to bear up under the weight and tragedy of the loss.

However, the answer to any circumstance, mild or tragic, is not wailing and whining. The answer is Jesus' *comfort* and *assurance*. Even if the circumstance is death, Jesus comforts and assures: "Why make ye this ado, and weep? The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth" (v.39). There is hope of the resurrection, which is a living fact, a living event that is to take place soon. In addition, there is hope of eternal life, of never dying, of being transported into the very presence of God upon passing from this life (Jn.5:24-29; 11:25-26. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18.)

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:24-25).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-26).**
>
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me [take me, transport me] unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).**

3. There is not a scornful, skeptical attitude. The mourners laughed Jesus to scorn (see note, pt.5—Mt.9:23-26 for a detailed discussion and thoughts).

4. There is an obedient attitude, an attitude that believes and follows Jesus. Note that the parents did exactly as Jesus said: they removed the guests and followed Jesus into the room where their dead daughter lay. They obeyed Him despite the scorn and skepticism of others.

> **Thought 1.** A believing faith often requires bearing abuse, scorn, and persecution to follow Jesus. Conquering the impossible requires great faith, and often it requires standing all alone against everyone else.

5. Jesus granted the believer's request. Jesus demonstrated His great love and amazing power. He raised Jairus' daughter. He showed that He cared for the man and the family who approached Him in belief and trust.

The family, of course, was amazed, as anyone would be. But note the *thoughtfulness* of Jesus. He told the family to tell no one what had really happened in order to protect them from an immediate onrush of sightseers. And He showed a tenderness by telling them to give their daughter something to eat.

> **Thought 1.** *Stubborn faith* is desperately needed by many parents in behalf of their children. However, note what must precede stubborn faith: a desperate faith that forgets and denies self and that seeks Jesus no matter the cost. Difficult cases require both a desperate faith and a stubborn faith. It is such faith that receives the *great* reward.
>
> > **"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20; cp. Mt.21:21).**
> >
> > **"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:22-24).**
> >
> > **"But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Lk.8:50).**
> >
> > **"And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chron.20:20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:36) **Faith—Fear**: fear is the opposite of belief. Believing God eliminates fear. Believing that God actually cares and will deliver one through any and all circumstances of life erases fear. If God does care, there is nothing to fear. However, if one does not believe that God cares, then fear is present. Why? Because there is no one beyond man to help, and man's help is limited—very limited. There are many times in life when man's help is not enough, or even close to being enough. Therefore for the unbelieving man, there are all kinds of things to fear: unfortunate circumstances, bad health, accident, loneliness, death, the loss of anything and everything—family, profession, friends, business, home.

	CHAPTER 6		
	I. The Rejection of Jesus' Authority: Why Jesus is Rejected,[DS1] **6:1-6** (Mt.13:54-58; cp. Lk.4:16-30)		b. He was from human & humble beginnings[DS2]
1 **Jesus was in His hometown, Nazareth**	And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.	3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.	**3 Some were offended by Him: They thought of Him only as one of their own**
a. He entered the synagogue b. He taught: The people were amazed	2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were	4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.	**4 Some blocked God's power**
2 **Some questioned His source of authority** a. He lacked proper credentials and education	astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him,	5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.	**5 Some were gripped with unbelief—shockingly so**
		6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.	

DIVISION III

THE SON OF GOD'S CONTINUING MINISTRY: JESUS' PARABLES AND HIS AUTHORITY, 4:1-6:6

I. The Rejection of Jesus' Authority: Why Jesus is Rejected, 6:1-6

(6:1-6) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Rejected—Ministers**: Jesus' hometown was harsh with Him. Most of His neighbors could never accept the fact that He was the Messiah. The fact that a person from among their midst could really be the true Messiah, the Son of God, was beyond their comprehension. There were some who were envious and jealous of the prominence and esteem He had achieved. Unacceptance, unbelief, and rumors about Him were widespread among His own people; and their unbelief led them to do some terrible things.

⇒ Some in the city tried to kill Him.

⇒ Some friends and neighbors considered Him mad or insane, so they went after Him to take Him home (Mk.3:20-21; Lk.4:16-30).

⇒ His family was extremely embarrassed by His claims and the wild rumors surrounding Him (Mk.3:31-32).

The most severe critics of a man's life and work are, of course, those who have always known him.

1. Jesus was in His hometown, Nazareth (v.1-2).
2. Some questioned His source of authority (v.2-3).
3. Some were offended by Him: They thought of Him only as one of their own (v.3-4).
4. Some blocked God's power (v.5).
5. Some were gripped with unbelief—shockingly so (v.6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:1-6) **Jesus Christ, Childhood and Early Life**: see note—Mt.2:12-23 for detailed discussion.

1 (6:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Hometown**: Jesus left Capernaum and returned to His hometown, Nazareth. Nazareth was the city where He had grown up as a child and young man. Note that the hometown folks did not flock to Him like they had everywhere else. From all indications, He had no opportunity to preach and teach until the Sabbath. When the Sabbath came, He entered the synagogue and began to teach. His teaching was powerful, extremely impressive—so much so that many were astonished and amazed at the ability and the force of what the *hometown boy* had to say.

Thought 1. Jesus was perfectly obedient to the Father (Heb.5:8). He lived and moved and had His being in the Father. This, of course, is the key to the believer's power in life and ministry. *Power living*, *power preaching*, and *power teaching* all come from the presence of God Himself.

> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"[That ye may know] what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).**
>
> **"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).**

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:7-8).

2 (6:2-3) **Jesus Christ, Accusations Against**: some questioned Jesus' source of authority. There were two primary reasons for this.

1. Jesus did not have the right credentials and education. His wisdom could not be denied; neither could the mighty works which He had done elsewhere be denied. The people even recognized that His wisdom and power were a *given* wisdom and power (v.2), but they could not understand from where and from whom He had received these.

Their question was a good one; it was the right question to ask. It showed that they were thinking about Him, but they were making a mistake. Why? Because they were unwilling to acknowledge that He had personally come from God (Lk.4:16-21; Jn.10:30-38). (See note, pt.1—Mt.13:54-56 for more discussion and applications.)

2. Jesus was from human and humble beginnings. He was a mere working man, a carpenter. His family had offered him no social or educational advantage. They were just common, ordinary folk, none of whom had ever achieved anything significant; yet, here He was teaching as a great Rabbi. (See note, pt.2—Mt.13:54-56 for a detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. The basic problem with Jesus' homefolk was envy and jealousy. They begrudged Jesus the honor and esteem that was being given Him by so many. He had become far more famous than any of them, and most of them had held so much more advantage and promise as children. They were just unwilling to admit that Jesus was really who He claimed to be (cp. Lk.4:16-24). They resented His claims, resented them so much that they became stiff-necked, giving themselves over to obstinate unbelief.

"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God" (Jer.5:4).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:3) **Jesus Christ—Accusations Against**: Jesus was not just being rejected—He was being sneered at and despised (Is.53:3). Contrary to their claims, He had not come *from* such a humble place as Nazareth, but He had come *to* Nazareth, come to seek and save those who had been His neighbors.

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

"But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Mic.5:2).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:5-8).

3 (6:3-4) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: some were offended by Him, offended because they thought of Him only as one of their own.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

Note that Jesus identified three groups who were offended and doing dishonor to Him. (See note—Mt.13:57 for a detailed discussion.)

1. "His own country": who attempted to kill Him (see outline and notes—Lk.4:16-30).
2. "His own kin": friends and neighbors who thought Him insane (see outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.3:20-21).
3. "His own house": family members who were embarrassed by His claims and the neighbors' talk (see outline and notes—Mk.3:31-32).

Thought 1. One thing that God abhors is envy, resenting the gifts given to others. God bestows gifts as He wills to help mankind in its desperate plight. He expects the gifts to be used, and He expects all to encourage one another in the use of those gifts.

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor.4:7).

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" (1 Cor.13:4).

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal.5:26).

4 (6:5) **Jesus Christ, Rejected—Unbelief**: some blocked God's power for the whole community. Their obstinate unbelief, questioning, rumors, and repulsion toward Jesus kept most away. Only a few sick folk were healed.

Thought 1. A man's unbelief affects and influences others. It keeps others away from Christ. What an awful responsibility—a terrible accounting—for one's own family and neighbors and country.

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Mt.18:6).

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mt.23:13).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (1 Jn.2:10).

Thought 2. Note that Christ tried to reach all three segments of society during His lifetime. Every believer is responsible to reach out to the same three segments of society. We shall be held accountable for how faithfully we reach out.

5 (6:6) **Jesus Christ, Rejected—Unbelief**: some were gripped with unbelief—shockingly so (see note—Mt.13:58). Note the words, "He marvelled because of their unbelief." They had His presence, His wisdom, and the testimony of His mighty works. They had His power to help them in all their need, yet they stayed away from His meetings. They would not come to Him. In pride, they refused to trust and believe Him. The situation amazed Jesus. Their unbelief was just incredible, but He had to accept their rejection. He could not force Himself upon them, so He left town and travelled to all the villages surrounding Nazareth.

Thought 1. Unbelief is shocking. It is an amazing thing to think that any man would ever reject the salvation of Christ—the salvation that delivers man from sin, death, and judgment to come, and that Christ enriches and enhances life so much (cp. Gal.5:22-23. See DEEPER STUDY # 4,5—Mt.1:21; note—2 Cor.3:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Eph.1:7; cp. Ro.8:28-39.)

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).

"Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job 21:14).

	IV. THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26	9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.	
		10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.	b. Were to show stability & settledness
	A. The Sending Forth of the Disciples, 6:7-13 (Mt.9:35-10:42; Lk.9: 1-6)	11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.	c. Were to reject any who were not hospitable & receptive 1) The reason: As a warning 2) The judgment: Terrible
1 The disciples were equipped a. Were called unto Him b. Were sent two by two c. Were given power **2 The disciples were instructed** a. Were to live in utter simplicity & humility	7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; 8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:	12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent. 13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.	d. Were to preach repentance e. Were to minister to the evil-possessed & the sick

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

A. The Sending Forth of the Disciples, 6:7-13

(6:7-13) **Introduction**: every man has to be equipped before He goes forth, no matter the project or endeavor. To a great degree success depends upon how well equipped a man is. This is certainly true of men in the business world. It is also true of God's servants and disciples. They must be equipped by God as they go forth to carry on their ministry for the Lord.

1. The disciples were equipped (v.7).
2. The disciples were instructed (v.8-13).

1 (6:7) **Disciples—Ministers**: Christ equipped the disciples. He did not send them out unprepared and unequipped.

1. Christ called His disciples "unto Him" (Mk.3:13; 6:7). He called them "that they should be with Him, that He might [later] send them forth to preach" (Mk.3:14. See note—Mk.3:14-15 for a detailed discussion.)

This was the very method Christ used to equip His disciples: the method of *attachment* or the method of *discipleship*. Christ simply called men to *be with Him*: to walk and associate with Him, to follow and live in His presence. By being "*with Him,*" they would see how He walked with God and ministered to people. They would begin to absorb and assimilate His very character and behavior. They would begin to be like Him, and in becoming like Him, they would begin to follow Him and to serve Him more and more. (See note—Mt.28:19-20 for a detailed discussion on Christ's method of discipleship.)

2. Christ sent His disciples forth two by two. There are at least two reasons for doing this.
   a. Every word was to be established (confirmed, upheld) in the mouth of two witnesses (Mt.18:16).
   b. The two would provide company for each other and be able to more easily face trials together. They could encourage, support, and strengthen each other.
3. Christ gave His disciples great power. Note that power over unclean spirits is all that is mentioned (cp. Mk.3:15). However, the power "to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" and "to preach the kingdom of God" was also given (cp. Mt.10:1; Lk.9:1-2). Why then does Mark concentrate only on the power over evil spirits? The reason seems to be twofold.
   a. Mark is writing to the Gentiles, a people...
      - who did not glorify God as God.
      - who were not thankful to God.
      - who had become vain in their imaginations.
      - who had hearts that were foolish and darkened.
      - who professed themselves to be wise, but were fools.
      - who changed the glory of God into images such as corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.
      - who were unclean through the lusts of their own hearts.
      - who dishonored their own bodies between themselves.
      - who changed the truth of God into a lie.
      - who worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.
      - who were given over to vile affections.
      - whose women changed the natural use into that which is against nature.
      - whose men left the natural use of the woman, and burned in their lust one toward another.

- who did not like to retain God in their knowledge.
- who had reprobate minds.
- who did those things that are degrading and immoral (cp. Ro.1:21-28).

Very simply and clearly stated, Mark was writing to a people filled with all kinds of evil, a people who were *subject* to being controlled by all kinds of evil spirits. Gentile society needed to be aware of the unclean spirits among them and their need to be cleansed of such uncleanness and evil.

> **"Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" (Ro.1:29-31).**

b. Mark focuses upon the central purpose of Christ: to conquer the *spirit of evil* and to *destroy the works of the devil*, especially in the hearts and lives of men.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
>
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

2 (6:8-13) **Minister, Life of—Believers, Life-Style—Healing, Oil**: Christ instructed the disciples. He gave them five specific instructions.

1. The disciples were to live in utter simplicity and humility (v.8-9). Christ spelled out exactly what He meant by this.

⇒ They were to take a staff only, that is, a walking staff.
⇒ They were to take no scrip or wallet, no bread, and no money in their purse.
⇒ They were to wear sandals for protection and coolness and comfort of the feet.
⇒ They were not to wear two coats, for this would display extravagant and wasteful living.

Thought 1. The whole idea is that the servant of God is to live simply and humbly just as ordinary folk live. The servant is not to be extravagant and flamboyant, worldly and materialistic-minded, indulgent and fleshy. There are four critical reasons for this instruction.

a. The Lord's servant is to "seek...and set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:1-2). He is to be *heavenly minded*, so that men will know there is a far better life and land than what this earth offers (cp. Heb.11:13-16, 24-26).

> **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).**

b. The Lord's servant is to have his mind centered on *preaching the gospel and ministering* to people, not on material things such as money, land, clothes, the best food, buying and selling, and accumulating.

> **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**

c. The Lord's servant (as he labors and serves) is to demonstrate trust in God for his needs, so that others might learn to depend upon God (Mt.6:24-34).

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**

d. The Lord's servant is to teach and depend upon God's people to provide for him (cp. Mt.10:9-10).

> **"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor.9:13-14).**

2. The disciples were to show stability and settledness (v.10). When they entered a town and found a host, they were to remain with that host and not be moving about from place to place. They were not to seek more comfort and luxury as they came to know a place.

Thought 1. There are several good reasons for this instruction. (See note—Mt.10:11 for the kind of host to seek.)
1) Favoring some hosts over others would indicate favoritism and cause jealousy.
2) Favoring some hosts over others would indicate a selfish, materialistic, and soft mind and would lead to the questioning of the disciple's commitment.
3) Favoring some hosts over others would distract from the disciple's purpose and ministry.
4) Favoring some hosts over others would hurt and often alienate the first host and others in the congregation.

3. The disciples were to reject any who were not hospitable and receptive (v.11). (See note, pts. 3, 4—Mt.10:12-15 for a detailed discussion.)

4. The disciples were to preach repentance (v.12). The disciples were not to preach their own message or ideas, not what they thought or believed. They were heralds...
- men who represented the King.
- men who were given the message of the King.
- men who were to proclaim the message of the King.

Thought 1. The message was that men should repent. Men should change their lives from the way they were living. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30.)

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**
>
> **"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).**

5. The disciples were to minister to the evil-possessed and the sick (v.13). Note they were to minister to both body and soul. They were to liberate the soul from evil spirits, delivering those who were so clearly gripped by the bondage of sin and shame. They were also to minister to those sick in body, those who were suffering and hurting.

Note: they "anointed with oil many that were sick." This is the anointing spoken of in James (see note—Jas.5:14-15).

a. Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, of His presence. The oil helps the sick person to focus and concentrate upon the presence of the Holy Spirit and His power. It is often difficult for a sick person to focus and concentrate. This is especially true with those who are hurting and suffering, racked with excruciating pain. It is also true of those with jerky and short attention spans. The oil—its presence and placement upon the body—helps the sick person focus and concentrate upon the Holy Spirit, His presence and power.

b. Oil is a symbol of God's care, comfort, and joy, of His mercy to us. It is the oil of gladness. Therefore, oil actually focuses the attention and stirs the sick person to believe in God's mercy. The focused attention and stirred faith helps to fill the person's heart with gladness.

> **"Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Ps.45:7).**
>
> **"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Heb.1:9).**

	B. The Death of John the Baptist: The Immoral Vs. the Righteous, 6:14-29 (Mt.14:1-14; Lk.9:7-9)	his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; 22 And when the daugther of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased	d. Because of seeking social approval[DS3]
1 The opinions about Jesus spread as the disciples preached, cp. v.7, 30f a. Herod: Thought Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead	14 And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.	Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. 23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.	e. Because of his fear of what men might say,[DS4] v.26
b. Others: Thought Jesus was Elijah or a prophet	15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.	24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.	**3 Salome's reaction to John: Weakness of character** a. Social conformity: Dress apparel & partying, v.22 b. Immature dependency upon mother, v.24
2 Herod's reaction to Jesus: A guilty conscience a. Because of several illegal acts 1) Imprisoning a just man 2) Stealing his half-brother's wife 3) Committing adultery	16 But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. 17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. 18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.	25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. 26 And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.	**4 Herodias' reaction to John: A revengeful spirit,** v.19, 24
	19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:	27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,	**5 John's reaction to Jesus: A courageous loyalty to the Messiah—martyrdom**
b. Because of an inadequate religion[DS1]	20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.	28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. 29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and	
c. Because of a partying, drunken spirit[DS2]	21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on	took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.	

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

B. The Death of John the Baptist: The Immoral vs. the Righteous, 6:14-29

(6:14-29) **Introduction—Herod**: the preaching of the disciples throughout Galilee reached the ears of Herod. Herod heard about Jesus and the news troubled and disturbed him, apparently causing some spiritual conviction. Why? The reason is contained in this passage, a passage that pictures *The Immoral vs. the Righteous*.

1. The opinions about Jesus spread as the disciples preached (v.14-15).
2. Herod's reaction to Jesus: a guilty conscience (v.16-23).
3. Salome's reaction to John: weakness of character (v.24-25).
4. Herodias' reaction to John: a revengeful spirit (v.25-26).
5. John's reaction to Jesus: a courageous loyalty to the Messiah—martyrdom (v.27-29).

1 (6:14-15) **Jesus Christ, Opinions of**: the opinions about Jesus spread like wildfire as the disciples preached (cp. v.7, 30f). Herod heard all about what was going on. He heard about a man called Jesus who preached righteousness and who worked enormous miracles. Herod was again striken in conscience. He was living such an immoral and murderous life that He could not escape the guilt, especially when a righteous person appeared on the scene. At first, when he heard about Jesus and His phenomenal works, he was perplexed. He had known only one man who was so righteous that he was able to do mighty works, and that was John. Therefore, Herod concluded that John the Baptist had "risen from the dead,"

that is, risen in the body of Jesus Christ. However, others believed and told Herod that it was not John, but Elijah or one of the other prophets (see note—Mk.8:28 for discussion). As shall be seen, Herod refused to believe it was anyone other than John the Baptist.

2 (6:16-23) **Herod—Guilt**: Herod's reaction to Jesus was that of a guilty conscience. The man lived a life of gross sin, immorality, and murder—including the murder of God's prophet, John the Baptist.

Herod had a guilty conscience because of several illegal acts. He had imprisoned a just and innocent man, John the Baptist, because John had been preaching against the kind of life Herod was living. Herod had married the daughter of Aretas, King of the Nabataean Arabs. On a trip to Rome, he had visited his half-brother and was deeply attracted to his wife, Herodias. He seduced her and talked her into returning with him. Herod's own wife discovered his plans and fled to her father, King Aretas. Two serious sins were committed by Herod. He had put away his own wife (her life was probably threatened), and he had stolen the wife of his half-brother. It was against such immorality that John preached (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt:14:1-14 for detailed discussion and thoughts).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:20) **Herod—Religion, Inadequate**: Herod had a guilty conscience because of an inadequate religion. Herod had a sensitive conscience; he was not totally hardened against the truth of righteousness. He kept John alive for a little over a year. He recognized something in John, something that drew him and caused him to want to hear what John had to say, and apparently he even tried to observe and do some of the things John preached. (How many try to do some of the things the preacher says?) However, whatever religious works Herod did, they were inadequate. As every genuine believer knows, religion is never adequate. Only a personal relationship with God suffices and meets the need of the human soul. Herod was inconsistent, loving the world and its things more than God and His righteousness.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:21-22) **Herod—Partying**: Herod had a guilty conscience because of a partying, drunken spirit. An example of this is seen in the event recorded in this passage. He apparently followed the Greek custom of celebrating special events with lavish feasts, heavy drinking, and suggestive and passionate dancing. (See note—Mt.14:6-8 for detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. What a scene! So much like our day and time; in fact, so much like so many generations!

> **"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(6:22) **Herod—Passion**: Herod had a guilty conscience because of seeking social approval above godly honor and respect. When he was full of drink, he was stirred with such lust and passion for his step-daughter that he offered her anything, even half his kingdom. Herod's marred judgment and foolishness were seen in the *reckless offer* to his step-daughter. He was foolish to think that he had to keep a wicked and dishonorable oath or else lose favor with his friends and associates. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.14:1-14 for detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. How often people use parties and drinking events to seek social approval! How often social approval is sought by reckless and foolish behavior—ranging from too much drink, suggestive movement of the body in dance, suggestive conversation; and, as in Herod's case, all of these.

Thought 2. Why does so much irresponsible, loose, and sinful behavior take place at drinking and dancing events?

⇒ A person needs social approval and acceptance.
⇒ A person has low self-esteem and needs to fit in.
⇒ A person fears disapproval, unacceptance, and rejection.

> **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(6:23) **Herod—Pride**: Herod had a guilty conscience because of his fear of what men might say. This is seen in v.26: "For their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her." Herod had made a foolish promise. Now he was faced with keeping a wicked oath or breaking one of God's major laws: "Thou shalt not kill." His pride prevented him from confessing his error. He feared being shamed and embarrassed by a woman's tantrums before his guests and being the object of ridicule in their jokes. He knew what he should do, but in *pride and weakness* before men, he buckled under to a terrible sin. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.14:1-14 for a detailed discussion.)

> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**

3 (6:24-25) **Worldliness—Immaturity—Salome**: Salome's reaction to John was weakness of character. This is seen in two acts.

1. She sought social approval and conformity (v.22). Her dress apparel was bound to be what the dancing girls wore at dancing and drinking parties. Socially acceptable dress exposed certain parts of the body and was worn to attract attention and to cause the gaping of others. Salome's dance borders on the incredible because she was of the royal family. The fact that she would dance so suggestively is a sad picture of her character.

Thought 1. What a lesson on the effect of dress and dancing and drinking parties!

> **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, of gold, or pearls, or costly array" (1 Tim.2:9).**
>
> **"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel" (1 Pt.3:3; cp. Is.3:16-24).**

2. She had an immature dependence upon her mother (v.24). Apparently, Salome's behavior was instigated by her mother, Herodias. Salome's age is not known, but she could not have been just a child; she could not have been underage. To have danced a solo dance at a social event indicates that she was at least a young woman. She was of age, personally responsible for her decisions. But note how heavily influenced she was by her mother, both in dancing and in seeking what to ask as a reward. She was immature in both spirit and personal responsibility. She did not have the ability to make right decisions. She was easily led into irresponsible and sinful behavior, lacking self-esteem and a strong spirit.

> **"And he [Ahaziah] did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: for he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done" (1 Ki.22:52-53).**
>
> **"He [Ahaziah] also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" (2 Chron.22:3).**
>
> **"But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them" (Jer.9:14).**
>
> **"I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked" (Amos 2:4).**
>
> **"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.20:18-19).**

Thought 1. Salome is a picture of so many today who lack self-esteem and a strong spirit, of many who sense a great need to fit in. Therefore, they give in to the immoral and sinful suggestions and lusts of others.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment" (Ex.23:2).**

4 (6:24-25) **Vengeance—Sin, Love of—Herodias**: Herodias' reaction to John was a revengeful spirit (v.19, 24). Herodias' vengeful spirit is spelled out clearly in the words of verses 18-19. John's preaching against immorality angered her to no end. She wanted him dead, and apparently she plotted this whole event hoping to trap Herod into executing John. Herodias' life is a picture of vengeance and its causes.

1. She *wanted to live as she wished* and not be told how to live by someone else—not by the King nor by the righteous and certainly not by God.
2. She *wanted to sin without interference* and without being reminded of it. She wanted everything and everyone removed out of her presence that reminded her that she was sinning.

3. She *ignored God*, His law and demand for accountability. She ignored the message of God and His righteousness. She ignored the fact that she had to meet God after death.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).
"He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now" (1 Jn.2:9).
"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 Jn.3:15).

5 (6:27-29) **Faithfulness—Dedication**: John's reaction to the whole scene was courageous loyalty to the Messiah and martyrdom. John stood firm for God. He preached righteousness while languishing in the rat and roach infested prison for a year and a half. He was savagely killed as a martyr for the cause of righteousness. (See notes—Mt.14:10-14 for detailed discussion and application.)

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).
"The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" (Ps.118:6).
"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Is.12:2).
"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

	C. The Need for Rest and Its Dangers, 6:30-34 (cp. Jn.6:1-4; Lk.9:10)	32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.	c. The disciples left to rest
1 The disciples returned from their mission a. Reported what they had done b. Reported what they had taught	30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.	33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.	**3 Danger 2: Taking too much time to rest when people are seeking help**
2 Danger 1: Not taking time to rest a. The disciples worked long & hard b. The disciples were pressed by the crowds	31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.	34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.	**4 Danger 3: Losing sight of people who are as sheep without a shepherd** a. Jesus saw & had compassion b. Jesus began to teach

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THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

C. The Need for Rest and Its Dangers, 6:30-34

(6:30-34) **Introduction—Rest**: every person needs rest, relaxation, and time alone with God. However, when the believer is seeking to rest, he must know there are some serious dangers that confront him. This passage shows three of the dangers.

1. The disciples returned from their mission (v.30).
2. Danger 1: not taking time to rest (v.31-32).
3. Danger 2: taking too much time to rest—when people are seeking help (v.33).
4. Danger 3: losing sight of people who are as sheep without a shepherd (v.34).

1 (6:30) **Disciples—Ministers**: the disciples returned from their mission and reported to Jesus. They reported two things: what they had done and what they had taught. How they had lived and what they had taught were both of vital interest to Christ. He had given them precise instructions in both areas. This report would reveal their obedience to Him, the degree of commitment and effectiveness of each disciple. Jesus needed to know, for the salvation of the world depended on their lives and teaching. He was soon to leave all in their hands.

> **Thought 1.** Believers are accountable both for how they live and for what they teach. They are to be obedient to Christ—living exactly as He has said and teaching exactly what He has said to teach. Every disciple is held accountable to God (2 Cor.5:10; Heb.13:17).
>
> **Thought 2.** A disciple should live and teach so that he can share anything with the Lord. He should have nothing to hide or of which to be ashamed.

2 (6:31-32) **Rest—Devotion**: the first danger is not taking time to rest. The disciples were extremely tired. They had gone forth for the Lord and carried out His mission, and it had exhausted them. Since returning, the demanding crowds surrounding Jesus were pressing in upon them. They barely had time to make their reports, much less rest and meditate. Therefore, Jesus suggested they go apart into a desert place and get alone with God for awhile. Note several things.

1. It was both the work of the ministry and the demands of the crowd that taxed the disciples' energy.

> **Thought 1.** It is not work alone that tires the body. Responsibility and the weight of it create pressure and tax one's energy. Just the presence of a demanding crowd is a reminder that one is responsible to work.

2. The disciples had bodies that naturally required some relief from pressure and rest from labor.

> **"And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness" (Ps.55:6-7).**

3. The disciples had spirits that required some extended periods alone with God in meditation, study, and prayer. They had to receive from God in order to share the presence and message of God. They had to be still and listen, giving God opportunity to share with them. They had to be recharged before they could charge.

> **"Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord of all the righteous acts of the Lord, which he did to you and to your fathers" (1 Sam.12:7).**
>
> **"Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14).**

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters" (Ps.23:1-2).

"This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Is.28:12).

4. The disciples needed a quiet, deserted place to get alone with God—not a place where others were, not a place of business, of commercialism, of fine accommodations.

5. The Lord cared about them; He cared about their exhaustion. They had poured themselves into His mission and into the lives of people. He knew they needed rest and rekindling, refuge and consoling, relaxation and worship. He had compassion upon them, so He said, "Come ye apart...and rest a while."

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Ex.33:14).

"Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest" (Ex.34:21).

"Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings" (Lev.23:3).

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).

"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps.131:2).

"But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Pr.1:33).

3 (6:33) **Rest**: the second danger is taking too much time to rest. People are desperately seeking help; therefore, the believer must take only the time needed to rest his body and spirit, no more, no less. The scene was dramatic. The people saw where Jesus and the disciples were heading. They began to run by foot around the lake. As they ran, they passed through the cities shouting excitedly the news that Jesus was nearby. Throngs of people joined in the streaming mass of humanity making its way around the lake. By the time they reached the place where Jesus' ship was to dock, the crowd had grown to five thousand men not counting women and children.

This is the crucial point: the disciples needed rest. They knew it and Jesus knew it, yet here was the demanding crowd. They were interfering and keeping the disciples from their much needed rest. The disciples became irritated and soon wanted the people sent away. (This is seen by their request in v.36 and the rude way they asked the question in v.37.) However, Jesus knew something. The disciples had rested some coming across the lake. The sea, their old stomping ground, had relaxed them a great deal. That was sufficient to carry the disciples through another session of ministry. It was a matter of just how exhausted the human body *really* was vs. the needs of the people. In this particular case, the disciples were ready to act selfishly and take too much rest, thereby neglecting the people.

Thought 1. There is a time to minister just as there is a time to spend alone with God. There is a time to work just as there is a time to pray. There is a time to get up and get to it just as there is a time to rest and relax.

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Is.32:17).

Thought 2. Unfortunately, many have the problem of resting and relaxing too much instead of working too much. Some even spend too much time in what they call Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with God and neglect being out among the people enough. While on this earth, fellowship with God is primarily to prepare us to go out and minister.

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth" (Is.62:1).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer.20:9).

4 (6:34) **Shepherd—Sheep**: the third danger is losing sight of people who are as sheep without a shepherd. Again the scene is descriptive. As the boat approached the shore, Jesus stood in the boat watching the multitude clamoring for space on the seashore. He needed rest, and the disciples needed rest even more. But He was not annoyed or irritated with the people. Contrariwise, He was moved with deep, intense compassion because the people were as sheep without a shepherd. He could not turn from them. He could not send them away despite the need for rest. He could do only one thing. He had to meet their need; He had to teach them, so He began "to teach them many things."

Note: when Jesus saw the multitude, He said, "They were as sheep without a shepherd." He meant at least three things by this statement. (See notes—Jn.10:1-6; 10:11-18. Cp. Is.53:6.)

1. Sheep without a shepherd are bewildered and wander about, not knowing where they are or where they are going. They get lost ever so easily and cannot find their way back to the flock. So it is with people. People without the shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are bewildered. They do not know where they have come from, where they are going, nor why they are where they are. They wander about, getting lost in place after place, never finding the way to true life (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.15:4).

"But when he saw the multitides, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:25).

"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have forgotten their resting place" (Jer.50:6).

"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Ezk.34:6).

2. Sheep without a shepherd go hungry. They do not have adequate nourishment. They cannot find sufficient food to live. So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, go hungry. They do not have the Shepherd of God to feed and inspire their souls nor to satisfy their inner longings for peace, love, and joy (Gal.5:22-23). They have only themselves to depend upon as they seek to meet their craving for life. They have only themselves in seeking the answer to...

- purpose
- direction
- assurance
- loneliness
- emptiness
- disturbance
- depression
- sickness
- death

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

3. Sheep without a shepherd cannot find shelter or safety. The sheep are exposed to all the dangers of the wilderness (see note 3—Lk.15:4). So it is with people. People without the Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, are exposed to all that is within the world, and they are doomed. They are doomed because the beasts, the temptations and trials of the world, attack at every opportunity and destroy all who wander about. (See outlines and notes—Jn.10:1-18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—10:27-29 for more discussion and application.)

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).

"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast" (Ps.57:1).

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps.91:1; cp. Ps.61:1-4; 91:1-6).

	D. The Attitudes Toward Human Need & Resources, 6:35-44 (Mt.14:15-21; Lk.9: 11-17; Jn.6:1-15)	knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.	
1 Two attitudes toward human need	35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This	39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.	c. Organizing to use what resources one has
a. Individual responsibility	is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:	40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.	
	36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.	41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.	d. Being thankful for what one has & can give e. Giving what one has
b. Corporate responsibility	37 He answered and said	42 And they did all eat, and	
2 Six attitudes toward resources	unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him,	were filled.	
a. Questioning one's ability to give	Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of	43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments,	f. Being careful in the handling of resources
b. Checking to see what one can give	bread, and give them to eat?	and of the fishes.	
	38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they	44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.	

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THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

D. The Attitudes Toward Human Need and Resources, 6:35-44

(6:35-44) **Introduction**: this event is of critical importance. The feeding of five thousand is the *only miracle* recorded by all four gospel writers. The apostles were deeply affected by the miracle. It made a dramatic and lasting impact upon them.

The miracle has to do with what is so close to God's heart: human need. Christ deals with our attitudes toward human need. He is concerned with how we handle our resources, with how we go about meeting the needs that confront us. The lesson is powerful (see outline and notes—Mt.14:15-21; Lk.9:10-17; Jn.6:1-15).

1. Two attitudes toward human need (v.35-37).
2. Six attitudes toward resources (v.37-44).

(6:35-44) **Another Outline**: What Christ Does with What Is Given to Him.

1. He thanks God for it (v.41).
2. He blesses it (v.41).
3. He breaks it (v.41).
4. He multiplies it (v.41).
5. He feeds with it (v.42).
6. He supplies more than enough (v.43).

1 (6:35-37) **Needs, Attitudes Toward—Stewardship**: there are two attitudes toward human need. Christ had been teaching for many hours, and now it was late afternoon, probably after 3 p.m. The disciples were exhausted and still wanted some rest. They came to Jesus and reminded Him of the time because there was little time left in the day for them to rest. They suggested, "Send the multitude away so they can go and buy food *for themselves*. But Jesus said, "No. You give them food to eat." In these words are seen the two attitudes toward human need.

1. There is the attitude of individual or personal responsibility. It is true that neither the disciples nor Jesus had invited the crowd. In fact, the crowd was not even wanted. The disciples and Jesus had planned something else. The crowd was interfering; therefore, the disciples sensed no responsibility for the crowd. They wanted to get rid of the people so they could be free to do as they wished. Their attitude was: "They are responsible for themselves, so send them away to fend for themselves."
2. There is the attitude of corporate responsibility. Jesus said very simply, "You give them food. They are hungry, and they are your neighbors, part of your world. You are responsible for your world and the people in it. If you know of people who have need, then you are the one who is responsible to help them. They may be irresponsible. They may not have been invited, and they may be interfering with your plans; but they have need, and you know about their need. So meet it. Feed them."

> **Thought 1.** Too many try to escape their responsibility for the world. When looking at or hearing about the poor and hungry, lonely and depressed, problem-centered and burdened, too many say: "Send them away. They got

themselves into this mess because they were too lazy or irresponsible or sinful. If they wanted to be straight and responsible, they could. I'm too busy to become involved with such shiftless and irresponsible people."

Such an attitude misses the whole point of Christ. Man is responsible for his world, no matter the condition. We are responsible for our neighbors. In fact, the worse off a neighbor is, the more we are responsible to help. The cause of his condition does not matter: whether sin and shame, or clear and understandable circumstances.

⇒ If his condition is sin and shame, then we are to share the gospel and teach him how to live and work responsibly.

⇒ If his condition is due to clear and understandable circumstances, then we are to help restore and replace him to a position of responsibility and self-worth.

> **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal.6:1).**

2 (6:37-44) **Resources**: there are six attitudes toward resources. It takes resources to meet human need. In consideration of this, there is a fact that needs to be acknowledged. Every person has something he can give. Every person can help and do something to meet a need when a need confronts him. The problem is not lack of resources nor a lack of ability or money or time. The problem is attitude—attitude toward the resources which one has.

1. There is the attitude of questioning one's ability to give (v.37). Jesus had just said, "Give them food." The disciples were shocked and even disturbed with the instructions, for the crowd was enormous and the task *impossible*. They were already upset over the presence and burden of the crowd. Irritated, the disciples fired back at Jesus, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" This amounted to about six months' labor for the disciples. They did not have the money, so the request by Jesus was ridiculous to them. There was no way they could give food to meet the need of the crowd. But note something: the disciples forgot two things.

a. They forgot that they did have something. The need of the crowd in this instance was for food, and the disciples had food for themselves (or at least enough money to buy food for themselves). Yet, they did not think to mention this fact. They were thinking only of what excess, what above their own needs they had to give.

b. They forgot the power of God. They forgot that God loved and cared for these people as well as for them. They forgot that God would meet the needs of any and all, if only they would put what they had at His disposal. They forgot that God's power could take little and multiply it.

Thought 1. The widow's mite is an excellent application for this point.

> **"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Mk.12:41-44).**
>
> **"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).**
>
> **"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase" (Pr.3:9).**

2. There is the attitude of checking to see what one can give (v.38). In response to the disciples' impatience, Jesus remained cool, asking rather forcefully, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." The disciples checked and reported that they had five loaves of bread and two fish. Note two facts.

a. They had resources that were *overlooked*. Why were they overlooked? Because the resources were so little. There was no possibility the resources could ever meet the need. In fact, two fish and five loaves of bread could not even make a dent in the hunger of five thousand men. In the eyes of the disciples, it was impossible for the resources to do any good whatsoever.

b. Jesus did not ask the disciples to check on how to feed all five thousand men. He asked them to check on *what resources they had* to give. They were to look at what they themselves could give, not at how the whole task could be done. Their eyes and perspective were to be on using what they had, not on the mammoth impossibility of the task. This is a critical point, and it should be carefully noted when looking at the vast needs of the world.

Thought 1. We need to check and to search out every resource, every single thing we can give, no matter how small and insignificant. Every single thing can be used by God to help meet the need.

Thought 2. The need may be overwhelming. It may swamp and easily discourage us. The answer is what Christ is teaching. Set your eyes on what you can give and do, not on the impossibility of the task. Check up on yourself. Find out what resources you have and can give to *help* meet the need.

> **"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea" (Acts 11:29).**
>
> **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor.16:2).**
>
> **"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee" (Dt.16:17).**

3. There is the attitude of organizing what resources one has so that they might be used (v.39-40). This is an important step Christ takes, and it should be well noted. The hour was late. Darkness was rapidly approaching. Distribution could have easily become a problem. The people had to be organized into small circles or rows which left room for the disciples to walk between them to distribute the food.

Thought 1. Our resources, whatever we give and do, should be used in an organized fashion. Organization, arrangement, and orderliness were always God's will in the meeting of needs and the handling of resources.

"Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor.14:40).

4. There is the attitude of being thankful for what one has and can give (v.41). What Jesus did was impressive. He took into His hands what they had, and He looked up to heaven and gave thanks for it. It was small; it was insignificant. It looked like it would do little, like it would be insignificant; but He took it anyway and *looked up to heaven and blessed it*.

Thought 1. What a tremendous lesson on attitude toward resources! No resource, no gift, no ability is too small. God should be thanked for whatever resource(s) we have, no matter how insignificant, unimpressive, or unattractive.

"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps.24:1).

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps.50:10).

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts" (Hag.2:8).

5. There is the attitude of giving what one has (v.41-42). After giving thanks, Jesus took the food and gave it to the disciples to set before the people. And a miracle happened! The resource multiplied: all the people were fed and were filled (v.42).

Thought 1. At least two lessons are seen in this act of Christ.

1) We are to give what we have, no matter how small. We *are* to take *all* of what we have and give it to meet the need.

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Mt.16:24-25).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

2) Christ is *The Perfect Provider, The Perfect Supplier*. He takes what we give and multiplies it to meet the need.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

Thought 2. Christ takes whatever is given to Him, and He multiplies its purpose, meaning, and significance.

6. There is the attitude of being careful in the handling of resources (v.43-44). Very simply, Christ teaches that resources are not to be wasted. They are to be used day after day. When there is more than enough to meet one need, what is left over is to be gathered up to use elsewhere.

Thought 1. Note three lessons.

1) There is no room in Christ's economy for extravagance. When there is more than what is needed, the excess is to be saved for another need.
2) There is no room for wasting. No resource is to be wasted; it is to be used elsewhere.
3) There is no room for resources to be stored and banked; there is not any excuse for allowing resources to lie around unused. All resources—abilities or money—are to be used to meet needs as long as needs exist (see notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23-26).

	E. Five Wise Lessons for Service, 6:45-52 (Mt.14:22-33; Jn.6: 16-21)	night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.	
1 Lesson 1: Crowd excitement is not always wise	45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.	49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:	b. Their fear was horrifying c. Their cry was desperate
2 Lesson 2: Prayer after service is wise	46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.	50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.	**4 Lesson 4: Receiving the presence of Jesus is wise**[DS2] a. His presence erases fear
3 Lesson 3: Crying for help in time of need is wise	47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.	51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.	b. His presence calms the storm
a. Their toil was long[DS1]	48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the	52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.	**5 Lesson 5: Remembering & trusting the power of Jesus is wise**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

E. Five Wise Lessons for Service, 6:45-52

(6:45-52) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Messiahship**: Jesus had to constrain His disciples to leave and go to the other shore. They argued against going. There were several reasons why the use of constraint was necessary.

First, right after Jesus had fed the crowd, they wished to take Him by force and make Him King. The Gospel of John tells us this (Jn.6:15). Jesus knew the popular view of Messiahship. The Messiah was to lead Israel in revolt against the Roman conquerors and free the people, establishing the government of theocracy, that is, the rule and reign of God over all the earth (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). The disciples were caught up in the excitement. Christ had to send them across the lake and disperse the crowd in order to prevent an immediate uprising.

Having to strain against a storm and fight for survival would calm the disciples' excitement. His calming the storm would also prove His Messiahship and again show that He was in control of all things and knew the best way to proclaim His Messiahship.

Second, it was time for Jesus to move on. Others needed His ministry. He wanted the disciples to make use of what little daylight there was in crossing the lake.

Third, and so important to see, Jesus needed time alone for prayer.

Fourth, Christ wanted the disciples to learn five lessons for service—lessons that would prove invaluable in their ministry to the world (see outlines and notes—Mt.14:22-33; Jn.6:16-21).

1. Lesson 1: crowd excitement is not always wise (v.45).
2. Lesson 2: prayer after service is wise (v.46).
3. Lesson 3: crying for help in time of need is wise (v.47-49).
4. Lesson 4: receiving the presence of Jesus is wise (v.50-51).
5. Lesson 5: remembering and trusting the power of Jesus is wise (v.52).

1 (6:45) **Jesus Christ, Messiahship—Excitement—Crowd**: the first lesson is that crowd excitement is not always wise. The crowd had been fed miraculously. They were extremely excited, for Jesus was bound to be the Messiah. He could always feed them and meet their needs, no matter what their needs were. They wanted to take Him by force and make Him King (see note—Mk.6:45-52; cp. Jn.6:14-15). Of course, the authorities would never allow a revolt; they would crush the people. But the people were not thinking. They wanted to act now, whether wise or unwise.

⇒ Fleshy emotions were running wild.
⇒ Selfish desires were dominating.
⇒ Rationality and thoughtfulness were lacking.
⇒ Spiritual insight was completely absent.

Jesus could not allow the disciples to be caught up in the excitement and worldly desires of the crowd. God's will had to be done; and His will was the cross, an eternal kingdom, not a worldly kingdom that gives man a life span of only seventy or so years. God wants man to live now, yes, but He also wants man to live eternally. Jesus knew this. And He also knew that man could live forever *only by the cross, only by a spiritual rebirth* wrought by the death of the Son of God (Jn.3:16;

Eph.1:7; 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18). Jesus had to do God's will. He had to get the disciples away from the crowd and their carnal, fleshy excitement lest the disciples be ill-affected (see note—Jn.6:14-15).

Thought 1. Motive, objective, and personal control are what make the difference. Excitement due to wrong motives and desires can lead to several problems.
1) Carnal and unwise action and behavior without thought or understanding.
2) Stimulation or exaltation of the flesh.
3) Ignoring thoughtful prayer and God's will.

When a crowd of people is excited, a person will often follow along with the crowd's emotional excitement. He goes ahead and does what the crowd does without thinking. His flesh is stimulated, excited, tingling and often craving. He gives way to his urge. He acts in his own flesh and strength. He ignores God, giving no consideration whatsoever to seeking God's will. This was the danger with the disciples. It is often the danger confronting us.

The answer, of course, is what Jesus did with the disciples: getting away from the crowd and its worldly and carnal motives and excitement.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).**

Thought 2. We must be surrendered to walk in God's will and way, not in the will and way of a worldly crowd.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**

2 (6:46) **Prayer—Crowd**: the second lesson is that prayer after service is wise (see note—Mt.14:22-23 for discussion). Jesus had been teaching the crowd and ministering to them. In the eyes of the world, He could not have been more successful. The results of His service and ministry were phenomenal.

⇒ He had a large successful ministry. The crowds were huge, ranging in the thousands. They were literally running and clamoring to get to him (cp. Mk.6:33).
⇒ He had the recognition, esteem, praise, and honor of the crowd.
⇒ He had the excitement and motivation of the crowd. They were motivated enough to even make Him King.

But note what Jesus did. He dismissed the people, sent them away. Why? So He could get alone "to pray." God, not the crowds, was...

- His source
- His excitement
- His strength
- His object of worship
- His rest
- His deliverance
- His motivation
- His source of renewal

He had to get alone with God. The word for prayer (proseuchasthai) is a descriptive word. It means to pray fervently, to pour one's whole heart and total being out to God. Jesus was totally dependent upon God, not upon the crowds. The crowds could give Him nothing, whereas God could give Him everything.

⇒ He was exhausted. He needed God's presence and rest.
⇒ He was tempted. He needed God's strength and deliverance (see note—Mt.14:22-23).
⇒ He was drained spiritually. He needed to worship God and to be renewed.
⇒ He was weary of man's worldly excitement and motives. He needed God's excitement and motivation.

> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**
>
> **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).**
>
> **"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**

3 (6:47-49) **Fear**: the third lesson is that a cry for help in time of need is wise. A storm came up while the disciples were crossing the lake. Three things are stressed about the disciples in the storm.

1. Their toil was long. The Lake of Galilee was only four to six miles across. They had been rowing against a headwind for some six to nine hours and had progressed only about three miles.
2. Their fear was horrifying. The disciples were physically exhausted and mentally drained from using all the seaman's skills at their disposal. Their lives were at stake; they were struggling for survival. All of a sudden, out of nowhere, they saw a figure, an apparition (ghost) walking on the water. They were scared, frightened, perhaps bordering on going into shock—perhaps thinking that the death angel, or a premonition of their death, was at hand.
3. Their cry was desperate. They were all toiling and rowing to save their lives (v.48); and "they all saw Christ, and were troubled [agitated, terrorized]" (v.50).

Thought 1. Note two significant points.

1) The disciples desperately needed help. They did exactly what they needed to do to get help: they cried out to Jesus.

> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder" (Ps.81:7).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

2) The disciples were doing God's will when the storm came. They were doing exactly what Christ had told them to do, that is, cross the lake and get ready to minister there. The storm was part of God's will. They had to learn...
   - to confess their need for Him before He could help.
   - to endure against the storms of life.
   - to trust through all, no matter how terrifying.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:48) **A Day's Timetable**: Hebrew time was used in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the Book of Acts. Sunrise (6 a.m.) was the beginning of the day. The first hour was 7 a.m. and so on. Sometimes Scripture refers to a watch. Both the day and the night were divided into four watches each. A watch was three hours long. The first watch of the day was 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. The fourth watch of the night mentioned above was 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. The disciples had been rowing between six and nine hours and had advanced only three miles. The Gospel of John uses Roman time, with the hours beginning at twelve noon and twelve midnight. Note that twentieth century time is the same as Roman time.

4 (6:50-51) **Jesus Christ, Presence**: the fourth lesson is that receiving the presence of Jesus is wise. It was an eerie, stormy night. The disciples were terrified; they cried out for help. All of a sudden, a voice from the body walking out on the water shouted out: "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid" (v.50). The authority and assurance of the voice made the disciples realize that it was Jesus. The disciples were encouraged. They knew they were safe and secure. He cared and He had the power to take care of them all. Note three results.

1. Their fear was erased.
2. The storm was calmed.
3. They stood amazed (beyond measure) in the presence of the Lord.

Thought 1. Receiving the presence of Jesus Christ takes care of all problems and trials. He gives the strength to row through all the storms of life, no matter their turbulence and severity.

Thought 2. Think: What if the disciples had been forced to face the storm alone? What if we had to face the storms of life alone? Which storm would drown the breath of life out of us? Which storm would send us reeling into eternity, having to meet God *unprepared*?

> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).**
>
> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).**
>
> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**
>
> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).**
>
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (2 Tim.4:18).**
>
> **"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:15).**
>
> **"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb.13:6).**
>
> **"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).**
>
> **"Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence" (Ps.91:3).**
>
> **"For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling" (Ps.116:8).**
>
> **"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).**
>
> **"And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(6:50) **"I Am"—Jesus Christ, Names - Titles**: this is the great name of God, the Self-Existent One, the Supreme One of the Universe (see note—Jn.6:20-21).

5 (6:52) **Jesus Christ, Power—Heart, Hard**: the fifth lesson is that remembering and trusting the power of Jesus is wise. The disciples had no reason to be so amazed at Jesus' calming the storm. They had just witnessed the miracle of the loaves and the feeding of five thousand men with just a little food. Christ was unquestionably God. And God not only cared about people, He could do anything for people—even control all of nature. How could they forget so easily? "Their heart was hardened" (v.52). A hardened heart is attached to the earth. It cannot break loose from the earth; it cannot see anything beyond the ordinary and explainable. It is slow to see anything beyond natural law controlling the world. The hardened heart may hope that God exists; it may even say that God exists, but to really believe there exists a true God who is actively controlling the world is difficult to accept and apply to everyday life. Profession is easy; living in complete trust upon God is difficult.

Thought 1. The disciples were as so many are: they had spiritual experience after experience, but they were attached to the earth. Therefore, they grew hard and callous, and they became dull to spiritual truth. Their spiritual understanding was always needing a boost.

> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Ro.3:11).**
>
> **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).**
>
> **"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps.82:5).**
>
> **"Thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house" (Ezk.12:2).**
>
> **"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).**

Thought 2. A spiritual mind and constant prayer are the answer to hardness of heart (cp. v.46).

> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).**
>
> **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:22-24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**
>
> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:6-8).**

	F. The Steps to Healing, 6:53-56 (Mt.14:34-36)	whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.	**one's need & believing that Jesus can help**
1 Step 1: Recognizing Jesus	53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.	56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might	**3 Step 3: Asking unashamedly & unreservedly for Jesus' help**
	54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,	touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made	
2 Step 2: Acknowledging	55 And ran through that	whole.	

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

F. The Steps to Healing, 6:53-56

(6:53-56) **Introduction**: a person can be healed spiritually and healed physically (cp. Ro.10:9-13). Here are the steps for both spiritual and physical healing. If a man wishes to be healed by Christ, he must take the same three steps. (See outline and notes—Mt.14:34-36 for a more detailed discussion.)

1. Step 1: recognizing Jesus (v.53-54).
2. Step 2: acknowledging one's need and believing that Jesus can help (v.55).
3. Step 3: asking unashamedly and unreservedly for Jesus' help (v.56).

1 (6:53-54) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Healing**: the first step to healing is recognizing Jesus. The people "knew Him" (epiginosko); that is, they fully recognized, perceived, knew exactly who He was. The idea is that the people *knew Him by experience*. Some had been touched and healed by Jesus before; others had witnessed Him touch and heal members of their family, friends, and strangers. The people knew two things.

1. They knew that Jesus had come to their land. He was now present, at hand, reachable, available to make them and their loved ones whole.
2. They knew that Jesus cared about the sick and that He had the power to make them whole. There was just something different about Jesus. His interest and care in people and His power to help them were phenomenal. He was so humble and meek, yet authoritative and strong. The presence of God was unquestionably within Him in a most unique way.

Thought 1. Jesus has come to earth. He has come to our land, and He is available and able to make us whole.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.28:20).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:6-7).**

2 (6:55) **Need, Acknowledging—Jesus, Seeking**: the second step to healing is acknowledging one's need and believing Jesus can help. Note a significant fact. The people not only came to Jesus themselves, they "ran through that whole region" and brought their families and friends. They even spread the word about Jesus to strangers. The picture is very descriptive. All who "knew Jesus" (v.54) cared deeply for all the people throughout their region. Their care and love were intense. No trouble was too great, no pain was too much to bear—they "ran through that whole region...and began to carry...those that were sick." They carried them wherever they heard Jesus was. The picture is that of running to and fro. If Jesus was not where they went, they picked the sick back up and rushed on to the next village or town, searching for Him until they found Him.

Two things would cause such intense seeking after Jesus.

1. The people knew they had great need. They were sick and needed to be made whole. They readily confessed their need. They did not try to hide their disease or injury.
2. The people believed Jesus could help; they believed He could make them whole. There was no chance they were going to miss this opportunity.

Thought 1. The same two things are true about us.

1) We have the need to be made whole...

• spiritually	• emotionally	• racially	• nationally
• mentally	• physically	• socially	• internationally

"The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn.5:19; cp. Ro.3:10-18 for a descriptive picture of man's desperate need. Also cp. Ro.1:18-32.)

"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips " (Ro.3:10-13).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

2) We must believe Jesus can help us. He can, but we *must believe* that He can before the world will come to Him for help.

"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

3 (6:56) **Salvation—Decision—Humility—Belief**: the third step to healing is asking unashamedly and unreservedly for Jesus' help. The people asked and begged Jesus to let them touch Him, to simply touch "the border of His garment" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.14:36). Note the word "besought." It means to ask, to beg. The word points to three essential attitudes necessary to be made whole.

1. A sense of need: sensing our need for Christ's help so much that we beseech Him, asking and begging in desperation if needed.
2. A sense of humility: sensing that our need is really desperate and beyond man's cure. We must sense the desperation so deeply that we humble ourselves, beseeching Christ to make us whole. Spectators and curiosity seekers who might be looking on just do not matter. We are willing to humble ourselves, no matter what men may say, in order to have our need met.
3. A belief in Christ's power and willingness to make us whole: believing so much that we beseech and ask and beg Him to make us whole through and through.

Note that all who touched Jesus were made whole. Touching Jesus brought healing to their whole being (see note—Mt.14:36). Jesus did not shrink from anyone, no matter how deformed, abnormal, diseased, unattractive, dirty, immoral, or sinful the person was.

Thought 1. Jesus loves everyone, and He sees the need within everyone and longs to meet that need. Anyone who reaches out for Him is taken by the hand and pulled to His heart. The person is received and made whole through and through.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn.6:37).

"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14. Note how this verse includes all three points in this note.)

	CHAPTER 7 **G. The Emptiness of (Man-Made) Tradition, Ritual, Ceremony, Works, 7:1-13** (Mt.15:1-9)	prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.	**3 Tradition can be empty, worthless worship**
1 The religionists found fault with Jesus' disciples a. A fact-finding commission from Jerusalem b. The fault: Eating with unwashed & defiled hands	Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.	8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.	**4 Tradition can be man-made commandments**
1) The tradition of cleanliness explained	3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.	9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. 10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or	**5 Tradition can be kept before the commandments of God**
2) The tradition illustrated	4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.	mother, let him die the death: 11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free.	a. They twisted God's commandments[DS1]
c. The charge against the disciples was brought to Jesus	5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?	12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; 13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.	b. They insisted on obedience to tradition
2 Tradition can be hypocritical honor	6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias		**6 Tradition can make the Word of God ineffective[DS2,3]**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

G. The Emptiness of (Man-Made) Tradition, Ritual, Ceremony, Works, 7:1-13

(7:1-13) **Introduction**: this passage is of critical importance for the destiny of both man and religion. Why is it so important? Because neither man nor religion can survive being institutionalized, that is, being based and focused upon tradition, ritual, ceremony, and works. Survival depends upon the hearts of man and of religion. The heart of both must be focused upon acceptance and reconciliation, approval and redemption, peace and love, humility and giving, joy and hope. Men can survive only when they...

- accept each other and are reconciled to God in Christ (together).
- approve each other and are redeemed.
- live in peace and love.
- experience the joy and hope of Christ.
- walk humbly and live a life of service.

1. The religionists found fault with Jesus' disciples (v.1-5).
2. Tradition can be hypocritical honor (v.6).
3. Tradition can be empty, worthless worship (v.7).
4. Tradition can be man-made commandments (v.8).
5. Tradition can be kept before the commandments of God (v.9-12).
6. Tradition can make the Word of God ineffective (v.13).

1 (7:1-5) **Religionists—Tradition**: the scene is that of religionists who found fault with Jesus' disciples. The religionists were a fact-finding commission from Jerusalem. They had come to investigate Jesus, to see exactly what was going on and happening. News of His preaching and healing and of His conflicts with local authorities were constantly being brought to the Jerusalem leaders. They had already sent one fact-finding commission to confront Jesus. Their report had not been good. They had accused Jesus of healing and casting out demons by Beelzebub. They had also accused Him of

breaking the Sabbath law. There had also been a fact-finding commission sent to investigate John the Baptist, the man who was said to be the forerunner of Jesus. His preaching and baptism and his priesthood had been suspect (see notes—Mt.3:7-10; Jn.1:19).

The whole country was astir with news of Jesus' claims and unbelievable miracles. People were stirred up, dangerously so. All this necessitated another commission being sent out to investigate Jesus.

When the commission arrived, they immediately saw the disciples breaking one of their traditions. The disciples were eating with unwashed and unclean hands. Of course, what they meant was not that the disciples had bad manners, nor that they were practicing bad health. They meant the disciples were unclean in the eyes of God. Why? Because the disciples had not washed their hands as a sign to God that they were offering themselves and their food to God . The traditional ceremony of washing one's hands before meals (as a sign of thanksgiving to God) had been broken. The disciples were ceremonially unclean.

The Law of Moses prescribed washing before handling some items. The idea was to instill within the people the holiness of God and His temple, and the need for man to be *spiritually clean* before approaching Him or handling His affairs. But what had happened was that some religionists had added to God's Word. They had taken the Law of God, including the laws of cleansing, and had added thousands and thousands of rules and regulations. There was a rule governing practically every thing a person did, so many rules in fact that no one could conceivably keep them. Instead of pointing a person to God and to the need for the cleansing of the heart, the rules caused a person to concentrate on the rules and the keeping of them. The rules became the center and focus of attention, not God.

In the case at hand, the rule being broken was that of washing the hands before eating a meal. The disciples had violated the tradition of the church and had embarrassed the religious faithful of their day. In the eyes of the investigating committee, they were unclean in the sight of God. They had broken a tradition of the elders and there was no excuse for it, not if they were the disciples of a true Rabbi. A true Rabbi would be teaching his disciples the traditions of the elders, not ignoring and violating them. Thus, the commission brought their charge to Jesus (v.5).

2 (7:6) **Tradition—Hypocrites**: tradition can be hypocritical honor. Jesus took the charge of the religionists and turned it against them. He quoted from Scripture, applying Isaiah's words to their spiritual condition (Is.29:13; cp. 1 Sam.15:22; 16:7). His words were strong and forceful: He called them "hypocrites" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.23:13). They honored God with their lips, but their heart was far from Him.

Thought 1. A hypocrite gives lip service while keeping his heart far from God. He acknowledges God and attends worship, but this is about all he does. However, there are some who are *religiously deceived* (cp. the Pharisees and Scribes). They study the Scripture, pray, witness, help the needy, and keep the rules. They would even fight to maintain religious tradition. Yet, Jesus says they are hypocrites. Why? Because their heart is not God's. They refuse to personally accept Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah and Savior of the world. They do not know God personally, not in the depths of their heart (Jn.14:6).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

"For when they [hypocrites] speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Pt.2:18-19).

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:2-3).

3 (7:7) **Tradition—Worship**: tradition can be empty, worthless worship. Jesus accused the religionists of worshipping in vain. "Ye worship ye know not what" (Jn.4:22). A religionist worships, but with an empty heart. Jesus taught that true worship must be *in spirit and in truth*, not only *in spirit*, but *in truth* as well (Jn.4:24). A person who denies Christ or denies God's Word cannot truly worship God (Jn.14:6; 17:17). He may worship; but his worship is empty, worthless, unacceptable. The religionists of Jesus' day were professing religion with their lips, but denying Christ, God's Son, in their hearts (cp. v.17-20).

4 (7:8) **Tradition**: tradition can be man-made commandments. A religionist teaches tradition as God's commandment. He teaches his tradition as he practices it or proclaims it. Tradition is man's *idea* of what should be or what should not be done. Some traditions are good; however, they are not to be taught as though they were the commandments of God. As important as some traditions may be, they are not as important as God's Word.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col.2:8).

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Tit.1:14; cp. Jn.17:17).

5 (7:9-12) **Tradition—Commandments**: tradition can be kept before the commandments of God. Jesus made another serious charge. He said that the religionist broke God's law *in order to keep* the traditions of religion. And Jesus gave an example:

"Scripture says, 'Honor thy father and mother.' But your tradition says that once a person vows to give a gift to the temple, he can never back out of the vow, even if he later needs the gift to take care of his parents."

Jesus was saying, "I am not the law breaker, the hypocrite. You are. You are the ones who are breaking God's law. You put your own rule above the law of God." (Several notes should be read at this point to see the background of this conflict. See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.7:11; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2.)

"For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men" (Mk.7:8).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (Jn.13:33-34).

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men" (Is.29:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:11) **Corban**: a gift dedicated to God. When a person gave a gift or left an estate to God, he simply pronounced the words, "My goods are corban." It was an official statement that was legally binding. Once the statement was made, the goods belonged to the temple. The problem arose when the religious leaders went too far in encouraging such gifts and estates. They tried to secure the vow even from those who had parents or family members that needed help. In such cases, a person was evading the most basic duty: caring for his family members (cp. Ex.20:12; 21:17).

6 (7:13) **Tradition—Word of God**: tradition can make the Word of God ineffective. Jesus charged the religionists with setting aside God's Word for tradition. Religious traditions may be described as institutional or personal.

1. Institutional traditions are such things as rituals, rules, regulations, schedules, forms, services, procedures, organizations—anything that gives order and security to the persons involved.
2. Personal traditions are such things as church attendance, prayers, habits, ceremonies, objects which a person uses (somewhat superstitiously) to keep himself religiously secure.

Jesus was attacking the fact that so many religionists put their traditions first while neglecting and ignoring God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10).

"But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Mt.15:3).

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal.5:1).

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (Col.2:20).

"[Worship] which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:10-15).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(7:13) **Making of none effect** (a kurountes): to make void, ineffective; to annul; to deprive of authority and power; to invalidate.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(7:13) **Word of God**: see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Th.2:13; notes—2 Th.2:13; 2 Tim.3:16; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—2 Pt.1:19-21. Cp. Acts 17:11; 20:32; 1 Pt.2:2-3.

	H. The Things That Defile, 7:14-23 (Mt.15:10-20; cp. Lk.11:37-41)	18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;	**2 Explanation 1: The thing that enters the body does not defile**
1 Jesus called the multitude to Him a. The importance stressed: Hearken & understand b. The point stated	14 And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: 15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.	19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? 20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.	a. It does not enter the heart b. It enters the digestive tract **3 Explanation 2: The thing that comes out from the heart does defile**[DS1] a. The progress of sin[DS2]
c. The importance re-stressed d. The disciples' dullness	16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. 17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.	21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.	b. The sins[DS3-15] **4 Explanation 3: The source of evil is the heart**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

H. The Things That Defile, 7:14-23

(7:14-23) **Introduction**: this is one of the most startling things Jesus ever taught. It shook the world of His day, and it has disturbed and gnawed at the minds and consciences of men ever since. It revolutionizes man's idea of evil and wrongdoing, of just what evil is and what causes it. It knocks the props out from under man's religion and morality. It lays man bare before God making him totally dependent upon God for salvation and life.

1. Jesus called the multitude to Him (v.14-17).
2. Explanation 1: the thing that enters the body does not defile (v.18-19).
3. Explanation 2: the thing that comes out from the heart does defile (v.20-22).
4. Explanation 3: the source of evil is the heart (v.23).

1 (7:14-17) **Heart—Defilement**: Jesus called the multitude to Him. Note verse fifteen where He says, "Hearken, hear and understand. Do not only hear what I am about to say, but understand it. It is of supreme importance."

> **"There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man" (v.15).**

Simply stated, a man is not defiled by what enters his body, but by what comes out of his heart. Now note verse sixteen. The importance of the point is again stressed: if any man has ears, let him hear. But the disciples were spiritually dull. They did not understand the parable. They asked Him to explain.

> **Thought 1.** It is not enough for us to hear what Christ is saying, we must understand.

2 (7:18-19) **Sin, Source—Defilement**: the first explanation—the thing that enters the body does not defile. What defiles a man is not what he eats and drinks. What a man eats and drinks does not enter his heart; it enters his digestive tract and passes through his body. Therefore, food and drink, or eating with unwashed hands, or doing any other outward thing cannot defile a man—not *spiritually*.

There is no connection between what we eat and spirituality. That is not to say that excessive eating and intemperance are not wrong. Lustful and excessive appetites come *out of the heart*. But when it comes to the items themselves, the food and drink, there is no merit or value, no morality or virtue to them—not within themselves. It is *what we do with the things*, what our heart does, that makes us either good or bad, spiritual or carnal.

> **Thought 1.** When *formal* or *outward religion* is outlined like Christ shares in this passage, the foolishness of holding such a position is really seen.
>
> > **"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" (Ro.14:17).**
> > **"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing" (1 Cor.7:19).**
> > **"But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse" (1 Cor.8:8).**

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal.4:10-11).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

3 (7:20-22) **Sin, Source—Heart**: the second explanation—the thing that comes out from the heart does defile. Note exactly what Jesus was saying: "It is not things that defile a man. It is the heart that defiles a man. A man's heart is corrupt; therefore, he corrupts himself. Man is not *made unclean* by things; he is unclean because of his polluted heart. *It is he himself who takes things and does unclean things with them* (see DEEPER STUDIES # 3-15—Mk.7:21-22 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:19-20) **Heart** (kardia): in the Bible the word "heart" refers to both the major organ of the body (Lev.17:11) and to the most important part of a person, that is, to man's innermost being. The heart is the central part, the very center of man's life. It is the most vital part of man's being.

The heart is man's inward life. It lies deep within, containing the *hidden man* or the real man (1 Pt.3:4); that is, the heart contains what a man really is, his true character. The heart determines what a man does, his behavior, whether good or depraved (Mt.15:18; Mk.7:21-23).

1. The heart is the source of man's rational being: reasoning (Mk.2:6), understanding (Mt.13:15), thinking (Mt.9:4).
2. The heart is the source of man's emotional being: joy (Jn.16:22; Eph.5:19), affections (Lk.24:32), desires (Mt.5:28).
3. The heart is the source of man's spiritual being: conscience (Acts 2:37), will (Ro.6:17), faith (Mk.11:23; Ro.10:10), evil (Mt.15:18; Mk.7:21-23; cp. Jer.17:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(7:21) **Sin**: note the progress of sin within man. (1) It begins in human nature: "within, out of the heart." (2) It develops in the human mind: in "evil thoughts." (3) It is expressed in human acts: "adulteries, fornications...."

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(7:21) **Evil Thoughts** (dialogismoi hoi kakoi): thoughts and imaginations and ideas and concepts that are base, wrong, wicked, immoral, unjust, reprehensible; thoughts that are not what they should be; thoughts that are not moral, clean and pure; thoughts that are not just and equitable; thoughts that are not uplifting and edifying; thoughts that are not spiritual, but carnal. (Cp. Ro.8:6; 2 Cor.10:5; Ph.4:8. Cp. Mt.5:28.) Evil thoughts are a sin against all the commandments (Ex.20:1f).

"And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Mt.9:4).

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Ro.1:21).

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5).

"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Ps.94:11).

"The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord: but the words of the pure are pleasant words" (Pr.15:26).

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" (Pr.23:7).

"The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men" (Pr.24:9).

"Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth" (Ezk.8:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(7:21) **Adultery** (moicheiai): sexual unfaithfulness to husband or wife. It is also looking on a woman or a man to lust after her or him. Looking at and lusting after the oppposite sex, whether in person, magazines, books, on beaches, or anywhere else, is adultery. Imagining and lusting within the heart is the very same as committing the act. (See notes—Mt.5:28; DEEPER STUDY # 5—19:9 for discussion.) Adultery is a sin against the seventh commandment.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex.20:14).

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:27-28).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind....shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:9-10).

"Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls" (2 Pt.2:14).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(7:21) **Fornication** (porneiai): a broad word including all forms and kinds of immoral and sexual acts. It is premarital sex and adultery; it is abnormal sex, all kinds of sexual vice.

"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (1 Cor.6:18).

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph.5:3).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1 Th.4:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(7:21) **Murder** (phonos): to kill, to take the life of another. Murder is a sin against the sixth commandment.

"Thou shalt not kill" (Ex.20:13).

"He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Mt.19:18).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:8-10).

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 Jn.3:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(7:22) **Thefts** (klopi): to cheat and steal; to take wrongfully from another person, either legally or illegally.

"Thou shalt not steal" (Ex.20:15).

"Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another" (Lev.19:11).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"Not purloining [stealing], but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Tit.2:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 8
(7:22) **Covetousness** (pleonexiai): to lust for more and more; to have a starving appetite for something; to have a love of possessing (2 Pt.2:14); to crave after and for. It means to crave and grasp after possessions, pleasure, power, fame. Covetousness lacks restraint. It lacks the ability to discriminate. It wants to have in order to spend in pleasure and luxury. Covetousness is an insatiable lust and craving of the flesh that cannot be satisfied. It is an intense appetite for gain, a passion for the pleasure that things can bring. It is a lust and craving so deep that a person finds his happiness in things instead of in God. It is idolatry (Eph.5:5).

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's" (Ex.20:17).

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph.5:5).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezk.33:31).

"And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage" (Mic.2:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 9
(7:22) **Wickedness** (poneria): to be depraved, to be actively evil, to do mischief, to trouble others and cause harm, to be malicious, to be dangerous and destructive. It is malice, hatred, and ill-will. It is an active wickedness, a desire within the heart to do harm and to corrupt people. It is actually pursuing others in order to seduce them or to harm them.

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit.3:3).

"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue" (Ps.5:9).

"The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth" (Ps.37:12).

"For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall" (Pr.4:16).

"Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward" (Is.1:4).

"But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt" (Is.57:20).

DEEPER STUDY # 10
(7:22) **Deceit** (dolos): to bait, to snare, to mislead, to beguile, to be crafty and deceitful, to mislead or give a false impression by word, act, or influence. It is conniving and twisting the truth to get one's own way. A man plots and deceives, doing whatever has to be done in order to get what he wants.

"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Ro.3:13).

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col.3:9).

"Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man" (Ps.5:6).

"He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight" (Ps.101:7).

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight" (Pr.12:22).

"The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death" (Pr.21:6).

"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

"For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth" (Mic.6:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 11
(7:22) **Lasciviousness** (aselgeia): filthiness, indecency, shamelessness. A chief characteristic of the behavior is open and shameless indecency. It means unrestrained evil thoughts and behavior. It is giving in to brutish and lustful desires, a readiness for any pleasure. It is a man who knows no restraint, a man who has sinned so much that he no longer cares what people say or think. It is something far more distasteful than just doing wrong. The man who misbehaves ususally tries to hide his wrong, but a lascivious man does not care who knows about his exploits or shame. He wants; therefore, he seeks to take and gratify. Decency and opinion do not matter. When he initially began to sin, he did as all men do: he misbehaved in secret. But eventually, the sin got the best of him—to the point that he no longer cared who saw or knew. He became the subject of a master—the master of habit, of the thing itself. Men become the slaves of such things as unbridled lust, wantonness, licentiousness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence (Mk.7:22), wanton manners, filthy words, indecent body movements, immoral handling of males and females (Ro.13:13), carnality, gluttony, and sexual immorality (1 Pt.4:3; 2 Pt.2:2, 18). (Cp. 2 Cor.12:21; Gal.5:19; Eph.4:19; 2 Pt.2:7.)

"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet" (Ro.1:27).

"Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph.4:19).

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ....Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 4, 7).

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, an abominable idolatries" (1 Pt.4:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 12
(7:22) **Evil Eye** (aphthalmos poneros): to look where one should not; to lust after what one should not; to envy, covet, crave and desire by looking; to use the eye in an evil way; to satisfy one's lusts and desires by looking.

"The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness" (Lk.11:34).

"So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and the remnant of his children which he shall leave" (Dt.28:54).

"Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats" (Pr.23:6).

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:27-28).

DEEPER STUDY # 13
(7:22) **Blasphemy** (blasphemia): to slander, insult, revile, speak evil of God or man (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.9:3).

"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mk.3:28-29).

"Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim.1:20).

"Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" (Jas.2:7).

"Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and our enemies laugh among themselves" (Ps.80:6).

"Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes" (Ps.119:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 14
(7:22) **Pride** (huperephania): self-exaltation, conceit, arrogance, haughtiness, putting oneself above others, looking down upon others, scorn, contempt. It means to lift one's head above another, to hold contempt for another, to compare oneself with others. Pride can be hidden in the heart as well as openly displayed. God resists the proud (Jas.4:6; 1 Pt.5:5; Pr.3:24).

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).

"The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined" (Ps.10:2).

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil" (Pr.3:7).

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame" (Pr.11:2).

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).

"A high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin" (Pr.21:4).

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).

DEEPER STUDY # 15
(7:22) **Foolishness** (aphrosune): moral senselessness, folly, wrecklessnes, thoughtlessness. It is a man who acts foolishly in morals and duty, behavior and thought.

"This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings" (Ps.49:13).

"The folly of fools is deceit" (Pr.14:8).

"The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness" (Pr.15:14).

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (Pr.18:13).

"As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly" (Pr.26:11).

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good" (Ps.53:1).

"Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour" (Pr.14:9).

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent" (Pr.15:5).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).

"Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary [perfumer] to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour" (Eccl.10:1).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

"And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he, that made that which is without, make that which is within also?" (Lk.11:39-40).

4 (7:23) **Sin, Source—Evil**: the third explanation—the source of evil is the heart. The problem of evil is from within, not from without; it is internal, not external. Evil comes from man's heart (spirit), not his body. Consider the news report of any city on any given day. Notice the evil things reported and keep in mind—it is within one's own city that such evil is happening. Multiply that evil by every city of any size. Just think of all the evil that is being done every day, and that is only the reported evil, the *major* evil. Think of the evil words and evil treatment and evil thoughts—all the evil things done within all the cities (Mk.7:21-22)—and one has a picture of what Jesus meant. Man's heart is his problem. It is from the heart that *these evil things* come. Man knows better. He has more intelligence than to allow so much evil in his life and home and community and city and world. He just cannot control his heart.

Man makes three fatal mistakes when dealing with the problems of the law and evil, that is, with the problems of his heart.

1. Man judges evil to be external only. He judges only the sinful act, only the deed. In the eyes of society, a man would be considered perfect if he never did bad—never broke the law and never did the forbidden thing. A person is considered good if he *seldom* does bad—seldom breaks the law and seldom does the forbidden thing (for example, breaking the speed limit or taking a pencil from the office).
2. Man fails to see (or confess) that evil arises from the heart, from within. He does not consider that evil things come from an evil heart. Therefore, man puts little if any restraint upon the lust and inward thought. Man seldom thinks beyond the act; he seldom digs into the reason for the lust and thought; he seldom gives any attention to the heart. The result: man still grapples and always will have to grapple with the problem and tragedy of evil.
3. Man fails to see and acknowledge that the human heart needs to be changed, that is, converted. He refuses to face up to the fact that is so clearly seen: a new man is what is needed. Somehow man's heart needs to be reborn.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).

"Put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:9-10).

Jesus revealed the problem so clearly in this passage. Note the progress of sin within man. (1) It begins in human nature: "within, out of the heart." (2) It develops in the human mind: in "evil thoughts." (3) It is expressed in human acts: "adulteries, fornications...."

	I. The Steps to Caring for the Rejected, 7:24-30 (Mt.15:21-28)	he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.	of the rejected.
		27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.	b. Stressing the need for humility to the rejected[DSI]
1 Jesus needed rest a. He entered the land of the Gentiles b. He sought quiet in a house	24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it: but he could not be hid.	28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.	c. Leading the rejected to persist & believe
2 Step 1: Allowing interruptions of one's seclusion by the rejected	25 For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:	29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.	**4 Step 3: Meeting the needs of the rejected**
3 Step 2: Conversing with the rejected a. Listening to the cry	26 The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that	30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.	

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

I. The Steps to Caring for the Rejected, 7:24-30

(7:24-30) **Introduction**: prejudice and rejection are wrong. The rejected are to be reached out to and helped. The rejected are always *cut off* by society, excluded from walking in the midst of society. They are unacceptable and ostracized. Why? Because society wraps its acceptable behavior around itself and secludes itself from those who act differently. Society has little time to deal with those who differ, and sometimes even fears them, but this must not be. Society must allow its seclusion to be interrupted—face up to the differences and needs of the rejected; converse and discuss the differences with them; and then work to meet their needs. Note the steps that the rejected must take in order to receive help. The rejected woman approached Jesus humbly (v.25); discussed her need with Him (v.26-28); persevered in asking for help (v.28); confessed her humble status or need (v.28); and then she received help (v.29-30).

1. Jesus needed rest (v.24).
2. Step 1: allowing interruptions of one's seclusion by the rejected (v.25).
3. Step 2: conversing with the rejected (v.26-28).
4. Step 3: meeting the needs of the rejected (v.29-30).

1 (7:24) **Rest—Jesus Christ, Humanity**: Jesus needed rest. In this passage He is seen deliberately withdrawing to the borders of Gentile country. He needed quiet and time to prepare both Himself and His disciples for the end. The only place He could find freedom from the crowds and from His opponents was in the northern area, the area bordering Gentile territory. No Jew was likely to enter Gentile areas. It should be noted that this event foreshadowed the spread of the gospel worldwide and God's great desire for all barriers to be broken down (see outline and notes—Eph.2:11-18; 2:19-22).

Tyre was the capitol of Phoenicia. (See note, *Tyre*—Acts 21:1-3.) It was immediately north of Judaea, and Sidon was immediately north of its border. Apparently multitudes of people had flocked to Jesus from these Gentile areas. His fame had already spread as far away as Tyre and Sidon (Mk.3:8). Jesus sought quiet in a private house, but as Mark says, "He could not be hid."

> **Thought 1.** There is a time to labor, and there is a time to seek rest and God's presence. Note: Jesus wanted to be alone. "[He] would have no man know" where He was. Seeking rest and God's presence are essential if we are to serve in the power of God. Jesus' stay in Gentile country was apparently about six months long. Imagine being in God's presence on a spiritual retreat for much of a six-month period (see notes—Mk.7:31; cp. Mt.15:29).

2 (7:25) **Jew—Gentile**: the first step to caring for the rejected is to allow interruptions by the rejected. The woman had two strikes against her. First, she had a daughter with an unclean spirit. In the ancient world when a family member had an evil spirit, the whole family was shunned, sometimes feared and ostracized. Both the daughter and mother knew rejection and the deep emotions of it.

Second, the mother was a Greek, a Syrophenician or Canaanite by race. She was from one of the seven nations driven out of the land of Canaan in the Old Testament. They and the Jews were bitter enemies, ancestral enemies. They despised and hated each other. In approaching Jesus, she knew that she was coming to a Jew who was assumed to be her enemy.

But note a significant fact: Jesus let her come; He did not stop her. Others rejected her and her daughter, having nothing to do with them. She and her daughter stood alone in the world, rejected by all. Jesus needed rest and time alone with God, and the disciples objected to her (Mt.15:23). But Jesus allowed her to interrupt Him. She stood alone in the world as rejected as a person could be, but Jesus received her.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Then were there brought unto him little children [the needy], that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children [the needy], and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:13-14).

3 (7:26-28) **Care—Humility—Belief**: the second step to caring for the rejected is to converse with them. Note three things.

1. Jesus listened to the cry of the rejected. The rejected woman "besought" (erotao), asked, begged Christ to heal her demon-possessed daughter. The word "besought" is in the Greek imperfect tense which means she *kept on begging and begging*. Note that Jesus kept on listening and listening.

It is important to understand what was happening. The woman had only a *limited* concept of Jesus, of who He was. She had apparently heard that the Jews expected a Messiah, a son of the great King David who was to work miracles for them. And she had heard about Jesus, that He was delivering people from their sicknesses and healing them. But seeing Jesus only as a miracle worker and healer was an inadequate concept of Him. It prohibited Him from working. What the woman needed was to grow in her understanding of just who Jesus really was.

How gracious is our Lord! He listened to the cry of this rejected woman. He knew her heart, what was in it, every thought. He knew what she needed in order to be brought around to understanding His true Messiahship. So He began to lead her step by step to understand His Lordship and to confess her faith in a humble and worshipful spirit.

2. Jesus stressed the need for humility to the rejected. Jesus said two things to the woman—two things that are often thought to be harsh; therefore, what He said needs to be clearly understood.

   a. Jesus said, "Let the children first be filled" (v.27). He was saying, "The Jews, the first children of God, must first be reached." There was no rejection whatsoever in this statement to the woman. It was merely a statement of fact. Jesus had come primarily to the house of Israel while on earth. He had to concentrate His ministry if He were to achieve His purpose. But why make this statement to the woman? There were apparently two reasons.

      ⇒ The woman needed to learn persistence, humility, and trust.

      ⇒ The woman needed to learn that there was only one true religion and one true Messiah. She was a Greek from a proud pagan society. She had been and probably was a worshipper of false gods; thereby she was undeserving of being heard by the true Messiah, the only living and true God of the universe. She had recognized Jesus as the Son of David, as the miracle worker of the Jews who was delivering them from their diseases. But she needed to recognize something else: that He was the *only Messiah* and the *only hope* for all people. No other religion, no other gods could do anything for her or for anyone else. He alone was her hope. He alone was to be the Lord and Master whom she was to worship. She had to learn the same lesson that the Samaritan woman at the well had to learn: salvation is of the Jews (Jn.4:22). (See note—Mt.15:21-28.)

   b. Jesus also said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs" (v.27). These words could be interpreted as harsh except for one thing: Jesus never spoke harshly or rejected anyone who came to Him with a desperate need and had the potential of trusting Him as Lord. So, whatever happened, we know the words were not meant to be words of harshness or rejection.

      What, then, did they mean? Again, Jesus had to move the woman forward in faith and in understanding who He was: the Lord and Master of everyone's life, not just of the Jews. He was not just the Son of David. He had to teach her that salvation was of the Jews, and that He was that Salvation—the Master of all lives. He was telling her that "it was not right to take the bread of the gospel that belonged to the true worshippers of God and give it to the *dogs*, that is, the heathen.

      The woman was a Greek; she was of a proud people with a rich heritage, but the Greeks despised the Jews. She was a worshipper of false gods, a heathen, an outsider, a sinner; and He was the Messiah, the Master of all lives. Was she willing to humble herself, surrendering to Him as the Master of her life?

3. Jesus led the rejected woman to persist and believe. Incisively and with great spiritual insight, she saw and confessed that she was nothing spiritually: she was *a dog*. However, being a dog of the family, she had the right to eat the crumbs that fell from His table (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.7:27).

Note: the woman now called Jesus *Lord* and now worshipped Him as Lord. She called Him "Lord" before, but now she did the one essential thing: she worshipped Him as Lord (cp. v.22).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21; cp. 7:21-23).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:27) **Dog**: was usually a symbol of dishonor—referring to the wild scavenging dogs of the streets. Calling people *dogs* in the day of Jesus was a common practice. Paul called the Judaizers who hounded and persecuted believers *dogs* (Ph.3:2). Jews sometimes called Gentiles *dogs* as a term of contempt and insult. A Gentile was a *Gentile dog*, an *infidel dog*, or a

Christian dog. However, note this: the word for dog used by Jesus is not the dog of the street, but of the house pet. This, as well as the tone of His voice, apparently took any contemptuous sting out of the word. This seems clear by the woman's persistence in seeking help. Jesus' use of the word was evidently to stir and test her sincerity and persistence (see notes—Mt.15:26-27; 15:28).

4 (7:29-30) **Ministering—Jesus Christ, Mission**: the fourth step to caring for the rejected is to meet their needs. Jesus answered her prayer. He cast the devil out of her daughter.

One things rises above all others in the experience of this mother. She believed Jesus could meet her need, and she would not let Him go until he had met her need. Her belief was so strong *she would not quit despite being met with silence, irritation, opposition, apparent rebuff, and being told that she was undeserving* (see notes—Mt.15:23-24; Mk.7:25). There is no way to say it except "O woman, great is thy faith."

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk.11:9).**

Imagine this also. She believed Jesus' power could overcome space and time. Her daughter was back home! What enormous faith!

But note a crucial point. Her faith in Jesus' power, as great as it was, was not enough. Her faith was not what caused Jesus to answer her prayer. What caused Jesus to answer her prayer was her personal humility (surrender) and worship of Him as Lord. Jesus answers the prayer and exercises His power in behalf of those who (1) surrender (humble) themselves to Him and (2) worship Him as Lord.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).**

	J. The Verdict Sought For One's Service: Doing All Things Well, 7:31-37 (Mt.15:29-31)	tongue; 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.	**4 He trusted God for power**
1 He looked after His own personal needs & the needs of His loved ones (the disciples)	31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.	35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.	
2 He listened to the pleas of people for help	32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.	36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it;	**5 He sought no personal applause or praise of men**
3 He was considerate of the feelings & conditions of others	33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his	37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.	**6 He demanded a verdict: "He hath done all things well"**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

J. The Verdict Sought for One's Service: Doing All Things Well, 7:31-37

(7:31-37) **Introduction—Decision—Judgment**: this passage includes a phenomenal verdict about Jesus: "He has done all things well" (v.37). This was the verdict of this particular crowd, but it was not and never has been the verdict of every man. Yet every man has to make a decision about Jesus; he has to pass judgment upon Jesus. A verdict is required.

Note something else: the day is coming when God is going to pronounce His verdict, His judgment upon every man. Every man is determining exactly what God's verdict will be. How? By the way he lives.

The verdict Christ wants pronounced upon every man is, "He doeth all things well" (Mk.7:37). "Well done thou good and faithful servant" (Mt.25:21). How can we be assured of such a verdict by God? Jesus shows us how in this passage.

1. He looked after His own personal needs and the needs of His loved ones (the disciples) (v.31).
2. He listened to the pleas of people for help (v.32).
3. He was considerate of the feelings and condition of others (v.33).
4. He trusted God for power (v.34-35).
5. He sought no personal applause or praise of men (v.36).
6. He demanded a verdict: "He hath done all things well" (v.37).

1 (7:31) **Disciples, Training of—Jesus Christ, Cross—Care**: Jesus looked after His own personal needs and the needs of His loved ones. This is a strange verse, for Jesus was in Tyre, and He wanted to go to Galilee which is south of Tyre. But note: the verse says He travelled north from Tyre to Sidon. Why would He go north to Sidon if He wished to go south to Galilee? Probably for two reasons. First, He needed a period of quietness before facing the opposition and storm that awaited Him in Galilee and beyond. Second, the disciples also needed a long period of quiet training.

The cross was lying immediately before Jesus. The end was at hand. The Gentile area was the only place He could be free from the crowds and have quiet with the disciples (see note—Mt.15:21-22). He and His disciples needed to be prepared for the end. Apparently the disciples had six months or more of uninterrupted and intensive training at the feet of Jesus. (See notes—Mt.15:21-22; 16:21-28; 17:22.) (See note—Mt.15:29 for more detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. Quiet is needed—freedom from crowds and from the hustle and bustle of daily responsibilities. However, rest does not mean inactivity. Even when resting, we should be meeting with God, preparing ourselves for what lies ahead.

> **"Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers" (1 Sam.12:7).**
>
> **"Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14).**
>
> **"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (Ps.4:4).**
>
> **"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).**

Thought 2. Imagine six months of training on the death and resurrection of Christ. How supreme is its importance!

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:3-6).

2 (7:32) **Listening—Compassion**: Jesus listened to the pleas of people for help. After six or so months, Jesus returned to the Sea of Galilee in the district of Decapolis. Some friends brought a deaf man to Him, and as is so often the case with deafness, the man's speech was affected. He "had an impediment in his speech"; he was tongue-tied.

The man could not hear. When the sounds of nature sang forth, he could not hear their beauty. When men carried on conversation, he could not participate. When strangers spoke loudly to help him hear, it only added to his embarrassment. He could only sit "as deaf," in stone silence.

The point is that Jesus felt compassion for the man; He listened to the plea for help. He was tender toward all men who had need. The man's friends "beseeched" Jesus to help by touching the man, and in compassion Jesus responded. He did exactly what He should do: "He did all things well" (v.37).

Thought 1. We should listen to the pleas of people for help. Listening is part of "doing all things well." Listening demonstrates a *Christ-centered heart*, a heart that belongs to a sensitive, godly servant of the Lord.

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt.25:35-36).

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Lk.6:36).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

3 (7:33) **Consideration—Compassion—Care—Jesus Christ, Source**: Jesus was considerate of the feelings and condition of others. Note two things.

1. Jesus took the man aside, out of the presence of the others. There was tenderness in this act. The man had suffered embarrassment all his life because he could not participate in conversation or activities with others. Life was cruel to him. He knew what embarrassment really was. He was shy and reserved, perhaps even withdrawn. He had experienced embarrassment even standing there before Jesus. Jesus responded tenderly. He *considered* the man's feelings; therefore, He took him aside from the crowd.

Thought 1. Doing all things well requires consideration. Consideration, tenderly reacting to the feelings of others, is always to be the way of the believer.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

2. Jesus put His fingers into the man's ears and spat and touched the man's tongue. Why? The man could not hear what Jesus was saying. He needed to know that it was Jesus who alone had the power to heal him. The saliva and fingers were signs that the power came through Jesus' body, from within His very being. Jesus Christ, His power alone, was the man's source of healing, of being made whole. The man needed to know this beyond any question. He could not hear, so some symbolic act had to be used.

The scene must have been dramatic for the man. He saw it all; and his attention, standing there face to face with Jesus, must have been glued to every act of Jesus. The man's faith was bound to be stirred enormously when Jesus touched His stammering tongue and thrust His fingers into the man's ears. There was bound to be a tremendous sense of expectancy surging through the man's body.

Thought 1. The source of the man's healing was Jesus. Jesus used whatever was at His disposal to show this.

1) Every man must be shown that the Source of healing, the Source of being made whole, is Jesus.
2) Believers must use everything at their disposal to proclaim Jesus as the Source of man's deliverance (salvation).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).

4 (7:34-35) **Jesus Christ, Power—Compassion**: Jesus trusted God for power. Note three acts.

1. Jesus looked up to heaven. (Remember the man could not hear.) Very simply, Jesus was demonstrating a point—a point that must always be made. The power to make a person whole comes from God above. The man must look up to heaven, to God, for deliverance.

Note a significant point: Jesus indicated in this act that He is *The Mediator* who stands between God and man. The source of power is God, and the power is brought to man by the Mediator, Jesus Christ.

2. Jesus sighed (stenazo); that is, He groaned. Jesus felt for the man; He was touched by the feeling of the man's infirmities. And He was probably thinking of all humanity, of the crowd in all its infirmity and sin (cp. Heb.4:15). He had just looked up to heaven and felt the great divergence between heaven and earth, the enormous difference between heaven's perfection and earth's sin and corruption. Jesus was bound to groan under the strain of such a spiritual ache—an ache for all men to be made whole.

3. Jesus exerted the power of God and healed the man. He said "ephphatha": be opened. He opened the man's ears and loosed his tongue, and the man was able to speak clearly.

Thought 1. The miracle was two things.

1) It was proof that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God Himself. Isaiah had predicted such miracles of the Messiah (Is.35:5-6).

> **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord....And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Lk.4:18-29, 21).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**

2) It was a demonstration of tender consideration for the needs and feelings of others—a strong lesson for every believer.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).**

5 (7:36) **Humility—Witnessing**: Jesus sought no personal honor. He charged everyone to keep the miracle quiet, to tell no one. The word for charge (diestelleto) is strong. The order was clearly given. The reason is not known, but there is a lesson on humility in the charge. Jesus was not after the applause or praise of men. The miracles were not done for that reason. All that He was and all that He had done was to help men and point them to God. Men were lost, and He had come to seek and save the lost, not to win their applause (cp. Lk.19:10).

Thought 1. There are two lessons here.

1) A lesson on humility.

> **"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt.20:26-27).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**
>
> **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).**

2) A lesson on witnessing. The healed man and his friends were forbidden to share their godly experience, but they could not keep quiet. They were so full of the presence of God and His power, they just had to bear witness. How much more the disciples! They were bound to learn the importance of being filled with God and His power for witnessing.

> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).**

6 (7:37) **Decision—Verdict**: Jesus demanded a verdict. Jesus healed a multitude of people at that time (Mt.15:30-31). The people were astonished "beyond measure" (huperperissos), overwhelmed. They pronounced the verdict: "He hath done all things well," the very verdict Christ was after. The people desperately needed to focus their attention upon *the Mediator and the power of God* to make men whole.

> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).**

	CHAPTER 8	a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness?	
	K. The Need for Spiritual Food, Compassion, and Evangelism, 8:1-9 (Mt.15:32-39)	5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.	
1 The need for spiritual food	In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them,	6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.	c. Compassion involves orderly arrangement d. Compassion involves giving all, taking all, & using all to meet needs e. Compassion involves thankfulness to God
a. Crowds followed Jesus b. Crowds hungered spiritually: Had gone without food			
2 The need for compassion[DSI]	2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:	7 And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.	
a. Compassion involves seeing needs	3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.	8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets.	f. Compassion involves saving and preserving
b. Compassion involves the use of resources	4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can	9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.	**3 The need for evangelism, for moving on**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

K. The Need for Spiritual Food, Compassion, and Evangelism, 8:1-9

(8:1-9) **Introduction**: Jesus was doing two things in this event.

1. As always, He was demonstrating His Messiahship in order to drive the truth more and more deeply into the hearts and minds of the disciples.
2. In a most direct way, He was teaching His disciples that they were to minister to the needy, no matter who they were. In this event He was ministering primarily, if not totally, to Gentiles (see notes—Mt.15:21-22; 15:29). The Jews considered the Gentiles to be heathen, lost and despised by God. Jewish prejudice against the Gentiles ran deep. Jesus had come to save all men, not just the Jews. The disciples desperately needed to learn this truth, for they would need to minister to all men regardless of race after His return to the Father.

In a very simple yet forceful demonstration, Jesus revealed that the *whole world* has three great needs.

1. The need for spiritual food (v.1).
2. The need for compassion (v.2-8).
3. The need for evangelism (v.9).

1 (8:1) **Spiritual Hunger—Witnessing**: the people were hungry for spiritual food. Note two facts.

1. The crowd was large, "very great." Four thousand ate. This was an interesting number. The event occured on the other side of the Sea of Galilee in Decapolis, a land heavily populated by Gentiles. These were the very people who had rejected Jesus earlier and had requested Him to leave their coasts after He had healed the demoniac (Mk.5:1-20). What brought about this significant change? The answer is probably found in Jesus' instructions to the healed demoniac. The demoniac had requested to follow Jesus, but Jesus had told him to remain in his own country to witness. Evidently his witness had borne great fruit and prepared the people for Jesus' return. (What a lesson to us on the importance of witnessing!)
2. The crowd hungered spiritually, so much so they had gone without food for three days. Some may have brought some provision, but by now all the food had been eaten. The people craved the Word of God. The word of Jesus was esteemed more highly than "necessary food" (Job 23:12).

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).**
>
> **"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**

2 (8:2-8) **Compassion**: the disciples needed to have compassion for the people. The disciples looked upon many of these people as outcasts. They were Gentiles, aliens from God's chosen race. They were even considered enemies by many of the Jews. There was nothing attractive or appealing about them in the eyes of the disciples. The disciples...

- had no compassion for them
- were not concerned for them
- did not observe them at all
- had no thought of helping them

Jesus had to teach His disciples compassion. He had already discussed the need for this with them (Mt.9:36-38). Now He tried to stir their compassion for the lost and outcast. He did this by showing just what compassion involves.

1. Compassion involves seeing needs (v.2-3). Jesus had looked at and observed the people, and in doing so, He had seen their need. The disciples should have also looked and observed, but they had not. They were too prejudiced and too prideful. They felt the people were beneath them, not worthy of their time and effort. Therefore, the disciples never observed the people's needs. They should have, for Jesus had just taught the same lesson (Mk.6:35-44); but their prejudice and pride blinded their eyes and hearts, even from the truth that had just been taught. This shows the great need for Jesus to repeat the same truths over and over.

Thought 1. Looking at and observing people are essential in order to see need, and seeing need is essential to stir compassion. Compassion is aroused by seeing and observing or studying the needs of people. If we never expose ourselves to the needs of people, we will never experience compassion.

> **"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Lk.10:2).**
>
> **"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).**
>
> **"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel [all nations] is, that they might be saved" (Ro.10:1).**

2. Compassion involves the use of resources (v.4-5. See note—Mk.6:37-44.) Needs can never be met apart from resources. The disciples wondered about the resources, where enough bread could be secured to feed so many; and they asked Jesus about the matter, offering every objection and excuse.

⇒ The place was a wilderness, beyond reach (v.4).
⇒ Their resources were too meager (v.5).
⇒ The multitude and the need were too great (v.1, 9).

Thought 1. Too many use the same excuses to keep from becoming involved. Too many needs go unmet because of such flimsy excuses.

Thought 2. Note two significant points.

1) The disciples overlooked the resources they had.
2) Jesus did not ask the disciples to discuss how they could meet so great a need. He told them to check on what resources *they had*. What resources others had and just how God was going to meet the need should not have been their concern. Their concern should have been seeing just what they could do.

> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).**
>
> **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).**
>
> **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).**

3. Compassion involves orderly arrangement (v.6). Note that meeting the people's needs was not done in a disorderly, haphazard way. The people were arranged to receive the provision (see note, pt.3—Mk.6:37-44 for discussion).

4. Compassion involves giving all, taking all, and using all that one has to meet the need (v.6). Note that all seven loaves were *given to Jesus*, then Jesus *took all* seven loaves and *used all* seven to meet the need. Nothing was held back. All the resources available were used to meet the need. Compassion will always give all, and then take all and use all to meet the need.

Thought 1. How often we hold back, store up, even deceive, lie and cheat about our resources just to keep from having to give. Christ teaches that we are to give all our resources to meet the needs of a desperate world. Then we are to make sure that all we gave is *taken and used* in meeting the needs. Such is *true compassion*.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea" (Acts 11:29).

5. Compassion involves thankfulness to God. Jesus "gave thanks" (v.6) and "blessed" (v.7) the resources. The point is striking. What the disciples had to give was small, really insignificant in meeting such a mammoth need, and what Jesus held in His hands was so meager it was impossible to meet the need. Yet Christ gave thanks for the meager resource, for what He held in His hands.

Thought 1. Note something. The resource had been given to be used; therefore, Jesus was able to use it despite its smallness. If it had not been given, it would not have been used. And most tragically, the need would not have been met. Christ is forever thankful for the resource given Him, no matter how small; and He is able to use the resource to meet the need—no matter how insignificant the resource and no matter how mammoth the need may seem.

6. Compassion involves saving and preserving whatever resource is left over (v.8). Resources are to be handled carefully. Nothing is to be wasted. Whatever is not used in meeting one need is to be used in meeting another need (see note, pt.6—Mk.6:37-44).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:2) **Compassion**: see note 2 and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.9:36.

3 (8:9) **Evangelism—Witnessing**: there was a the need for evangelism, for moving on. Remember this crowd had hungered for the Word of God, hungered for spiritual food, even putting the spiritual before the physical. Now Jesus sent them away. The idea is that He sent them away as a group, as a body of people who had hungered spiritually and had been fed. As they went, they would certainly bear witness to their glorious experience of having been fed by Jesus, both spiritually and physically.

Thought 1. Christ has sent us, too, to proclaim that He alone can feed the soul of man.

Thought 2. There is a time to sit at the feet of Jesus and be fed, but there is also a time to be sent away, to go forth carrying the glorious message that He feeds the hungering heart.

"But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country" (Mt.9:31).

"Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee" (Lk.8:39).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor.4:13).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses" (Is.63:7).

	L. The Fault of the Spiritually Blind, 8:10-13 (Mt.16:1-4)	sign from heaven, tempting him.	His works b. Motive: To trick Him
1 Jesus crossed the lake a. He entered Dalmanutha[DS1] b. Religionists confronted	10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.	12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.	**3 They grieved the Lord**[DS2]
2 They sought a sign a. They were blind to	11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a	13 And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.	**4 They received no sign from the Lord** **5 They were left behind by the Lord**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

L. The Fault of the Spiritually Blind, 8:10-13

(8:10-13) **Introduction**: spiritual blindness is a problem for every generation. Most men are spiritually blind (2 Cor.4:4). They are blind to the "signs," to the presence, mercy, care, and gifts of God to men. God is easily seen by men who openly and honestly seek the truth. He is seen in the world and happenings of life, in the merciful actions that often occur in life, in the care and love often experienced, and in the gifts of goodness to help a person get along in an antagonistic world. Yet, so few look for God and give thanks to Him for all He is and does. Man chooses rather to reject a personal God and to attribute the happenings and things of life to his own efforts (humanism). Why? There is one clear reason: if man acknowledges a personal God, he has to surrender his life to that God. Therefore, man challenges: "If there be a God, prove yourself, show yourself, give us a sign." And all the while he expects no sign, and even if he saw one, he would deny it—all because he is spiritually blind to the truth.

What Jesus does in this passage is discuss the faults of the spiritually blind who want more signs.

1. Jesus crossed the lake (v.10-11).
2. They sought a sign (v.11).
3. They grieved the Lord (v.12).
4. They received no sign from the Lord (v.12).
5. They were left behind by the Lord (v.13).

1 (8:10) **Jesus Christ, Opposition to**: Jesus crossed the lake (Sea of Galilee) to the west side and to the lands close to Dalmanutha. As soon as He stepped off the boat, the religionists confronted Him. Note that Mark mentions only the Pharisees (v.11). Matthew says the Sadducees had joined forces with them in an attempt to discredit Jesus before the people (Mt.16:1). In so doing, they revealed their spiritual blindness (see note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 4—12:24; notes—12:31-32; 15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:10) **Dalmanutha**: this was a city sitting next to Magdala (Magadan) on the west coast of the lake or Sea of Galilee. Both cities were in the Decapolis district (cp. Mt.15:39).

2 (8:11) **Spiritual Blindness—Signs, Seeking**: the spiritually blind sought a sign. Note several things.

1. There is a sharp difference between man's natural and spiritual senses. Man's *natural senses can be very sharp and discerning*. He is skillful in drawing conclusions from his observations and experiences of the natural world. Weather is an example. However, *when it comes to the spiritual senses, man is dead and undiscerning*. He does not observe nor does he experience the spiritual world, not really. The signs of the times are an example.

   The people of Jesus' day had signs. They lived in critical times, times that foretold the coming of the Messiah. A thoughtful and genuinely spiritual person could see the signs. Some did, such as Simeon and Anna (Lk.3:25f).

   Some of the signs were as follows.

   a. The sceptre, that is, the lawgiver, had come from Judah (Mt.1:2).
   b. The weeks or ages predicted by Daniel were closing out (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.24:15).
   c. The predicted return of Elijah, who was fulfilled in the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist, had come and proclaimed the Messiah to be Jesus (Mt.3:1-12).
   d. The baby Jesus had been born in Bethlehem (Mt.2:1).
   e. Many throughout the world were expecting the coming of some great person, some Messiah (Mt.1:18).
   f. Many godly Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah, God's great Deliverer of Israel (Lk.2:25f).
   g. The message and works of Jesus were great evidence, phenomenal miracles given by God to substantiate His claims (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:11).

2. The people of our generation and every generation since Christ have had signs.
   a. There are the signs of the natural world, the marvels of which are being revealed every day. But men refuse to acknowledge the Creator to whom creation points (cp. Ro.1:20; cp. Ro.1:18-32).
   b. There are the privileges of life, the beauty of the world, and the experience of God's daily mercy. But men ascribe them all to natural happenings or to the laws of nature or to humanistic ability and evolution.

c. There is the Old Testament. But men, while perhaps appreciating some of its history, reject its prophetic promises of God's Messiah and salvation.
d. There is conscience or consciousness of sin (inner thought). But men deny sin. They deny it even while experiencing guilt and wondering deep within what the truth really is.
e. There is Jesus Christ and His claim to be the Messiah, the very Son of God. But men reject and deny His claim. They reject and deny while extolling the morality and value of all else He taught.
f. There is the death and resurrection of Christ, and its enormous effect upon so many down through the generations. But men deny a substitutionary death in behalf of men, and they deny the resurrection despite all the evidence validating it.
g. There are the changed lives of teeming thousands who proclaim that *the living Lord* has saved them from destruction and indwells their being. But men attribute such change to psychological causes.

3. The reason men are spiritually blind is because of their motive. The motive of the religionists was not open and honest, nor was it the motive of men's seeking the truth. They were out to *trick* Jesus, to disprove His claim and discredit Him before the people. They were out to show Him to be an imposter (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 3,4—12:24; notes—12:31-32; 15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9).

Man can be very intelligent and discerning within the natural world, yet very ignorant and blind to the spiritual world. Too often the reason is his motive. His motive is to discredit the spiritual world, whether by denying and disproving its existence or by minimizing its influence and authority.

If man truly admits the existence of a spiritual world or of a Messiah, then he must surrender and follow the Messiah as Lord, or he must reject the Messiah and await his condemnation. Man does not want to be put into such a position. He does not want a sense, a constant nagging, of being condemned, nor does he want to change his life-style. So he closes his mind and says he will believe only if God gives him a personal sign, a miraculous sign, a sign from heaven. And all the while, he expects no sign, just knowing there will be none.

There are, of course, plenty of signs. It is a very simple matter to see God and the spiritual world behind the physical world. Any thinking man who is *open and honest and seeking the truth* will be touched by God. There is not a chance that God will not open the honest man's eyes and heart so that he can see and know. Such an honest and seeking man can clearly see that the world shows a Supreme Designer, a Supreme Intelligence and Force, an eternal purpose, a first cause. (See outlines and notes—Ro.1:19; 1:20; 1:21; 1:22-23.)

The problem is that natural man seeks justification for his worldly motives, desires, and life-style. He does not want to change his life and desires. He wants to do his own thing, to control his own destiny. In fact, man's morality, desires, motives, and life-style determine his beliefs. Natural man wants to justify himself, prove himself and his thoughts right. He does not want to discover a heavenly world and a spiritual Lord who would demand righteousness and love, total giving and sacrifice. He does not want to be under a Lord who requires all he is and has to meet the needs of a desperate world.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth" (Ph.2:9-10).**

3 (8:12) **Spiritual Blindness**: the spiritually blind grieved the Lord. There is no excuse for spiritual blindness. Evidence after evidence, sign after sign, work after work can be clearly seen to the *honest, thinking* man. Yet man continues to deceive his own heart, and he does it knowingly. Man knows that God is; he knows down deep within the quiet recesses of his heart. Yet he outwardly denies, deceiving himself. Such is obstinate unbelief, and obstinate unbelief is both irrational and inexcusable.

Jesus faced a sad fact. The men who were standing before Him were spiritually blind, but they were not ordinary secular men. They were religionists who had the enormous evidence of His life and miracles before their very eyes. Yet even they chose to keep their lives in their own hands and to deny the Son of God who loved them and came to save them.

Thought 1. Obstinate unbelief grieves the Lord—terribly so.

> **"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph.4:30).**
>
> **"Quench not the Spirit" (1 Th.5:19).**
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> **"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways" (Heb.3:10).**

Thought 2. There have always been unbelievers even among religious leaders. The acts of social justice—the care and ministry of enough food, clothing, housing, peace, security, happiness, health—have always attracted some to the service of Christ. Christ taught social justice and care, and what He taught is to be done. But He also taught that existence is eternal. He taught that man must be delivered from sin and corruption, born again spiritually so that he might inherit eternal life instead of dying and being separated from God eternally. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(8:12) **Grieve** (anastenazas): means to groan, to sigh. Jesus felt both grief and indignation from the bottom of His heart. He was stirred to the depths, to the very core of His being. Grief and indignation were both aroused, and He groaned within His spirit (see notes—Eph.4:30; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Th.5:19; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.3:5; notes—Heb.3:10; Ps.95:10; Is.54:6).

4 (8:12) **Spiritual Blindness—Signs, Seeking**: the spiritually blind receive no sign from the Lord. There are seven reasons why "no sign shall be given this generation."

1. The Jews refused to look at the signs of the times (chose to be spiritually blind) because they were wicked and adulterous. There were never enough signs or evidences to convince them, to change their lives, nor to lead them to turn to God (see note—Mt.12:38-40).

"Light [Christ] is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).

2. The Jews were totally unjustified in seeking additional signs from Jesus. There had been sign after sign, miracle after miracle, work after work—enough to lead any man to the firm belief: "*Truly, this man is the Son of God*" (Mk.15:39; cp. Acts 2:22).
3. The Jews just did not believe. In fact, they did not want to believe. The result, of course, was what always happens to wilful unbelievers: they became obstinate in their unbelief (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32).
4. The Jews did not understand the love and the faith of God, that is, the true religion of God. They failed to see what God was after: faith and love, not signs and works. God wants a man to simply believe and love Him because of who He is and because of what He has done and does do for man. The true religion of God is not a religion of works and signs, but of faith and love in Christ Jesus, His own Son (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; note—4:48-49; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25; note—4:5. Cp. Acts 2:22.)
5. The Jews sought a sign because they were an evil and adulterous generation. The reason was simple. They were apostates, going after the false gods of works and signs instead of seeking the God of faith and love. In seeking signs and works, they were committing spiritual whoredom, turning from God and His Messiah to the false gods of signs and works. (Note: It is human reason that seeks signs and works and proofs. The spirit of man seeks belief and trust and love—the spiritual qualities that bind life together and make sense of life in all its facets.)
6. The Jews wanted signs of their own choosing, not the signs God had chosen to give. Men are always wanting God to deal with them through...
   - some spectacular sign
   - some brilliant sight
   - some astounding truth
   - some irrefutable argument
   - some miraculous experience
   - some unbelievable deliverance
7. God's great concern is not "signs from heaven," signs outside man. God's great concern is meeting people in their lives and hearts where they really need Him if they are to live abundantly and eternally. God wants to meet people in their sickness and sorrow, corruption and death. Meeting man in the areas of his need is an irrefutable sign given to every generation.

Thought 1. What is said of the religionists of Jesus' generation can be said of every generation of unbelievers. Unbelievers do not receive signs—not from the Lord. But believers do receive signs, the signs of having their needs met.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8; cp. Ps.23:1f).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

5 (8:13) **Spiritual Blindness—Jesus Christ, Rejected**: the spiritually blind are left behind by the Lord. Note the force of the words, "He left them." They refused to believe despite all the evidence. Jesus had no choice. The decision was theirs. He had to turn and leave them.

> **"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"If we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:22-23).**

	M. The Evil & Danger of Religionists & World Leaders, 8:14-21 (Mt.16:5-12)	bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?	things, with the bread of this world
		18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?	b. Danger 2: Not seeing and understanding the Lord's provision
1 The disciples a. They forgot to take bread b. Jesus used forgetfulness to teach a much needed lesson	14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.	19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.	1) The feeding of five thousand
2 The evil: Beware of leaven—the leaven of religionists & world leaders[DS1,2]	15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.	20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.	2) The feeding of four thousand
3 The danger in dealing with religionists & world leaders a. Danger 1: Being spiritually blinded & hard-hearted—a concern with material	16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no	21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?	c. Danger 3: Grieving the Lord's heart

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

M. The Evil and Danger of Religionists and World Leaders, 8:14-21

(8:14-21) **Introduction**: some religionists and world leaders are a threat to most people, to every generation of men. Jesus taught this, and every man must take heed and beware of both. Just what Jesus meant is clearly seen and explained in this event.

1. The disciples (v.14).
2. The evil: beware of leaven—the leaven of religionists and world leaders (v.15).
3. The danger in dealing with religionists and world leaders (v.16-21).

1 (8:14) **Opportunity, Grasping**: all of a sudden the disciples remembered something. They had forgotten to bring food, and they had only one loaf of bread in the boat. Jesus saw in their forgetfulness the chance to teach a much needed lesson on the evil and dangers of religionists and world leaders.

2 (8:15) **Religionists—Leaven**: the evil of religionists and world leaders is leaven. Jesus said, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod." The disciples completely misunderstood what Jesus was saying. Apparently they thought Jesus was saying one of three things.

1. They thought He was rebuking them for having forgotten to take bread.
2. They thought He was warning them not to eat the "bread" of the religionists or world leaders. The Pharisees were very strict in the kind of leaven that was to be used in bread. They used the rule governing leaven to stress ceremonial cleanliness. The disciples thought Jesus was saying they were not to become involved in the external stress of religion nor in the indulgence of the world.
3. They thought He meant they were not to sit down with the religionists and world leaders (fellowship) and eat their "leaven" and bread; that is, they were not to fellowship with them.

What did Jesus mean by the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod or world leaders? (Matthew uses Sadducees instead of Herod. Most Herodians, followers of Herod, were Sadducees. See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.22:16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8.)

1. The leaven of the Pharisees (religionists) was their doctrine or teaching (Mt.16:12) and their hypocrisy, deception, and play-acting (Lk.12:1). The Pharisees *fermented and soured everyone they touched* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.8:15).

The Pharisees believed in a personal God and in the Scripture as God's Word to man, but they added to God's Word (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2). They added rules and regulations, rituals and ceremonies which put undue restrictions upon man's behavior. This led to three gross errors.

a. It led people to think that their good behavior and their religious rituals and ceremonies made them acceptable to God. A religion of good works was being depended upon for righteousness.
b. It led to a religion of social respectability, to an external religion. If one was socially respectable and did all the right things, then he was judged acceptable to God.
c. It led to an attitude and an aire of self-righteousness. If one kept the rules and regulations, he naturally felt righteous and sometimes demonstrated it. There was a dependence upon oneself, upon keeping the right rules and thereby being righteous.

2. The Sadducees or Herodians were the liberal-minded of their day. Their leaven or false teaching was twofold.
   a. They took away from God's Word, denying all Scripture except the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.
   b. They were free thinkers and rationalists who were secular and materialistic-minded. Therefore, they were willing to collaborate with the Romans in doing away with Jewish culture and instituting Roman and Greek culture. Because of this, Rome placed their leaders in the governing positions (the Sanhedrin) and gave

them wealth. Their worldly-mindedness, secular philosophy, and liberal theology were always a threat to any man (see note—Mt.16:1-12).

Note the double warning that Jesus gave: "Take heed, beware." This stressed the supreme importance of guarding against the leaven of both religionists and world leaders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.8:15).

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt.15:9).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3; cp. Ro.16:18).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision [the doctrine of the law, of works]: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Tit.1:10-11).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:18-19; cp. 2:22).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:15) **Take Heed** (horao): to see, behold, discern, and acquaint oneself by closely observing and experiencing. Two things are needed for a person to "take heed": active thought and a discerning mind. The thing to be heeded must be actively observed, thought through, and discerned.

In the present passage, the charge is a *present imperative*. The disciple is to "take heed" of leaven beginning right now, and he is to continue taking heed, always observing and discerning.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:15) **Beware** (blepo): to see, perceive, grasp, and understand in order to watch out for something; to turn the mind upon an object and consider and keep a watchful eye upon it; to guard and protect against something.

Again, the charge is a *present imperative*. The person is to begin immediately to beware and to continue his watch, always looking out for the danger.

3 (8:16-21) **Religionists—World Leaders**: the danger in dealing with religionists and world leaders is threefold.

1. The first danger is spiritual blindness and hardness of heart, being concerned with material and earthly things (bread) (v.16). Note that Jesus does nothing but ask questions through the rest of this passage. His questions point out the failure of the disciples. They fail...

- to reason (v.17)
- to percieve (v.17)
- to understand (v.17)
- to have soft hearts (v.17)
- to see (v.18)
- to hear (v.18)
- to remember (v.18)

What Jesus is doing is rebuking such preoccupation with earthly matters. He calls it distrust: "O ye of little faith" (Mt.16:8). The Lord's followers are to be primarily concerned with spiritual matters, not with earthly affairs. Guarding one's mind and soul against the leaven of the Pharisees and world leaders is to be the believer's constant concern, not worrying and caring for earthly things. A person's thoughts must be dominated by the truth so that he may remain in the truth and not be misled spiritually (Mt.15:19; Ro.8:5-7; 2 Cor.10:3-5; Eph.4:23-34). The leaven, the false teaching of religionists and world leaders, is the great threat to human survival. If believers are blind to this fact, then the world is doomed.

Thought 1. We face the same danger today: spiritual blindness and hardness. Too many are attached to the world and its things, its possessions and pleasures. The world and its god (the devil) blind the minds of men lest they see the truth (2 Cor.4:4). As a result men are dying, and they are doomed to perish eternally.

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).

"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not" (Jer.5:21).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

2. The second danger is failing to see and understand the Lord's provision (v.18-20). The disciples had just witnessed two phenomenal events. They had seen a crowd of people hungering for the Lord's Word, hungering so much that they had gone without food for three days. They had seen the Lord miraculously feed all four thousand of them with just seven loaves of bread (see outline and notes—Mk.8:1-9).

⇒ Yet, "having eyes, they did not see" what had really happened (v.18).
⇒ Yet, "having ears, they did not hear" what had really happened (v.18).
⇒ Yet, "they did not remember" (v.18).

The disciples had failed to make the connection between...

- the people's hunger for God's Word and the fact that Jesus alone could give them God's Word.
- the people's hunger for bread and the fact that Jesus alone could give them bread from heaven, the energy and power of His very being.

The disciples had failed to see and understand that Jesus Christ was "the Bread of Life," the only "Bread" that could satisfy the spiritual hunger of men. World and religious leaders could never satisfy their need (see note—Jn.6:1-71. See outline and notes—Jn.6:30-36 for application.)

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:47-51).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).

3. The third danger is grieving the Lord's heart (v.21). All that the Lord had pointed out caused agony to the Lord's soul. He grieved deeply over...

- spiritual blindness
- hardness of heart
- materialistic and carnal minds
- not seeing and understanding His provision

The issues of leaven—true and false doctrine, real and hypocritical behavior—are of supreme importance. The issue of Jesus' being the Bread of Life—the real truth, the true doctrine, the only way to true satisfaction—is of supreme importance. At first the disciples failed to get the point and make the connection, and they grieved the Lord deeply. How many have grieved Him since that day? (See note—Eph.4:30; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Th.5:19.)

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (Jn.14:6-9).

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" (Lk.13:34).

	N. The Necessity for Caring, 8:22-26	him if he saw ought.	
		24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.	**4 Jesus cared for the man's need enough to keep after it**
1 Jesus cared for the man's friends	22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.	25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.	
2 Jesus cared for the man's handicap	23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he	26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go	**5 Jesus cared for the man's family**
3 Jesus cared for the man's beliefs	had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked	into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.	

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF GOD'S TRAINING MINISTRY: JESUS' INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF THE DISCIPLES, 6:7-8:26

N. The Necessity for Caring, 8:22-26

(8:22-26) **Introduction**: the story of this blind man is told by Mark alone. The major thrust is care—caring for all involved. Jesus experienced deep feelings all throughout the event. His care and the intensity of it were seen at every turn. He was concerned and anguished over all the suffering and hurting of everyone involved. And through the whole experience, He was teaching His followers to care deeply.

1. Jesus cared for the man's friends (v.22).
2. Jesus cared for the man's handicap (v.23).
3. Jesus cared for the man's beliefs (v.23).
4. Jesus cared for the man's need *enough* to keep after it (v.24-25).
5. Jesus cared for the man's family (v.26).

1 (8:22) **Jesus Christ, Care—Service**: Jesus cared for the man's friends. Note two things.

1. It was friends who brought the blind man to Jesus, and they are the ones who begged Jesus to touch him. The friends cared for the man deeply. They cared enough to want him well. Apparently he had been blind all of his life, so the friends would have been accustomed to his blindness, to the daily routine year after year. However, here they were years later still caring, still hoping, still praying, and still wanting their friend made whole. Their care was deep and genuine, and Jesus saw their care.
2. The friends believed that Jesus could heal the blind man. It was primarily their faith and belief that led Jesus to act. They brought the man and begged Jesus to heal him.

Thought 1. This is a strong lesson on *intercession*. We are to care enough to bring people to Christ and to pray (beg) for Christ to heal them.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (Jn.17:20).

"For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers" (Ro.1:9).

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Eph.1:15-16).

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.3:14).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Eph.6:18-19).

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Ph.1:3-4).

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you" (Col.1:3).

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col.4:12).

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers" (1 Th.1:2).

Thought 2. Jesus cares deeply for *friends* who care. He cares enough to receive and listen and act in their behalf. The caring person and the intercessor receive the care of Christ.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk.10:43-44).

2 (8:23) **Care—Handicap**: Jesus cared for the man's handicap. The man was blind. Imagine the scene. The blind man had never seen anything before. Surrounding him and Jesus was a throng of people with the noise that comes from such a massive crowd. The man was excited, nervous, and somewhat bewildered; and his concentration was weakened by it all. Jesus knew all that was within the man...

- that the man needed to be taken aside, away from the crowd so that he could more easily focus his attention and concentrate upon Jesus.
- that the man's eyes needed to be opened slowly, lest he be dazzled and bewildered with the sight of everything rushing in upon his mind.

Jesus knew all. He knew all the problems and difficulties that the man's blindness had caused, and He knew all that the man needed to be perfectly healed. Jesus cared for the man's handicap, so Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of town. He was ever so sensitive to the blind man's needs.

Thought 1. We are to care for the people who are handicapped...

- understanding the problems and difficulties of the handicapped person.
- being sensitive to the special needs of the handicapped person.
- doing all we can to bring the handicapped person to Christ and to see that the handicapped person is helped or healed.

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Ro.12:9-10).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out" (Job 29:15-16).

3 (8:23) **Witnessing—Beliefs**: Jesus cared for the man's beliefs. People of that day believed spittle or saliva had some healing power. One of the first things usually done when a man burns or cuts his finger is put his finger into his mouth. The saliva seems to ease the pain. Note what Jesus did: He placed saliva on the man's eyes and put his hands upon the man. Jesus focused the man's attention upon the healing power of both the saliva and His hands. The touch of both would mean so much more than just spoken words, and the touch of both would stir the faith of the man more readily.

The point is this: Jesus cared for the man's belief in the healing power of saliva. Jesus began where the man was in his beliefs and led him on into the essential belief that healing comes through the Lord Himself, through His touch.

"For we have not an high prest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

Thought 1. Note three things involved in caring.

1) We are to care for men even when their beliefs are wrong.
2) We should begin where men are in dealing with them. We can begin with the faith men have and move them on to more belief in Christ.
3) We must always lead men to the essential belief: the power to be made whole comes only through the Lord Himself.

4 (8:24-25) **Perseverance—Endurance—Witnessing—Training**: Jesus cared enough to keep after the man's need. So far as is known, this is the only miracle that took place in stages. Jesus had asked the man if "he saw anything." The man replied that he saw men as trees, walking. The man's sight was not completely healed. He saw only faintly, dimly. His eyes were foggy. He saw objects with bodies or trunks like trees, yet they were walking; so he reasoned and said they were bound to be men. The man was extremely excited and was bound to blurt out whatever crossed his mind first.

Note what Jesus did: He again put His hands upon the man's eyes and made him look up. The man's sight was restored, and he saw clearly. Why did Jesus heal the man in stages? Apparently, the man's faith was weak and needed to be strengthened step by step. Greater hope and desire needed to be stirred within the man. The man needed to grow more spiritually, grow more in faith, before he could be healed. This seems to be indicated by his silence in asking Jesus to touch him. His friends were the ones who asked, not him.

The point is this: Jesus cared enough to keep after the man's need. He did not ignore the man or turn from him just because his faith was weak. Jesus did not leave the man or let him go. He stayed right with him, doing all that was necessary to meet the man's need.

Thought 1. Note a critical point. A person grows by stages.

⇒ A person is not always led to Christ immediately.

⇒ A person is never *mature in Christ* immediately. There is no such thing as *instantaneous maturity*. A person grows in Christ step by step and stage by stage (2 Pt.3:18; 2 Th.1:3; 1 Pt.2:2-3).

The crucial point for believers and churches can be simply stated: we must *care enough* to keep after the person's need. We must care enough to keep after...

- witnessing
- ministering
- teaching and instructing
- visiting
- feeding and clothing
- loving

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

5 (8:26) **Family—Witnessing**: Jesus cared for the man's family. Jesus told the man not to go back into the town of Bethsaida. Apparently, he lived either in the countryside or in some surrounding town. Why did Jesus tell the man not to enter the town, but instead to go home? The reason seemed to be that Jesus cared for the whole family and was sensitive to their feelings and hopes. Since the man was from out of town, Jesus wanted the man to go home immediately to share the glorious news with his family. They all deserved to share in the joy.

Thought 1. Sensitivity to a person's family is essential. The feelings and hopes of family members matter greatly.

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself " (Eph.5:28).

"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Dt.4:9).

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up....And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (Dt.6:6-7, 9).

	V. THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP 8:27-9:50		a. He visited the towns b. He questioned the people's belief about Himself
	A. The Great Confession of Peter: Who Jesus Is, 8:27-30 (Mt.16:13-20; Lk.9:18-21)		**2 The confession of men: He is a great man** **3 The confession of His disciples: He is the Christ**
1 Jesus in Caesarea Philippi[DSI]	27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Caesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? 28 And they answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets. 29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ. 30 And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.		**4 The need: To learn about God's Messiah**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

A. The Great Confession of Peter: Who Jesus Is, 8:27-30

(8:27-9:50) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus Christ, Savior—Messiah**: most men do not object to the idea of a Messiah, that is, a deliverer, savior, provider, and protector. Most men want a leader who is going to bring about a utopian society that will provide social justice and plenty for everyone. What men want is a Messiah who fits into the wants and passions and power structures of their world. Men want their bellies full, their bodies clothed and housed, and their urges satisfied. They want the *good things* of this world. If a Messiah can give these, then men are ready and willing to accept the Messiah. Jesus deliberately set out to make sure that the disciples saw Him as God's Messiah and not man's Messiah. He had to make sure they understood God's way of salvation and utopia, that God was after victory over death and a life that lasted eternally, not just for seventy or so years. God's Messiah and salvation was not man's way of power and pleasure; it was not leaving the future to take care of itself (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—22:42).

(8:27-30) **Introduction**: Jesus was facing the end very, very soon and there was still much to teach the disciples. It was time for them to learn that He was building a church—an assembly of people who would be confessing Him to be the Messiah. The present passage is one of the most dramatic revelations ever made. It is also one of the most demanding questions ever asked. The answer given determines one's eternal destiny and requires a single answer: "Thou art the Christ." The importance of the question and its confession is clearly seen by glancing quickly at the points of the passage.

1. Jesus was in Caesarea Philippi (v.27).
2. The confession of men: He is a great man (v.28).
3. The confession of His disciples: He is the Christ (v.29).
4. The need: to learn about God's Messiah (v.30).

1 (8:27) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: Jesus left Bethsaida and travelled about the towns of Caesarea Philippi (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.8:27). As He was travelling along some road between the towns, He asked the supreme question of life—the question that determines a man's eternal fate: "Whom do men say that I am?"

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:27) **Caesarea Philippi**: the city had a rich religious history. It had once been the center of Baal worship with at least fourteen temples in and around the city. It was believed to have within its borders the cavern in which the Greek god of nature, Pan, was born. In the beginning of its history the city was so identified with this god that it was named after the god, being called Panias. One of its most beautiful structures was the gleaming white marble temple built for the worship of Caesar. Herod the Great had built the temple in honor of Caesar when Caesar bestowed on him another country. But it was Herod's son Philip who adorned the temple with the magnificence for which it was known worldwide. It was also Philip who changed the name of the city from Panias to Caesarea, Caesar's town. He added his own name also, calling the city Caesarea Philippi.

The city proclaimed far and wide the worship of Caesar and of the gods of one's choice, that is, the worship of all except the One true and living God. It was against this dramatic yet terrible background that Jesus asked the pointed question, "But who do you say that I am?" (emphatic Greek translation). It was against this background of religion that Peter made his great discovery and confession: Jesus is the Christ, the real Messiah.

2 (8:28) **Profession, False—Jesus Christ, Denial**: the confession of men shortchanged Jesus. Most men saw Jesus only as a great man, a man who was highly esteemed and respected. He was considered one of the greatest of men, but note a crucial point: these *professions* were not only untrue, they were dangerous. They contained only half-truths, and people were deceived and misled by them.

1. Some said Jesus was John the Baptist. They professed Jesus to be a great spirit of righteousness, a spirit that was willing to be martyred for its faith. Herod and others thought this (Mt.14:1-2). Upon hearing of Jesus' marvelous works, Herod fancied that either John had been revived or else his spirit indwelt the man Jesus.

The common people also saw some similarity between John and Jesus: both were doing a great work for God; both were divinely chosen and gifted by God; and both proclaimed the Kingdom of God and prepared men for it. Therefore, when some looked at Jesus and His ministry, they thought Jesus was not the Messiah Himself, but the promised forerunner of the Messiah (Mal.4:5).

2. Some said Jesus was Elijah. They professed Jesus to be the greatest prophet and teacher of all time, for Elijah was so considered. Elijah was predicted to be the forerunner of the coming Messiah (Mal.4:5). Even today the Jews expect Elijah to return before the Messiah. In the celebration of the Passover they always leave a chair vacant for him to occupy. Elijah had also been used by God to miraculously feed a widow woman and her son (1 Ki.17:14); therefore, the people connected Elijah's miracle and Jesus' feeding of the multitude.

3. Some said Jesus was one of the prophets. They professed Jesus to be a great prophet sent for their day and time. He was thought to be one of the great prophets brought back to life or one in whom the spirit of a great prophet dwelt (cp. Dt.18:15, 18).

Thought 1. The same false confessions about Christ exist in every generation.

1) He was only a great man of righteousness who was martyred for His great faith. As such He leaves us a great example of how to live and stand up for what we believe.
2) He was one of the greatest teachers and prophets of all time.
3) He was only a great man who revealed some very important things to us about God and religion. As such He can make a significant contribution to every man in his search for God.
4) He was only a great man, a prophet sent to the people (Jews) of His day from whom we can learn by studying His life.

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).

"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 Jn.2:22-23).

"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:3).

3 (8:29) **Confession—Jesus Christ, Names & Titles**: the confession of the disciples was that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Note three facts that are stressed.

1. The word "saith" (eperotao) means to ask, to question. It is in the imperfect tense which means that Jesus kept on asking them. The question, "Whom say ye that I am?" was extremely critical. The answer required concentrated thought and correct belief and genuine confession.

2. The question asked is emphatic in the Greek: "But ye, whom do ye say that I am?" The answer to the question is critical; it is all important. It determines a person's destiny, his eternal destiny.

3. The answer given was immediate and terse: "Thou art the Christ," that is, the promised Messiah, the Son of the living God (cp. Mt.16:16 for the full confession. Remember Mark was Peter's disciple, and what Mark is writing shows the humility of Peter. He usually de-emphasizes the facts surrounding Peter.)

The confession is momentous, arising from a personal conviction. It is both the confession that saves the soul and the confession thay lays the foundation for the church. The very life and survival of a man's soul and of the church as a whole rest upon this simple, yet profound conviction.

1. The Christ: the Messiah; the anointed One of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.1:18 for discussion).
2. The Son of God: of the same being, the same substance; One with the Father (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34; Ph.2:6).
3. Living: the source and being of life; possessing the source, energy, and power of life within Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; note—1:4-5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3. Cp. Jn.5:26; 1 Th.1:9 for discussion and application.)

4 (8:30) **Messiah—Messiahship—Study**: the disciples had a great need to learn about *God's Messiah*. Note: Jesus instructed the disciples not to share their confession with anyone else—not now. Why? Because they were just beginning to learn what God's idea of the Messiah really meant. They had to know the truth and be accurate in their preaching of the truth before they began to share. They could do irreparable harm by spreading a false concept of the Messiah. Jesus had to protect them against this error.

Thought 1. Confession is just the beginning of our spiritual journey. There is much to study and learn about Christ after coming to know Him personally. Note two things.

1) We must be accurate in what we study. We must make sure we learn the truth and not error (see outline and notes—Mk.8:15).
2) We must be accurate in what we share, making certain that we share the truth. This necessitates time to study and grow before we begin sharing.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3; cp. Acts 20:32; 2 Tim.2:15; 2 Pt.3:18).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

	B. The First Prediction of Death: God's Messiah Vs. Man's Messiah, 8:31-33 (Mt.16:21-23; Lk.9:22)	after three days rise again. 32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. 33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.	
1 The way of God's Messiah[DSI] a. Involves suffering & death b. Involves the resurrection from the dead	31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and		**2 The way of man's messiah** a. Involves rejecting God's Messiah b. Involves following the way of Satan c. Involves setting the mind on material things, not on the things of God

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

B. The First Prediction of Death: God's Messiah Vs. Man's Messiah, 8:31-33

(8:31-33) **Introduction—Utopia**: man aches and searches for utopia, for a messiah, for a savior who can bring utopia to earth. But there is a critical point to note. God's Messiah and man's messiah differ. (See outline and notes—Mk.8:27-9:50; 9:30-32; 10:32-34; Mt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19.)

1. The way of God's Messiah (v.31).
2. The way of man's messiah (v.32-33).

1 (8:31) **Messiahship—Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection**: the way of God's Messiah. The disciples had just made the profound confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God. At this point Jesus launched a new stage. He began to indoctrinate them into the way of God's Messiah, for God's Messiah was not man's messiah (see note—Mk.8:27-9:50). Note several things.

1. The phrase "He began to teach them" is significant. Matthew says, "From that time forth"; that is, from the time of the profound confession that Jesus is the Messiah—beyond question the Messiah—something significant happened. A new stage was being launched. He revealed with a powerful thrust that the "Son of the living God" was going to be killed and raised again from the dead. Never before had this happened. Never again would it happen. History would be made. "Jerusalem...that killed the prophets" would now commit the ultimate crime: Jerusalem would kill God's own Son (cp. Mt.23:37).

2. Jesus had been telling His disciples about His death and resurrection for some time. But they had not understood. First, the idea of a suffering Messiah differed radically from their own idea of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). And second, the revelation had been hidden in pictures and symbols.

> **"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19).**
>
> **"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn.3:14).**
>
> **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).**

The difference now was that Jesus no longer spoke in pictures and symbols. He told them in simple and direct words (Mt.20:18-20; Lk.18:31-33). A new stage in the revelation of God's plan for the world was now to take place: God's Son was to die and be raised again for the sins of the world. God's plan for saving the world was to take place through a suffering Messiah, not a conquering Messiah. God's Messiah was not going to deliver a materialistic world into the hands of His followers. Contrariwise, He was to die, and His death was to usher in the Kingdom of God, making it possible for His followers to live eternally in the very presence of God Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; cp. Jn.3:16; 5:24f).

3. The words "must [dei] suffer" are strong. "Must" is constraint, an utter necessity. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus Christ, Death*—Acts 2:23 for more discussion.) It was absolutely necessary by the very nature of the case for Jesus to suffer. God is love and man is corruptible, so God, in love, must provide salvation for man. But God is also just, so He must provide salvation in such a way that justice will be done. The penalty must be paid; death must be carried out. Some *Ideal Man* must die for man so that His *Ideal Death* can stand for and cover all men (see notes, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51; *Justification*—Ro.5:1). There is only One Ideal Man: Jesus, the Son of God. The Son of God must become the Son of Man, the Ideal Man:

⇒ He must live a perfect life providing for the world the Ideal Righteousness or Ideal Life.
⇒ He must die, providing for the world the Ideal Death.
⇒ He must arise from the dead, providing for the world the Ideal Resurrection.

4. The words "suffer many things" include much more than just the sufferings surrounding His death. This is often overlooked. Hebrews 5:8 makes this clear: "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." However, the point is not seen unless one acknowledges the truth of the word *Son,* that is, Jesus' deity. Jesus is *the Son of God* who left the very presence of God. He left heaven with all the majesty and splendor, glory and worship, praise

and honor due Him. He is *the Son of Heaven*, but He became the Son of a woman. He belonged in heaven, but He was present on earth. He had ruled in the perfect, incorruptible world, but He was now a servant in this imperfect and corruptible world. Every sight, sound, touch, taste—every experience and awareness was a world of distance from what He had known. He suffered through every moment and through every experience. Every experience drained "virtue" out of Him, for He always had before His face the truth and glory of heaven and the sin and corruption of earth.

5. Jesus' prediction of His resurrection is clear to us because we can look back upon it. But it was never clear to His disciples. Why? Very simply, it was to be a new experience. No one had ever risen from the dead, not a person who was never again to die. It had never happened before; it was unprecedented. Perhaps the disciples believed somewhat like Martha, that there was to be a future resurrection of all men (Jn.11:24-26). Such a belief was an expression of the hope that is within every man, the hope to continue on in some form of existence. Such a belief is easy to hold. But to think of an immediate resurrection, to think of a person's arising from the dead today is difficult (just think about it). The idea of the Messiah's dying and arising from the dead would be almost unimaginable to those who had not been taught the truth.

Just what the disciples thought Jesus meant by "being raised again" is not known. The fact that they did not fully understand is clear from the fact that their spirits were crushed when He was killed. But some of His followers seemed to grasp more of a real bodily resurrection than others. This is clear by an immediate remembrance of His words after His resurrection. For example, there was John who did believe immediately (Jn.20:8-9); there was Mary Magdalene who was shown that He had risen (Mt.28:6). However, others were slower to understand and believe (Mk.16:11; Jn.20:24-25).

> **"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles" (Acts 26:22-23).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"[Christ] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:31) **Jesus Christ, Opposition**: see note—Mt.8:31 for the three groups who opposed Christ.

2 (8:32-33) **Messiahship**: the way of man's messiah. Note the word "openly" (parresia). It means plainly, unmistakably, frankly, without hesitation (see note, pt.1—Mk.8:31). Jesus literally indoctrinated His disciples with the fact and meaning of His death. He talked about it so much that it shook the apostles, so much so that they had Peter to confront Christ. Note three points.

1. Natural man rejects God's Messiah. He rebels at the idea of the cross. He wants another way other than the cross. This is what Peter was doing: rebelling against the idea that *God's Son* was to die, that His blood was to be shed for the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24). Peter could accept Jesus as *the Son of the living God*, but not as the Suffering Savior. Such an idea was repulsive and unacceptable to him. Therefore, he tried to stop the idea. Peter did two things.
   a. "Peter took Him" (proslabomenos). The Greek is strong. It means *caught hold*. Peter took hold and grabbed Jesus. Peter bodily took Jesus aside for a conference.
   b. Peter "began to rebuke [epitiman] Him." This again is strong. It is not just a wish, but a forcible attempt to stop the idea of the Suffering Savior: "This shall not be unto thee. This must not and cannot happen to you." *God forbid* is the equivalent idea. Peter was out to stop the cross. He was urging Jesus to be the Messiah of power, fame, and sensation that the Jews were expecting (see notes—Mk.8:27-9:50; 8:30; Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). Peter was urging Jesus to follow his own human schemes instead of God's way. And by such, he was tempting Jesus with the very same compromises that Satan used to tempt Jesus, the compromises of power, fame, and sensations (Mt.4:1-11). Peter was zealous for God, but He was mistaken and ignorant in his zeal. He did not understand that God was planning to save the world through the death of His Son (see note, pt.3—Mk.8:31).

      Peter's behavior is the way of the world. It is the natural, carnal mind. Man just rebels and recoils against the idea of a Suffering Savior who dies for the sins of the world, a Suffering Savior who demands the same sacrifice and denial of His followers. Such an idea is unacceptable and repulsive.

Thought 1. The natural man's idea of God and of God's plan for man is seen in three concepts.

1) Some think the path of life is an indulgent love. God is seen as a giving, loving, indulgent *grandfather type* of person. He is seen as One who tolerates (and rewards by accepting) even the worst behavior, no matter how much human suffering and devastation is wrought by the hands of a person. To think of the cross and the blood of Christ as an emblem of suffering is repulsive. The cross is viewed only as an emblem of love, not of sin and shame. The way of love is thought to be the path of life that man is to follow.
2) Some think that comfort and pleasure are the path of life and God's way. God again is viewed only as an indulgent *grandfather type*. His will for man is to have *the good life* of things: comfort and pleasure, ease and plenty, health and leisure. And again the cross is only an emblem of love and care for the world, not of suffering and sacrifice and self-denial. Its shame and pain and agony and its purpose of reconciling a world lost in sin and depravity are denied.

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life; and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"[They] shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments" (Is.47:8-9).

3) Some feel that triumph, victory, power, and reigning supreme are God's way. This was the idea of most Jews in Christ's day. It was Peter's concept of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23). Applying man's ideas to his own emotional and mental state of being, as well as to his physical and material being, is revealing. The ideas show how some view the concepts of *Self-Image, Self-Improvement*, and *Personality Development* as being God's plan and path for man. Again, the idea of suffering and sacrifice and self-denial is rejected.

"They that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt.20:25-27).

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).

"Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).

2. Natural man is of Satan. The literal meaning of the name Satan is *Adversary* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9). Calling Peter "Satan" was stern, yet such sternness was necessary. Peter was tempting Christ with the very same temptation Jesus had faced in the wilderness (see notes—Mt.4:8-10). All the world's glory that could be His flashed across His mind. The loyalty and allegiance of men without the cross was again being suggested to Him. How this must have cut the heart of Jesus! This time the temptation was coming from one of His own disciples. When a man refuses to accept God's plan for life, he becomes an adversary to God. He opposes God's will. In essence the man says that he knows what is best; he is *wiser* than God. Think! When a man does not accept God's plan for life, the crux of what he says to God is, "The cross is not necessary. Jesus' death to save the world is a useless plan. It is not needed."

This is what Peter was doing and saying. He was opposing God's plan for life, that is, opposing the salvation of the world through the death of God's Son. Peter was saying that he was wiser than God. Note: Jesus abruptly turned to Peter before Peter could say anything else and stopped him in his tracks. He charged Peter with being Satan, with being under the authority of Satan, with speaking for Satan. He had become as Satan, an adversary against God's plan for His Son and for the salvation of the world.

"And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (Jn.8:44).

"In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).

3. Natural man sets his mind on material things, not on the things of God. The words "thou savorest not" (ou phroneis) mean to think, to mind. Peter did not have his mind, his thinking, in line with God's mind and thoughts. His tastes were different from God's tastes. Peter's thoughts and tastes were worldly and self-pleasing, not spiritual and not pleasing to God. He was using human reasoning, not God's reasoning. The death of God's Son by shedding His blood for the sins of the world was distasteful to Peter. In his mind such a concept was unfit for God.

Note Jesus' words to Peter and how true they are: "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." The death of Jesus reveals man's true nature, a nature that uses natural and carnal reasoning instead of spiritual reasoning.

> **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Ro.8:5-7).**
>
> **"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Eph.4:17).**
>
> **"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:18-19).**
>
> **"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he [God] reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight" (Col.1:21-22).**
>
> **"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit.1:15).**
>
> **"The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Ps.94:11).**
>
> **"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).**

Thought 1. Jesus was tempted to bypass God's will for His life. And note: the temptation came from a disciple. We are often tempted to bypass God's will, and unfortunately, the temptation often comes from friends! They may mean well; they may want to save us from the difficult path of trouble, sorrow, and trials. Nevertheless, their suggestion to bypass the cross is not of God. It is of Satan.

Thought 2. Note Peter's testimony after Jesus' death and resurrection.

> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).**
>
> **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).**
>
> **"Who by him [you] do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pt.1:21).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Pt.4:1).**

	C. The Issues of God and the Issues of Men, 8:34-9:1 (Mt.16:24-28; Lk.9:27-33)	own soul? 37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.	**5 The issue of the Messiah: Being ashamed of Christ vs. confessing Christ**
1 Jesus spoke to all, both to the people & to His disciples **2 The issue of discipleship: Indulging self vs. denying self**[DS1,2,3]	34 And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.	**CHAPTER 9**	
3 The issue of life: Saving life vs. losing life	35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.	And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.	**6 The issue of death: Tasting death vs. seeing God's kingdom**
4 The issue of value: Gaining the world vs. saving the soul	36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

C. The Issues of God and the Issues of Men, 8:34-9:1

(8:34-9:1) **Introduction**: the issues of God and the issues of men differ radically. This passage shows just how much they differ, and as such it warns every man.

1. Jesus spoke to all, both to the people and to His disciples (v.34).
2. The issue of discipleship: indulgence vs. denying self (v.34).
3. The issue of life: saving life vs. losing life (v.35).
4. The issue of value: gaining the world vs. saving the soul (v.36-37).
5. The issue of the Messiah: being ashamed vs. confessing Christ (v.38).
6. The issue of death: tasting death vs. seeing God's kingdom (v.9:1).

1 (8:34) **Jesus Christ, Warns**: Jesus spoke to all, both to the people and to His disciples. Note that Jesus "had called the people...with His disciples." What He now said was a warning to the whole crowd, to the whole world.

2 (8:34) **Discipleship—Indulgence—Denying Self**: there is the issue of discipleship, that is, indulging self vs. denying self. Jesus was very pointed: there is a life of self-indulgence and there is a life of self-denial (Ro.12:1-2; 2 Cor.6:17-18; 1 Jn.2:15-16). A person has to make a choice between...

loving comfort and ease	or	commitment and discipline
loving wealth and property	or	work and compassion
loving recognition and fame	or	humility and sacrifice
loving position and power	or	service and ministry
loving pleasure and feeling	or	righteousness and self-control

The question is: "How does a person go about making the right choice?" Jesus said four things.

1. A man must *will to come* after Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Wills*—Mk.8:34).
2. A man must *deny himself* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Deny*,—Mk.8:34).
3. A man must *take up his cross* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Cross*—Lk.9:23).
4. A man must *follow Christ* (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Follow*—Mk.8:34).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:34) **Wills** (thelei): to desire, wish, design, purpose, resolve, determine. It is a deliberate willing, a deliberate choice, a determined resolve to follow Christ. If a person really wills and deliberately chooses to follow Christ, then he has to do the three things mentioned. Note, the choice is voluntary. It is not forced upon the person. It is the individual who wills and chooses; therefore, it is the individual who must act and do the three things mentioned.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:34) **Deny** (aparneomai): to disown, disregard, forsake, renounce, reject, refuse, restrain, disclaim, do without. It means to subdue, to disregard oneself and one's interest. Very simply, it means to say "no." But note: the call is not to say "no" to some behavior or thing, but to *self*. A person is to *deny self*. This means much more than just being negative, that is,

giving up something and doing without something. It means that we are to act positively, to say "yes" to Christ and "no" to self. It means to let Christ rule and reign in one's heart and life, to let Christ have His way completely. Of course, if a person allows Christ to rule in his life, all negative as well as positive behavior is taken care of (see outline note 2—Mk.8:34). In the Greek the word is an ingressive aorist, which means the person enters a new state or condition. It means *let him at once begin* to "deny self."

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(8:34) **Follow** (akolootheo): to be a follower or companion, to be a disciple. It has the idea of seeking to be in union with and in the likeness of. It is following Christ, seeking to be just like Him. Again, this is not passive behavior, but an active commitment and walk. It is energy and effort, action and work. It is going after Christ with zeal and energy, struggling and seeking to follow in His footsteps no matter the cost. Note that His steps lead to death before they lead to glory (Mt.16:21).

3 (8:35) **Life—Gospel**: there is the issue of life, that is, saving life vs. losing life. Jesus made a very surprising statement. If a man wished to save his life, he must lose it. What did He mean? The key is found in two phrases.

1. The first phrase is: "for my sake." "Whosoever shall lose his life *for my sake*...the same shall save it." The person who abandons this life, who sacrifices and gives all that he is and has for Christ, shall save his life. But the person who *keeps* his life, that is, what he has, and *seeks* more and more of this life shall lose his life completely and eternally.

The person who "saves his life, who..."

- seeks to avoid aging, decaying, and death and denies Christ, shall lose his life eternally.
- seeks to make his life more and more comfortable and secure beyond what is necessary and neglects Christ, shall lose his life eternally.
- seeks to gain wealth, power, and fame, and who compromises Christ, shall lose his life eternally.
- seeks the thrills, excitement, and stimulation of this world and ignores Christ, shall lose his life eternally.

As said above, the person who loses his life for Christ, who sacrifices and gives all he is and has for Christ, saves his life; and he saves it eternally. The person who keeps his life and what he has for himself shall lose his life, and he loses it eternally. The call of Christ is just what He says: a life of denial that takes up the cross and follows in His steps.

> **"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).**
>
> **"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).**
>
> **"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death" (Pr.10:2).**

2. The second phrase is: "and the gospel's [sake]." Whosoever shall lose his life for...the gospel's [sake], the same shall save it." The person who abandons this life, who sacrifices and gives all he is and has for the gospel shall save his life. But the person who keeps his life and all that he has and tries to keep himself and his family free from the suffering and needs of this world—that person shall lose his life.

The person who saves his life...	*The person who gives his life...*
• who lies around in the comforts of home... shall lose his life.	• who becomes an explorer and pioneer for Christ... shall save his life.
• who spends all he has on himself and his family... shall lose his life	• who sacrifices and gives all he is & has to the gospel... shall save his life.
• who takes all his time for his own affairs and desires... shall lose his life.	• who gives of his time for the gospel (visiting, teaching, sharing, witnessing, ministering)... shall save his life.

> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**
>
> **"I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:43).**
>
> **"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).**
>
> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).**

"And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zech.7:6).

4 (8:36-37) **Worldliness—Value—Soul**: there is the issue of value, that is, gaining the world vs. saving the soul. The Greek word translated *soul* is the same Greek word translated *life*. Jesus used the word *life* in two senses. There are *two stages, two beings, two existences to the same life*: the life that exists on this earth and the life that shall exist beyond this earth. Once a person (life) is born into this world, he will exist forever. It is just a matter of where he goes after life in this world: to be with God or to be apart from God.

No man can gain the whole world. But what if he could? All the pleasure and wealth and power and fame are nothing compared with his soul. There are four primary reasons why the soul is far superior to the things of this earth.

1. Everything fades and passes away. A person possesses something but for a short time...
   - A man may choose money and property instead of helping to meet the needs of the world. But money and property can be held only for a short time.
   - A man may choose position and power instead of giving his life where it would do the most good. But position and power are held only for a short time.
   - A woman may choose freedom and pleasure instead of home and family. But freedom and pleasure last only for a short time.
   - A person may choose the world and comfort instead of God and His church. But the world and comfort do not satisfy, and they last only for a short time.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field" (Is.40:6).

2. Everything cannot be used all at once. Everything sits, is unused most of the time. Most of the time...
   - clothes sit.
   - a car sits.
   - power goes unused.
   - popularity and fame are not thought of.

3. The human soul is eternal; it never dies, never ceases to exist. It shall live forever, either with or apart from God.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (Jn.12:25).

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).

4. The human soul is of more value than the whole world.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

5 (8:38) **Confession**: there is the issue of the Messiah, that is, being ashamed of Christ vs. confessing Christ. At least five things are said in this verse (see note—Mt.10:32-33).

1. Christ is the true Messiah. *He and His words* determine a man's destiny. Note the words, "Me and my words."
2. A man can be ashamed of Christ, and some men are ashamed of Him. Some fear what others will say. They fear being ridiculed by peers: talked about, questioned, avoided, sneered at, abused, persecuted. Therefore, they deny Christ. They deny by word, act, and silence.
3. The world makes it difficult to confess Christ. Why? The world is an adulterous and sinful place. And every generation passes down its adulterous and sinful behavior. Few ever want to confess (follow) the true and living God. God's insistence on the denial of self and the giving of all one is and has is too high a price for most persons. Most persons want to keep some control over their lives and some wealth for themselves. Most are unwilling to give all they are and have to God (that is, to the gospel) and to the demanding love that *the needs of this desperate world require*.
4. The day of the Messiah's glory is coming, a day when His glory shall be revealed to all. It will be a day of glory and splendor, of triumph and victory, a day when all shall see Him as He really is: the true Messiah, the Son of the living God.
5. The day of judgment—of shame and of being ashamed—is coming. All who are ashamed of the Messiah in this world will be ashamed of their behavior where it really counts—before God Himself. The person will see Christ's standing with God, and Christ will be ashamed of the person and of the selfish life the person has lived. And then the *ashamed person* will hear those fateful and terrifying words, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23; cp. Mt.25:41-46).

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23).

"But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Lk.12:9).

"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).

6 (9:1) **Death, Spiritual—Salvation—God's Kingdom**: there is the issue of death, that is, tasting death vs. seeing God's kingdom. This is not a reference to the Lord's second coming. The disciples did die before Jesus' return. More than likely it refers to the Lord's victory over death and hell which took place upon the cross and in the resurrection. It refers to the rule and reign of God's kingdom that takes place within the heart of the believer, to the rule and reign of the Holy Spirit when the Holy Spirit comes to take residence within the believer (see notes—Mt.16:28, pt.4; DEEPER STUDY # 3—19:23-24; cp. Jn.8:52; Heb.2:9).

Thought 1. A man either tastes death or sees God's kingdom with power.

1) Most men walk in death.

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn.6:53).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev.3:1).

2) Some men experience the saving power of God's kingdom (see note, pt.1—Mt.19:23-24).

"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found" (Lk.15:32).

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col.2:13).

"Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death" (Jn.8:52).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

	D. The Transfiguration: A Glimpse of Heaven's Glory, 9:2-13 (Mt.17:1-13; Lk.9:28-36)	
1 Jesus took three disciples all alone up into a high mountain[DS1]	2 And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.	
2 The transfiguration strengthened Jesus[DS2] a. His transfiguration: His clothing began to shine	3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.	
b. His companions: Talked with Jesus 1) The Great Prophet 2) The Great Lawgiver	4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.	
3 The transfiguration strengthened the disciples a. Helped their shattered faith b. Gave them a taste of glory c. Struck them with awesome fear d. Made them witnesses of God's approval[DS3]	5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, It is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. 7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.	
	8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.	**4 The transfiguration gave a unique opportunity to discuss God's Messiahship**
	9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.	a. Jesus charged the disciples to tell no man about the experience until after His resurrection
	10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.	b. The disciples questioned the resurrection: Why must Elijah come first?
	11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?	
	12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.	c. Jesus corrected the disciples 1) Elijah was to come first 2) Scripture also said that the Messiah was to die
	13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.	3) Elijah had already come: He was John the Baptist

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

D. The Transfiguration: A Glimpse of Heaven's Glory, 9:2-13

(9:2-13) **Introduction**: the purpose of the transfiguration was to reveal heaven's glory. Heaven's glory would strengthen Jesus to bear the cross and strengthen the disciples in their belief that Jesus was God's Messiah (see note—Mt.17:1-13; Lk.9:28-36). A close study of the transfiguration will strengthen the faith of any believer in his Lord. And a strengthened faith will enable the believer to bear the cross of his own call.

1. Jesus took three disciples all alone up into a high mountain (v.2).
2. The transfiguration strengthened Jesus (v.2-4).
3. The transfiguration strengthened the disciples (v.5-7).
4. The transfiguration gave a unique opportunity to discuss God's Messiahship (v.8-13).

(9:2-13) **Another Outline**: The Transfiguration—Some Strange Events.

1. There was Jesus transfigured (v.3).
2. There were Elijah and Moses talking with Jesus (v.4).
3. There was the ecstatic exhilaration of the experience (v.5-6).
4. There was God's voice (v.7).
5. There was the sudden silence (v.8).
6. There was the restriction: "Tell no man" (v.9).
7. There was the statement: Jesus was to arise from the dead (v.9b-10).
8. There was the discussion of Messiahship (v.11-13).

1 (9:2) **Disciples, Inner Circle**: Jesus took three disciples all alone up into a high mountain. Why did He not take the other disciples with them? The answer is not given. It is only speculation to guess. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Inner Circle*—Mk.9:2.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:2) **Disciples, Inner Circle**: Peter, James, and John apparently formed an inner circle around Jesus. Jesus revealed more to these three men than to the other disciples. They were with Him when He raised Jairus' daughter, when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, and here on the mount of transfiguration. Why were these three chosen to receive these additional revelations?

What is known is this. Each was being chosen for a very special leadership role. They were not aware of it yet, but they were to fill unique positions.

1. Peter was to be the leader of the early church, the one who was to open the door of the gospel to both Jew and Gentile after Pentecost (Acts 2:1f; 10:1f).
2. James was to be the head of the first great church which was to be at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13).
3. John was to receive *The Revelation* from God to close out the Scripture.

2 (9:2-4) **Jesus Christ, Transfiguration—Glory**: the transfiguration strengthened Jesus. Jesus needed to be strengthened. He was about to face the cross and the full weight of all that was involved in dying for the sins of the world. The pressure of bearing God's judgment for *all* the sins of the world was beginning to press in upon Him. He needed God's strength, encouragement, and assurance in a very special way. Therefore, God gave Jesus two very special experiences.

1. Jesus "was transfigured...His raiment became shining" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Transfigured*—Mk.9:2-3).
2. Jesus was visited by two saints from heaven: Moses, the great lawgiver, and Elijah, the great prophet. Why did Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus? There seem to be two reasons.
   a. To discuss His death (Lk.17:31). Jesus needed to be strengthened to bear the weight and pressure of the cross. Cp. the Garden of Gethsemane experience and His cry on the cross, Lk.22:39-46; see note—Mt.27:46-49.)
   b. They show that Jesus is the true Messiah, the Son of God, the One who is superior to the law and the prophets. Moses represented the law; and Elijah, who was considered the greatest of the prophets, represented the prophets. These two men were honoring and ministering to Jesus. They were symbolizing that the law and the prophets found their fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus is the One of whom the law and the prophets spoke; He is the One to whom the law and the prophets pointed. The old covenant was now to be fulfilled and superseded by Jesus who was to usher in the new covenant (see outline and notes—2 Cor.3:6-18; Heb.9:15-22; cp. Mt.9:16-17.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(9:2-3) **Transfigured** (metamorphoo): a change into another form; a transformation; a change of countenance; a complete change. Luke says, "the fashion of His countenance was altered" (Lk.9:29). Note how the gospel writers describe what happened.

"His face did shine as the sun and His raiment was white as the light" (Mt.17:2).
"His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mk.9:3).
"The fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistening" (Lk.9:29).

Apparently, *the glory* of His Godly nature was allowed to shine through His body. "The glory which [He] had with the Father before the world was" emanated through His body right on through His clothes (Jn.17:5). Peter says, "We were eyewitnesses of His majesty." In John's vision of Jesus in *The Revelation*, he describes the glory of Christ as the sun which "shineth in its strength" (Rev.1:16). The Scripture says:

"God is light" (1 Jn.1:5).
"[God]...*dwelling* in the light which no man can approach" (1 Tim.6:16).
"[God] who *coverest* thyself with light as with a garment" (Ps.104:2).

Two things need to be noted.

1. The word "shining" (stilbo) is a Greek participle which means the shining is active. The transfiguration was a real, active experience. It was no illusion, no dream; it was not of the imagination. It was not a reflection of the sun's shining off some rock, glass, or lake. "His [own] face did shine." The "shining" was the glory of the Lord's inner nature, of His Godly nature actively shining right through His being.
2. The full glory of the Godhead was not shining through Jesus. No man could ever stand in the full glory of the Lord's presence, not in man's present physical body. As Scripture says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ...the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light *which no man can approach unto*; whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (1 Tim.6:14-16). Apparently God allowed only a small degree of the glory, only what the three disciples could bear to shine through the body and clothing of Jesus.

The transfiguration is, of course, a mystery to man. But it should be remembered that it is a mystery cloked in the fullness of the Godhead. And God's glory is so brilliant there is no need for a sun (Rev.21:23; 22:5). The glory of the Supreme Being who stands behind the universe in His unlimited presence and power is bound to be beyond description and thought (cp. Eph.3:20).

3 (9:5-7) **Jesus Christ, Transfiguration—Shattered Faith—Disciples**: the transfiguration strengthened the disciples. They were strengthened in at least four ways.

1. The transfiguration helped the disciples' shattered faith (v.5). The disciples were shattered because Jesus said that He was going to Jerusalem to die (Mk.8:31). They began to interpret His words symbolically (Mk.8:10). The transfiguration made them eyewitnesses to the brilliant splendor and radiance of the Messiah's glory and to God's voice of approval. They also saw that the law and the prophets found their fulfillment in Him as represented in Moses and Elijah. Therefore, their spirits were bolstered in the firm conviction that Jesus was God's Messiah.
2. The transfiguration gave the disciples a taste of glory (v.5). The three disciples were tasting some of heaven's joy, peace, security, fulfillment, and perfection. They did not want to leave this hallowed ground.

Note what Peter did.

   a. He offered to build three *shelters* (skenas) for Jesus and the two prophets. By this act, he hoped to extend the stay of the heavenly guests and the glorious experience. The shelters which Peter offered to build were

the booths made of branches and grass which could be quickly built, the kind often built by travellers on their stops along the road night by night.

b. He said, "If thou wilt." Peter, even in a moment as glorious as this, would not act against his Lord's will. Imagine the devotion and loyalty.

3. The transfiguration struck the disciples with awesome fear (v.6). The disciples' experience can be applied to the future, to the believer's appearance before God in the great Day of Redemption. In fact, that is just what happened to Peter, James, and John. They found themselves in God's presence. The believer's experience in the Day of Redemption will undoubtedly be very much like what they experienced.

a. The believer will experience the Shekinah glory, see its full manifestation upon Christ.

b. The believer will hear the voice of God proclaiming Christ to be His Son, expressing perfect approval of His redemptive work, and rejoicing that He has been heard and is to be heard throughout all eternity.

c. The believer will fall upon his face, prostrate before Christ in awe and adoration and worship.

d. The believer will experience the Lord's intercessory work. He will feel the Lord's hand reaching out to touch him and to lift him up. And the believer will stand in the Lord's righteousness and perfection, living in a state of glory forever.

e. The believer will witness and experience the Lord's preeminence throughout all eternity.

4. The transfiguration made the disciples witnesses of God's approval (v.7. See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Cloud*—Mk.9:7. Also see note—Mt.17:8.)

Thought 1. The believer must often get alone with Christ in order to have his strength renewed.

> **"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint" (Is.40:31).**
>
> **"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).**
>
> **"Keep silence before me...and let the people renew their strength: let them come near" (Is.41:1).**
>
> **"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed [strengthened] day by day" (2 Cor.4:16).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(9:7) **Cloud**: the cloud enveloped both Jesus and the three disciples. The cloud and the voice of God terrified the disciples and caused them to fall immediately upon their faces, prostrate and unable to look up. As mortal men they were paralyzed in fear. Note three facts.

1. The cloud was "a bright cloud." This was the Shekinah glory, the cloud that symbolized God's presence. It was the cloud that guided Israel out of Egypt and that rested upon the tabernacle (Ex.40:34-38) and above the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy Place. God "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which *no man can approach unto*" (1 Tim.6:16). God dwells in unapproachable light upon which no man can look. Peter later called it "the excellent glory" (2 Pt.1:17).

2. The "bright cloud" overshadowing Jesus is in contrast to the dark and threatening cloud that overshadowed the giving of the old covenant to Moses, that is, the law (Ex.19:18; 20:21). There is a point to be made here. The law (old covenant) was dark and threatening (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Gal.3:10); the new covenant (the love of Christ) is bright and is given to save and bless, not to threaten and condemn (Heb.12:18-24. Cp. Heb.8:6-13.)

3. The voice speaking actually says in the Greek, "This is My Son, the Beloved One." Note the two facts stressed. Jesus is God's Son, and He is the Beloved One. The idea is that Jesus is the "only begotten Son" who was to be given for the world (Jn.3:16).

4 (9:8-13) **Jesus Christ, Transfiguration**: the transfiguration gave a unique opportunity to discuss God's Messiahship. Jesus charged the disciples to tell no one about their experience until after He had "risen from the dead." The mentioning of *rising from the dead* stirred them to question what He meant. They had just witnessed His glory and seen Moses and Elijah with Him. They thought that He was going to set up His kingdom *now* and that He would now reign in glory. Why, then, did Elijah leave? The Scribes said that Elijah had to come before the Messiah would set up His kingdom. Christ answered the disciples and corrected the view that the Scribes had always taught.

First, Scripture does teach that Elijah must come first and restore or prepare all things.

Second, Scripture also teaches that the Messiah must die. And it is this fact that they were overlooking (Jn.10:11, 15, 17-18).

Third, Elijah had already come. He was John the Baptist.

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God. Belief in Him is absolutely essential.

> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69; cp. Jn.11:25-27).**
>
> **"But Saul [Paul the apostle] increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (Acts 9:22; cp. Acts 17:2-3).**
>
> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).**

E. The Problem of Spiritual Immaturity & Powerlessness, 9:14-29 (Mt.17:14-21; Lk.9:37-42)

1 Spiritual immaturity belittles and shames

a. The crowds gathered
b. The Scribes questioned

14 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

c. The crowds rushed up to Jesus—greatly amazed[DS1]

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

d. Jesus drew attention from the humiliated disciples

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

e. The cause of the embarrassment

1) A need—a sick child[DS2]

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

2) A weak faith—of a concerned father, v.23

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

3) A powerless ministry—of the disciples[DS3]

2 Spiritual immaturity grieves the Lord

a. The faithlessness of men

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

b. The pitiful condition of a person's need

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

c. The desperate plight of loved ones

3 Spiritual immaturity must be acknowledged to receive God's blessings

a. Acknowledged by faith
b. Acknowledged by humility & crying for help

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

c. Result: Spiritual blessings are secured by Jesus' word & power

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

4 Spiritual immaturity can be conquered; spiritual power is available

a. By seeking

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

b. By prayer & fasting[DS4,5]

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

E. The Problem of Spiritual Immaturity and Powerlessness, 9:14-29

(9:14-29) **Introduction**: the Scripture and outline above point out a chronic problem among believers—spiritual immaturity and a powerless life and ministry.

1. Spiritual immaturity belittles and shames (v.14-18).
2. Spiritual immaturity grieves the Lord (v.19-22).
3. Spiritual immaturity must be acknowledged to receive God's blessings (v.23-27).
4. Spiritual immaturity can be conquered; spiritual power is available (v.28-29).

1 (9:14-18) **Spiritual Immaturity**: spiritual immaturity belittles and shames. As Jesus descended from the mountain, He saw that a great crowd had gathered at the foot awaiting His return. As He drew closer, He noticed that the Scribes were ridiculing and shaming the disciples. The Scribes were, of course, questioning and belittling their credentials to minister. By discrediting the disciples, they hoped to discredit Jesus in the eyes of the people (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10). When Jesus was seen approaching, the crowds were "greatly amazed" and ran to meet Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.9:15).

When Jesus reached the Scribes and the disciples, He asked the Scribes what it was they were questioning. Note how Jesus had stepped into the scene. He drew attention from the disciples' humiliation. He delivered them.

Note also who it was that answered Jesus. It was not the Scribes, but the desperate father of a needy child. The cause of the embarrassment was threefold.

1. There was the sickness that caused embarrassment (v.17. See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Evil Spirits*—Mk.9:17-18.) Demon possession and epilepsy were cursed diseases, diseases that caused isolation and rejection by society. Because of society's

reaction, families were often embarrassed when a member was afflicted. Just imagine this scene. The child and father were right in the midst of a shameful experience. They were the subject of the questioning and ridicule. Imagine their embarrassment in being the focus of the crowd's attention, their problem of demon possession, and their having sought help from apparent frauds.

> **"And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6).**
>
> **"But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).**
>
> **"My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me" (Ps.44:15).**

2. There was the presence of weak faith. The father's faith was weak.
   ⇒ He was part of the "faithless generation" (v.19).
   ⇒ He was told "if thou canst believe" (v.23).
   ⇒ He had to cry, "help thou mine unbelief" (v.24).

The child had not been healed because of weak faith. But it was not just the weak faith of the disciples; no one had faith enough to heal the child—not the father, not the disciples, not the religionists (Scribes).

> **"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Mt.13:58).**
>
> **"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Mt.14:31).**
>
> **"Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me" (Mt.17:17).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful: how is that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).**

3. There was a powerless ministry (v.18). The very persons who should have been able to help were the disciples. Nine disciples were there when the man first came for help, yet not a single one of them was able to help. They all lacked the power (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.9:18).

> **Thought 1.** *No power* affects the testimony of believers (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.9:18).
>
> **Thought 2.** Remember this critical fact: the world uses the lives of believers to judge not only their testimonies but also Christ Himself. The world tries to discredit Christ because of the powerlessness of believers.
>
> **Thought 3.** Note the three causes of embarrassment in this passage: a weak faith, a powerless ministry, and the boy's illness. Some illnesses (whether due to natural causes or brought on by immorality, drunkenness, or some other sinful behavior that destroys or brings injury to the body) will always cause embarrassment. There is no excuse for a believer's living a sinful life, a life so sinful that his faith becomes weak, his ministry becomes powerless, or his body contracts a disease.

> **"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).**
>
> **"John...said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (Jn.3:27).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).**
>
> **"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing [power] as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:15) **Greatly Amazed** (ekethambethe): to be filled with wonder. What amazed the people when they "beheld" Jesus?

1. Perhaps Jesus retained some of the glory of the transfiguration (cp. Ex.34:29 when Moses came down from the mountain after having been with God). The people may have seen a glow, a majestic countenance, about Jesus.
2. Perhaps Jesus came at such an opportune time that the people were amazed to see Him, as though His timing was destined. He arrived just when His disciples needed help.
3. Perhaps Jesus walked with a renewed aire, a more authoritative and decisive countenance than before. Just coming from the transfiguration was bound to instill a renewed confidence and authority within Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(9:17-18) **Evil Spirits**: the son's illness seems to have been both physical and spiritual. The description of the illness in Mark points toward what is known today as epilepsy and demon possession (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:17-18; Lk.9:39). The demon possession in particular seems to have heightened and aggravated the condition, perhaps causing some suicidal tendencies (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:22). Throughout the gospels this seems to be one of the major works of evil spirits: to *heighten and aggravate* existing conditions.

Note the description of the three gospels. Luke's description is especially interesting because it is the description of a physician.

Mark 9:17-18	*Luke 9:39*	*Mt.17:15*
A dumb spirit	A spirit (evil)	A devil (v.18)
It takes Him (seizes hold)	Takes him	Lunatick
It tears him (strikes down)	Cries out	Sore vexed
He foams	Tears him	Falls into the fire
He gnashes with his teeth	Foams	Falls into the water
He pines away (wastes away)	Bruises him	

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(9:18) **Power, Lack of**: Why do the servants of God fail? Why do they often lack power? Why does their faith weaken? This experience of the disciples reveals much about spiritual failure and lack of power.

1. A sense that Christ is far away and out of reach makes one ineffective. The indwelling presence and power of Christ are just not felt—not to the extent that they need to be available. In the above situation Christ was absent, but His power was still available. The disciples were just not all that aware of His power.
2. The lack of leadership causes the faith and loyalty of some to weaken. The nine disciples apparently had no leader to stand forth as a champion of faith and power.
3. Uncompromising unbelief can weaken one's trust (v.16). This was true of the Scribes' unbelief and questioning. They distracted and sapped the disciples' faith and power.
4. An atmosphere of questioning and unbelief often affects the faith and power of a person's life. A terrible atmosphere of unbelief and distrust in God was created by everyone present: the man's questionable belief (v.22), the Scribes' questioning (v.16), the disciples' lack of faith and power, and the people's disturbance over the whole affair.

What happens when the servants of God have *no power*? What are the results of a powerless life and ministry?

1. No power causes embarrassment and shame.
2. No power causes the world to question and ridicule and belittle.
3. No power questions the deity (validity) of Christ and God.
4. No power causes the questioning of God and His ability to deliver.

The answer to no power is given by Christ. Power comes (1) by seeking and (2) by prayer and fasting (v.28-29).

2 (9:19-22) **Spiritual Immaturity**: spiritual immaturity grieves the Lord in three areas.

1. The faithlessness of men grieves Christ. Christ rebuked the generation standing before Him; but in all honesty, every generation was rebuked, for every generation has proven to be faithless. Having no faith saddened and brought sorrow to the Lord's heart, and He expressed that sorrow: "How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer [bear with] you?"

Who is being rebuked? Who is faithless? To whom is Christ speaking? The answer is clearly seen. There was not a single person present who helped the desperate child: not the father, not the crowd, not the disciples, and not even the questioning religionists.

⇒ The father was unbelieving.
⇒ The crowd was unspiritual and worldly.
⇒ The disciples were ineffective and powerless.
⇒ The religionists were self-centered and critical.

> **"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other" (Mk.3:5).**
>
> **"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways" (Heb.3:10).**
>
> **"I [was] grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways" (Ps.95:10).**

2. The pitiful condition of a person's need grieves Christ. The son was helpless, under the power of an evil spirit that tore (convulsed) him and caused him to wallow around, foaming at the mouth (see notes—Mk.1:23-24; 5:6-7). The sight of the boy in such a pitiful condition touched and grieved the heart of Christ.
3. The desperate plight of loved ones grieves the Lord. Jesus cared for the father just as much as He cared for the son. The father was hurting in his heart. It was his love for the son that drove him to seek Jesus in the first place. Jesus knew this, and Jesus knew something else. The father's faith was weak and needed strengthening, so Jesus asked the father about the history of the boy's illness. But note: Jesus was not interested so much in the boy's case history as He was in getting the father...

- to focus on his desperate need.
- to focus on Jesus who stood before him.
- to focus on Jesus who alone could meet his need.
- to focus on Jesus so much that his faith would be stirred.

Jesus' purpose worked: the man's attention was focused upon Jesus and upon his son's case history. The man said two significant things to Jesus.

1. "If thou canst do anything...help us."
2. "Have compassion on us, and help us."

The man lacked personal knowledge and faith in Jesus' power, but He cried for the compassion of Jesus—if Jesus really did have the power to help. There was no way Jesus would turn away from the man's cry for mercy (cp. Lk.18:13).

Thought 1. Note two significant statements. It is not so much our faith as it is our cry for mercy and compassion that arouses God to help us. It is not so much our faith as the object of our faith (God Himself) that saves us (see note—Mk.11:22-23).

> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:14-15).**

Thought 2. The same three things that grieved Christ should grieve the heart of every believer. We should be grieved to the point that we act and minister just as Christ did.

3 (9:23-27) **Spiritual Blessings**: spiritual immaturity must be acknowledged to receive God's blessings.

1. Spiritual immaturity must be acknowledged by *faith*. The father's faith was immature. Jesus threw the father's words back to him: "It is not a question, If I can, but 'If thou canst believe. All things are possible to him that believeth.'"
   a. All things are possible to the Son of God. The power of God is available, but a person must trust in God's power.
   b. The great principle of prayer and faith was being taught to the man.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22). (See note—Mk.11:22-23.)**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

2. Spiritual immaturity must be acknowledged by *humility and crying for help*. The man was weak, but his need was desperate. He *accepted* the Lord's Word...
   - about his being weak (sinful) and needing help personally.
   - about his lack of faith being the problem.

The man responded in humility and cried out with tears, "Lord I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Note that he cried out for Jesus to help him *even* in his faith. He needed help even in believing; but he did the one essential, he cried out with all his heart and being, *confessing* that he needed help.

> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**
>
> **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).**
>
> **"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).**

3. Spiritual blessings are secured by Jesus' Word and power. Note several things.
   a. Jesus healed the boy when He saw the crowd running toward them. He had apparently pulled the father and boy to the side to help the father's concentration (cp. v.25. See note, pt.1—Lk.9:14-18.)
   b. It was the word of Jesus that healed the boy. It was His Word that broke the devil's power. The word "rebuked" (epetimese) is strong, authoritative, even severe. Satan cannot stand before God's Word. Christ has spoiled the principalities and powers of evil (Col.2:15).
   c. The evil spirit made one last effort to disrupt and discredit the power of Christ. The evil spirit (as so often happens) apparently attempted to destroy the boy.
   d. Jesus took the boy by the hand and lifted him up, and the boy arose, being healed.

4 (9:28-29) **Spiritual Immaturity—Power—Prayer—Fasting**: spiritual immaturity can be conquered; spiritual power is available.

1. Immaturity can be conquered by *seeking spiritual power*. The disciples sought to know why they failed. They wanted to know the cause. Remember: Jesus had already given them power over evil spirits, and they had already exercised such power. They could not understand why they had failed when they had been successful before (Mk.3:14-15; cp. Lk.9:1; 10:17).
2. Immaturity can be conquered by *prayer and fasting*. Jesus pointed to one thing: the disciples were not living close enough to God. They were not praying and fasting enough, not seeking Him enough, not putting Him before food and other things. They were taking time for other things, taking time to eat, but not taking time for God.

Thought 1. God must be depended upon so much that food and everything else are set aside in order to seek Him. A man's heart must sometimes crave God so much that food and all else are set aside to seek Him.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk.11:9).**
>
> **"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(9:29) **Prayer**: see note—Mt.7:7-11; cp. Eph.6:18.

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(9:29) **Fasting**: see note—Mt.6:16-18.

	F. The Second Prediction of Death: Intensive Training in the Death of Christ, 9:30-32 (Mt.17:22-23; Lk.9:43-45)	31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.	**2 The lesson: Jesus taught His disciples that He was to die & arise**[DSI,2]
1 The preparation: Jesus got alone with His disciples	30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.	32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.	**3 The response: The disciples rejected what they did not wish to see**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

F. The Second Prediction of Death: Intensive Training in the Death of Christ, 9:30-32

(9:30-32) **Introduction**: the thrust of this passage is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (see outline and notes—Mk.8:31-33; 10:32-34; Mt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19). Because of its enormous importance, Jesus drilled the truth of His death and resurrection into His disciples. It is absolutely essential that every man grasp the death and resurrection of Jesus.

⇒ A man's eternal destiny depends upon his grasping the truth.
⇒ The fate of the Christian message depends upon believing the truth.
⇒ The fate of the world, moral truth and justice, depends upon men's grasping and believing the truth.

1. The preparation: Jesus got alone with His disciples (v.30).
2. The lesson: Jesus taught His disciples that He was to die and arise (v.31).
3. The response: the disciples rejected what they did not wish to see (v.32).

1 (9:30) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: the preparation—Jesus got alone with His disciples. This was a pivotal point in Jesus' ministry. He left the area of Caesarea Philippi in the north country where He was safe and headed toward Galilee from where He was to go into Jerusalem. The cross was sitting right before His face (cp. Mk.8:31-33). But note: He was still moving about quietly. Matthew says that Jesus "moved to and fro" Galilee. The idea is that Jesus moved about in order to avoid the crowds, yet He was moving ever so much closer to Jerusalem and the cross. Jesus needed to concentrate on His disciples, to drill into them the fact that He had to die and arise from the dead. He had to continue repeating and reiterating His death and resurrection because it was contrary to all their hopes and expectations. It was different from all they had ever heard or been taught. The Messiah was thought to be a Messiah of power and sovereign rule, not a Messiah who had to suffer and die in order to save man. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)

2 (9:31) **Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection**: the lesson. Jesus taught His disciples that He was to die and arise from the dead. Note three things.

1. Jesus "taught" (edidaske) His disciples. The Greek tense is imperfect; that is, He continued to teach them, kept right on teaching them. It was a continuous process, pulling one to the side, then another, then two, then four or five, then the whole group. He taught and taught, drilling the fact of His death and resurrection into them.
2. The word "delivered" (paradidotai) means to be delivered over and into death. It means that His death was determined, ordained, set in the plan and counsel of God. Note that Jesus said, "The Son of Man *is* delivered." His death is right before His face.
   a. God delivered Christ up to be betrayed.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**
>
> **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).**

   b. Christ delivered Himself up to be crucified.

> **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).**
>
> **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**
>
> **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:25).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).**

c. Judas betrayed Him (see notes—Mt.26:20-25; 27:3-5; Mk.14:10-11; Lk.22:4-6; Jn.13:18; 13:21-26).

Jesus named the man who would kill Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1-Mt.16:21). The betrayal would be by *Judas* who identified Him for the *elders*, *chief priests*, and *Scribes*; they in turn would deliver Him to the *Gentiles* (or Romans) for execution (Mt.20:19).

In preaching to the Jews right after Pentecost, Peter accused the Jews: "Ye have taken [Him] and by wicked hands [the hands of the lawless Gentiles or Romans] have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

3. There are several reasons why Jesus repeated and repeated the fact of His death (also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.9:31).

a. To enforce that He was *dying as a willing sacrifice* and not as a hopeless martyr or as a mistaken man who thought He was the Messiah.

> **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).**
>
> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**

b. To stress that He was *dying to redeem man* just as God willed.

> **"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Ro.3:24-25).**
>
> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:14).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb.9:12).**
>
> **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).**
>
> **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev.5:9).**

c. To assure that His death was deliberately planned in the purposes of God and that He was willingly dying to fulfill that purpose.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**
>
> **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).**

d. To keep the disciples from thinking that the Messiah, the Son of God, could never die (see note, pt.2—Mk.9:31).

e. To drill His death into the disciples so that they could better understand the truth after His resurrection.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:31) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus Christ was killed for two reasons (see note, *Death*—Mt.17:23 for discussion. This note includes most of the New Testament passages dealing with the death of Christ. See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 1:3; DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—2:23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.3:24; notes—5:1; 5:6-7; 5:6-11; 6:1-10; 7:4; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:3; note—8:31-33.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:31) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: God raised Christ for several reasons (see note, *Resurrection*—Mt.17:23 for discussion. This note includes most of the New Testament passages dealing with the resurrection of Christ. See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 1:3; DEEPER STUDY # 4—2:24.)

3 (9:32) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the response. The disciples rejected what they did not wish to see. Jesus stressed and stressed His death and resurrection to the disciples. He meant what He said: He was to die, and He was to arise from the dead. The disciples were just not able to accept the literal facts. Their confusion and rejection were understandable.

⇒ They had been taught all their lives that the Messiah was coming to free them from all oppression and suffering (see notes—Lk.3:24-31).

⇒ Jesus had taught them that the kingdom was at hand, ready to be established now. How could it be established if He were to literally die? They failed to see the various stages of the kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

⇒ They had been with Jesus for only a few months. *A complete reversal and unlearning of beliefs takes time.* They had not had enough time to sit at Jesus' feet, not enough time to accept and understand the literal truth of His death and resurrection.

Apparently, the disciples spiritualized His death and resurrection. They clearly saw a new air about Him as He quickened His pace and set His face toward Jerusalem. They could tell that something was pending, something that seemed to draw Christ forward with more determination than ever before. They knew that for many months now, He had been concentrating upon teaching them and sharing the truth of His death and resurrection. However, it was all a mystery to them; it was a puzzle (see notes—Mt.17:22; Mk.9:30, outline note 1). By death and resurrection did He mean...

- that He had to *die to self*, being shamed and discredited by the leaders, before He would become riled enough to *rise up and establish the kingdom*?
- that He had to die to self, rejecting the present order of things (present religion and government), before He could *rise up* and restore things to some higher level or state?
- that the conflict of freeing Israel from her enemies would be so severe that it would be like a death and the victory which would take three days would be like a resurrection from the dead?

The disciples just did not understand. They certainly did not want to accept the fact that their Lord would be literally killed. So they went along with the desire of their flesh and spiritualized what He said.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).

"And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?" (Mt.15:16).

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).

"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps.82:5).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor" (Mic.4:12).

	G. The Disciples' Terrible Ignorance of Messiahship: A Problem of Ambition, 9:33-37 (Mt.18:1-4; Lk.9:46-48)	35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.	**3 Ambition needs instruction** **4 Ambition is a virtue, but it must be directed toward the right goal: To serve**
1 Jesus returned to Capernaum a. The disciples argued b. Jesus questioned what they were arguing about	33 And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?	36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,	**5 Ambition for service proves a person's discipleship** a. The illustration: Receiving a child
2 Ambition can shame	34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest.	37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.	b. The lesson: Proves one's discipleship 1) Proves one has received Christ 2) Proves one has received God

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

G. The Disciples' Terrible Ignorance of Messiahship: A Problem of Ambition, 9:33-37

(9:33-37) **Greatness**: the disciples, on more than one occasion, argued over who should hold the highest position in the kingdom (see outlines and notes—Mt.18:1-2; 20:20-28; Lk.22:24-30). Their desire was for recognition and honor in an earthly kingdom. Jesus had to reeducate their thinking.

The same reeducation is needed by all men. All men have the same needs for...

- some recognition
- some position
- some prestige
- some money
- some authority
- some esteem
- some challenge
- some physical satisfaction

There is nothing wrong with these needs. They are human and legitimate and must be met, but men allow their hearts to be overtaken with selfishness. Men begin to want more and more to the point of lusting and consuming and hoarding. They become prideful, covetous, worldly, ambitious, envious, and hurtful even to the point of destroying and killing in order to fulfill their lusts (cp. Jas.4:1-3).

What Christ sets out to do is to change the lives and reeducate man's concept of greatness.

1. Jesus returned to Capernaum (v.33).
2. Ambition can shame (v.34).
3. Ambition needs instruction (v.35).
4. Ambition is a virtue, but it must be directed toward the right goal: to serve (v.35).
5. Ambition for service proves a person's discipleship (v.36-37).

1 (9:33) **Ambition—Divisiveness**: Jesus returned to Capernaum, His headquarters, and entered the home which was so often opened to Him. Along the way, the disciples had been disputing among themselves and were probably continuing to argue after entering the house. The word "disputed" (dialogizomai) means arguing and bickering as well as reasoning. They were definitely arguing among themselves.

Imagine how Jesus' heart must have been cut to the core. How often He had told them about the cross. And here He was about to stand face to face with the cross, yet the disciples were arguing over who should be the greatest.

He could do only one thing: continue to teach them. He knew about the dispute, but they were not aware that He knew. He very simply turned and asked, "What were you arguing about along the way?"

Thought 1. How often we have heard about the cross, and yet how easily we forget.

1) Many have heard time after time and have never responded. Such cuts the heart of Christ.
2) Many have heard and have responded, yet they continue to seek the things of the world: power, position, wealth, property, fame. Such also cuts the heart of Christ.

Thought 2. A man who pursues the world soon forgets the cross. He forgets that he "was purged from his old sins" (2 Pt.1:9).

2 (9:34) **Ambition—Ashamed—Shame**: ambition can shame. The disciples had been arguing over who should be the greatest in Jesus' government. Note several things about their argument.

1. They did not mean who would be the greatest in quality or character, but in name and position. They were thinking in terms of power, fame, wealth, position, and name (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23 for a picture of their concept of the Messiah).

a. They sensed that Jesus was about to set up His kingdom, about to assume His throne. They were looking forward to becoming chiefs of state in His kingdom.
b. They had seen three men among them honored in special ways (Peter, James, and John, Mt.17:1-13). And one of them in particular had been distinguished (Peter, Mt.16:17-19). Who were to be the leaders in the Lord's kingdom? They were apparently gripped with jealousy, envy, ambition, and some rivalry.
c. They misinterpreted Jesus' words that He must die and arise again. They spiritualized His words instead of taking them at face value (see notes—Mk.9:32; Mt.17:22). Apparently they connected the thought of "rising from the dead" with the setting up of His kingdom and began to argue over the top positions of leadership.

2. They did not yet understand what the kingdom was. They still saw an earthly, temporal kingdom and not a spiritual, eternal kingdom. This passage shows just how far away they were from understanding God's idea of the Messiah (cp. points above. See note—Mk.10:35-37.)

Note that the disciples "held their peace." They kept quiet and said nothing in response to Jesus. They knew they had done wrong and were ashamed and embarrassed. Their ambition had led them to quarrel and divide. Their ambition shamed them.

Thought 1. Ambition that leads to argument and division is wrong. The person who seeks and secures by dispute and division shall soon stand before Christ ashamed and embarrassed.

Thought 2. All men shall be asked what they were reasoning and disputing about as they walked through life.

> **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).**
>
> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).**

Thought 3. Each man will be called to give an account for his disputes. He shall give an account both for his words and his life.

> **"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Mt.12:37).**
>
> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:16-17).**
>
> **"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can be any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps.49:6-7).**
>
> **"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).**

3 (9:35) **Ambition**: ambition needs instruction. Note that Jesus "*sat down* and called the twelve." In Jesus' day, when a Rabbi was ready to give a profound lesson, he sat down before his pupils. The disciples had slipped into a gross error and committed a serious sin. They must be corrected and taught the truth. Their ambition needed to be instructed and guided in the right direction.

> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness" (2 Tim.2:15-16).**

4 (9:35) **Ambition**: ambition is a virtue, but it must be directed toward the right goal. Note the points made by Jesus.

1. Ambition is a virtue. It is not wrong to desire greatness, to desire to make a contribution. Jesus did not rebuke the disciples' ambition. What He did was to direct their ambition, their energy and motive and efforts, in the right direction.
2. The way to greatness is service, humble service. If a man wishes to be great, then he must actively seek to serve others. No matter his position or authority, he is to serve; he is to actively work for the sake and benefit of others. A man's ambition must not be to rule for the sake of holding position and authority and receiving honor from men.

To be great, a man's ambition must be to use his gifts and abilities to serve others, helping and ministering to them in every way possible. A great man does not build his own prestige. A great man builds the lives and betters the welfare of others.

> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).**
>
> **"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).**

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth" (Ps.10:3).

"Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Pr.25:14).

5 (9:36-37) **Discipleship—Salvation—Child**: ambition for service proves one's discipleship. Jesus illustrated His point. He took a child into His arms, receiving and gathering the child unto Himself. And then He drove His point home. He said that the very qualities that are necessary to *receive* a child are the qualities that are to characterize the believer's life. The believer is to treat all men as he treats a child when he receives a child into his arms.

Note the qualities present when a man receives and gathers up a child into his arms.

1. Receiving a child requires humility. In the matters of adult life, many consider the child useless, unable to contribute. They overlook and fail to consider the great contributions a child makes to an adult. A child requires and teaches the spirit of love, caring, forgiveness, courage, trust, and on and on. A person who serves a child must be humble.
2. Receiving a child requires courage. A child is a great responsibility. When a man receives a child, he undertakes the child's care and welfare. A person who serves a child must be courageous.
3. Receiving a child requires faith and trust. A person has to believe the child will respond and learn, not rebel and reject. A person who serves a child must believe and trust.
4. Receiving a child requires patience and endurance. A person has to be patient and persevering in teaching and training. The child is sometimes slow. A person who serves a child must be patient.
5. Receiving a child requires forgiveness. A child falls and fails often, making the same mistake time and again. A person who serves a child must be forgiving.

Jesus was teaching that a child has needs. Thus it is with society. All men have needs. Just as we receive a little child, so we must receive all men. Just as we serve and treat a little child, so we must serve and treat all men. Note that Jesus made a wonderful promise. If we receive a child, a man in need, we receive Him; and if we receive Him, we receive God (cp. Mt.25:34f).

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

	H. The Conditions of Tolerance, 9:38-41 (Lk.9:49-50)	not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.	Receive him
1 John felt guilt—he had rejected a man a. A man who was ministering in Jesus' name b. The disciples had rebuked him c. Jesus' instruction:	38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us. 39 But Jesus said, Forbid him	40 For he that is not against us is on our part. 41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.	**2 Condition 1: If he does not speak evil of Christ** **3 Condition 2: If he is not against Christ** **4 Condition 3: If he shows kindness to the followers of Christ**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

H. The Conditions of Tolerance, 9:38-41

(9:38-41) **Introduction**: Jesus had just taught a lesson on ambition and service. Now He teaches a lesson on tolerance. The lesson is greatly needed, for tolerance is often misunderstood. Some believe that every person should be received and accepted no matter their beliefs or behavior. Others are convinced that beliefs and behavior matter; that is, if a person's beliefs and behavior are damaging to the welfare of others, then that person should not be received and accepted (for example Hitler, agnosticism, humanism, atheism).

Jesus' words in v.37 stirred John to share about a man's ministering in Jesus' name. John saw immediately that Jesus seemed to be saying that people were to be accepted and cared for in His name—no matter who they were. Jesus took John's account of rejection and laid down the conditions of tolerance.

1. John felt guilt—he had rejected a man (v.38-39).
2. Condition 1: if he does not speak evil of Christ (v.39).
3. Condition 2: if he is not against Christ (v.40).
4. Condition 3: if he shows kindness to the followers of Christ (v.41).

1 (9:38-39) **Tolerance**: John felt guilt because he had rejected a man. Jesus had just said that His followers were to be open-armed in receiving people (v.37). These words aroused guilty feelings within John. He and the other apostles had seen a man ministering in Jesus' name, and they had stopped him. Why? Note John's words: "He *followeth not us*: and we forbad him, because he *followeth not us*." The disciples stopped him because he...

- was not one of them, of their group.
- was not of their inner circle.
- was unattached, had not been called and ordained by their Leader (Christ).
- had not been taught by their Teacher (Christ).
- could not have been as strong and firm in his beliefs as they were.
- did not stand with them. In their minds their way was the only way.

However, note this about the man.

⇒ He had somehow been influenced by the Lord. He knew about the Lord.

⇒ He had a strong faith in the Lord's name. He had given himself to the ministry and was ministering to people. In fact, he was ministering to the most difficult cases, to the demon-possessed. And note: ministering to the demon-possessed was the ministry which was difficult for the disciples to perform (cp. Mk.9:14-29).

There are several reasons why men oppose others, why men are not tolerant.

1. Loyalty to an organization or to a leader can cause intolerance. If a person does not stand for our organization or leader, he is often unacceptable.
2. Conviction of our own position and belief can cause intolerance. If a person does not agree with our position or belief, he is often unacceptable.
3. The need for unity can cause intolerance. If a person questions or opposes us or our organization and its acts, he is often unacceptable.
4. A sense of authority and self-exaltation can cause intolerance. We can think too highly of ourselves, feeling that we are *the great defenders* of the truth. Therefore, if a person questions or opposes our position or acts, he is often unacceptable.
5. Jealousy and envy can cause intolerance. Who a person *is* (spiritually, physically, mentally) and what he *has* (position, gifts, recognition) are often secretly desired or coveted. Therefore, the person is often unacceptable.
6. A sense of pride and arrogance, of being better than others, can cause intolerance. A person who is poor, disadvantaged, unemployed, uneducated, single, and a myriad of other *conditions* can be unacceptable.

This man, although professing and ministering *in the name of Christ*, was rebuked and stopped by the apostles. What he was doing was unacceptable to them. But note: John sensed guilt over the matter, and he was honest enough to confess his intolerance and ask Jesus about the matter.

What did Jesus say? Very simply, "Forbid him not. Receive him. Let him minister." Then Jesus laid down the conditions of tolerance.

Thought 1. The disciples made several gross errors.
1) They set themselves up as judges of others.
2) They were too narrow, too exclusive.
3) They denied another the right to serve.
4) They wrecked a servant's ministry.
5) They kept many from ever being helped.
6) They taught intolerance.

Thought 2. Intolerance has wrecked many lives and churches. Intolerance causes strife and division, hurt and pain. It shames and ruins and paralyzes both individuals and churches.

2 (9:39) **Tolerance—Jesus Christ, Speaking Evil Against—Ministers**: the first condition is, be tolerant if a man does not speak evil of Christ. The emphasis of this point seems to be on the phrase "speaking evil of Christ." A man who truly ministers "in the name of Christ" *will most likely* not speak evil of Christ. If he ever does speak evil of Christ, it will not be while he is ministering and sharing about Christ, but sometime later, after he ministers "in Christ's name."

Therefore, the man who does not speak evil of Christ shows that he is ministering "in the name of Christ." But the opposite is also true. The man who speaks evil of Christ shows that he is an enemy of Christ. The first man is to be accepted. The last man who speaks evil of Christ is not to be accepted.

"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Ph.1:15-18).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Mt.7:3).

3 (9:40) **Tolerance**: the second condition is, be tolerant if a man is not against Christ and His disciples. Note two things.

1. Jesus used the word "us." "He that is not against us is on our part [for us]." (Cp. Mt.12:30.) A person's attitude toward both Christ *and His disciples* (church) is to be observed. Man's attitude toward believers reveals his attitude toward Christ. In Christ's eyes He and His people are one. To stand against His followers is to stand against Him. To mistreat His followers is to mistreat Him. To speak evil of His followers is to speak evil of Him.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:16).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Mt.10:40).

"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Lk.10:16).

2. A man's actions are to be looked at—nothing else: not his appearance, education, credentials, group, or label. If a man has a spirit of faith, love, joy, peace, forgiveness, oneness, and worship, he is to be accepted. He does not stand against Christ. But if a man has a spirit of unbelief, disturbance, unforgiveness, divisiveness, self, and sin, he is against Christ and His followers. This man's behavior should not be accepted. He is "against us."

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (1 Cor.8:12).

4 (9:41) **Tolerance—Kindness—Ministering**: the third condition is, be tolerant if a man shows kindness to the followers of Christ. Giving a cup of water in a hot country like Palestine was a common sight. But note: Christ is talking about giving "in His name." If a person does something for a believer "because he belongs to Christ," then that person shall be rewarded. And the idea is that he will be rewarded greatly. The whole point is helping, giving to a person "because he belongs to Christ." Note three points.

1. Many people help and give to others. They help and give because...
   - it is the custom and practice.
   - it is the respectable thing to do.

- they wish recognition and honor.
- they would be embarrassed not to give.
- they are touched by the need.

2. The reward is promised for a specific act, the act of helping a person because he "belongs to Christ."
3. The reward is given for the most simple and humble of acts, the giving of water to a thirsty believer. Anyone would give a drink of water, yet so simple an act done for one of Christ's followers will be greatly rewarded.

Thought 1. No gift, no service is too small. God notices all. What an encouragement! What a challenge to use what we have and all we have for Christ and His followers! "We shall not lose our reward" (1 Cor.15:58; 2 Cor.5:10). Our reward is sure; it is guaranteed!

> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**
>
> **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me....Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt.25:34-36, 40).**

	I. The Terribleness of Sin, 9:42-50	into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:	b. The reason: Sins of the feet condemn one to hell
1 The terrible sin of offending others	42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.	46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.	c. Hell is punishment & it is forever
a. Offending "little ones" especially		47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:	**4 The terrible sins of the eye**
b. The better alternative: To drown one's self[DSI,2]			a. The better alternative: To pluck out one's eye
2 The terrible sins of the hands	43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:	48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.	b. The reason: Sins of the eye condemn one to hell
a. The better alternative: To cut off one's hand		49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.	c. Hell is punishment & it is forever
b. The reason: Sins of the hand condemn one to hell	44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.	50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.	**5 The terrible surety of judgment for sin**
c. Hell is punishment & it is forever			a. Everyone
3 The terrible sins of the feet	45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast		b. Every sacrifice, work
a. The better alternative: To cut off one's foot			**6 The wonderful challenge to save oneself from sin**
			a. Search oneself
			b. Be salted: Be pure & useful

DIVISION V

THE SON OF GOD'S CLOSING MINISTRY: JESUS TEACHES THE IDEA OF GOD'S MESSIAHSHIP, NOT MAN'S MESSIAHSHIP, 8:27-9:50

I. The Terribleness of Sin, 9:42-50

(9:42-50) **Introduction**: this is a sinful world, full of terrible evil and behavior. No one can walk out into the world without facing temptation after temptation and pull after pull to look, touch, taste—to experience the *good life* of physical gratification and earthly comfort and personal fulfillment. We are tempted, seduced, and influenced at every turn. There is no escape (cp. Ro.3:9-18).

"The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn.5:19).
"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

In this passage Christ stressed just how terrible sin is, and He warned the sinner. Every man is personally responsible for his sin. The fact of a sinful world does not lessen a man's personal responsibility. He cannot blame the world, society, or others, for he has a free will. In addition, he has the knowledge of much good, and he has the pull to do good (at least initially). He also has examples of goodness, and he can choose to do good. Man can even work to overcome and strengthen his weaknesses. And most of all he has God, who provides a way to escape temptation (1 Cor.10:13). Woe to the sinner—he is *personally* responsible. Every sin becomes a stumbling block to others! Woe to the man who sins and places the stumbling block for others to fall over.

1. The terrible sin of offending others (v.42).
2. The terrible sins of the hands (v.43-44).
3. The terrible sins of the feet (v.45-46).
4. The terrible sins of the eye (v.47-48).
5. The terrible surety of judgment for sin (v.49).
6. The wonderful challenge to save oneself from sin (v.50).

1 (9:42) **Sin—Stumbling Block**: Christ mentioned the terrible sin of offending others, that is, of causing others to stumble, of actually leading others to sin (see note—Mt.18:5-10 for more discussion).

Note several things. (See outlines and notes—Mt.18:6 for more discussion.)

1. The word "offend" (skandalizo) means to cause a person to stumble, to lead a person to sin (see notes—Mt.5:29; outline note 4—17:27).
2. The "little ones" are identified by Christ. They are those who "believe in me." Christ often called the believers "little ones" and referred to the believer as "a little child" (see note—Mt.18:5-10). Believers are children of God. A "little one" is any little child, any *new beginner* in the faith, and any person who has a *child-like faith and spirit in Christ.*
3. Christ seemed to be saying, "The most terrible sin of all is leading another person to sin. There is no sin any worse than leading another person astray. It is the worst conceivable sin."

There are several ways we cause others to sin.

a. By leading them into sin and teaching them to sin. "Oh, come on, no one will know. It's not going to hurt you."

b. By example, things that we do. Example is not a direct vocal suggestion. We are not necessarily aware that "the child" sees or is observing us; nevertheless, he sees and learns from what we do. He thinks to himself: "If it's all right for him, then it is bound to be all right for me."

c. By overlooking or passing over wrong; by giving soft names to it; by considering some sins to be merely minor sins. "Oh, that's all right. There's not that much to it. It isn't going to hurt anyone. Don't pay any attention to it. Just forget it."

d. By ridiculing or poking fun at, or by joking and sneering at a person's attempt to do right. "Oh, don't be a fuddy-duddy, a square; you're acting like a fanatic. You and your religion."

e. By looking at, touching, and tasting some things that are socially acceptable; but that are sinful to God. They are harmful, habit forming, and physically stimulating when they should not be. "Wow, look at that." "Taste that." "What a turn on!"

f. By persecuting and threatening "a child" or a believer. The threat can range all the way from loss of promotion, job, friendship, or acceptance to imprisonment and death.

4. The terribleness of this sin is stressed by the better alternative Christ gives. A person would be better off to hang a huge stone about his neck and cast himself into the sea than to lead another person to sin (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.9:42).

"Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones" (Lk.17:1-2).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (1 Cor.10:32).

"Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor.6:3).

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (1 Jn.2:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:42) **Millstone** (mulos/onikos): the word *onos* is the word for an ass or a donkey. The word *mulos* is the word for the millstone that the donkey pulled around to grind the grain. Thus, the millstone Christ spoke of is the huge millstone, not the small hand millstone used by the women to grind a little grain at a time. Note: The very fact that Christ chose the huge millstone to demonstrate His point shows how great this sin is. The person would be held to the bottom by the most awful and terrible weight. The sin of leading a child astray is the worst possible sin; therefore, its condemnation shall be awful and terrible.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(9:42) **Death—Drowning**: drowning was a form of criminal punishment used by the Romans, but never by the Jews. The Jews saw drowning as a symbol of *utter destruction and annihilation*, of being in the very depths of death. They feared it. Even the Romans reserved it only for the worst criminals.

Note something: Christ *added to the fear* of His audience. He painted the picture of a stone around the offender's neck. Why? So that the body could never rise to the top and be properly buried. But He went even further to add to the fear—He pictured the huge millstone, not the small one. Why did He want to strike fear into the heart of His hearers, laying additional stress upon the fear? The answer is clear: the sin of leading another person astray is terrible, and the offender must know the fate that is awaiting him.

2 (9:43-44) **Sin—Hands—Hell—Life**: Christ mentioned the terrible sins of the hand. He made five significant points about the sins of the hand (see note—Mt.18:7-9).

1. The hand can offend and be a stumbling block. If something is *forbidden or unwise* or if it should be *given or let go*, the hand can sin...

- by touching
- by grabbing
- by stroking
- by clutching
- by pointing
- by striking
- by holding

2. There is a better alternative than sinning with one's hand: cutting it off. This is strong language, very descriptive, and radical in its point. But honesty and thought are called for in seeing the point of Christ. What is more horrible than taking one's hand and leading "a little one" to sin and being a stumbling block to his life and salvation? What is more horrible than dooming him to what Christ calls *hell fire*? What is more horrible than doing the same with one's self? If God really loves man and hell fire is real, then descriptive and radical language is needed to awaken man to the truth.

3. Sinning with one's hand condemns one to hell. Christ said very plainly: "If thy hand offend...it [shall]...go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Hell*—Mt.5:22).

4. Hell is punishment and it is forever (v.44). Christ said, "Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The point of this verse is both punishment and duration. The punishment shall be just like the punishment inflicted by a worm and fire, and the punishment shall be forever.

By "worm" Christ meant one of two things.

a. There is a "worm" in hell that afflicts man; therefore, it can be called "their worm." This is, of course, a picture of something within hell that would prey upon man, wound him, and inflict a biting, gnawing, and consuming pain. And note, it "dies not"; it never ends.

b. There is a "worm" within man in hell. It is a "worm" within, a worm created by his own sinful hands, a worm within that bites, gnaws, and consumes him. Perhaps the worm is memory and conscience that never leaves the man alone. It disturbs and reminds him of what he has missed and lost. (See *The Rich Man and Lazarus*—Lk.16:19-31.) Note that the punishment is forever. Both worm and fire are forever.

5. Life can be lived abundantly even if one is maimed in the eyes of the world. Abundance of life does not depend upon physical wholeness. A person can have life and be without a hand. The abundance and wholeness of life depend upon righteousness, upon living for Christ and not allowing one's hand to sin (cp. Jn.10:10).

Thought 1. The hand determines our destiny.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**

3 (9:45-46) **Sin—Foot—Hell—Life**: Christ mentioned the terrible sins of the foot. He made five significant points about sins of the foot (see note—Mt.18:7-9).

1. The foot can offend and be a stumbling block. If something is *forbidden or unwise* or if it should be *avoided or attended*, the foot can sin...

- by standing
- by running
- by jumping
- by walking
- by pointing
- by dancing
- by turning
- by kicking

2. There is a better alternative than sinning with the foot: cutting it off (see note, pt.2—Mk.9:43-44 for discussion).
3. Sinning with one's foot condemns one to hell. Again Christ said, "If thy foot offend...it [shall]...be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Hell*—Mt.5:22.)
4. Hell is punishment and it is forever (v.45-46). (See note, pt.4—Mk.9:43-44.)
5. Life can be lived abundantly even if one is maimed in the eyes of the world (see note, pt.5—Mk.9:43-44).

Thought 1. The believer is to walk even as Christ walked.

> **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" (Eph.5:15).**
> **"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).**
> **"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).**

4 (9:47-48) **Sin—Eyes—Hell—Kingdom of God**: Christ mentioned the terrible sins of the eye. He made five significant points about the sins of the eye (see note—Mt.18:7-9).

1. The eye can offend and be a stumbling block. If something is *forbidden or unwise* or if it should be *avoided or observed*, the eye can sin...

- by looking
- by staring
- by focusing
- by glancing
- by winking
- by opening
- by blinking
- by scanning
- by closing

2. There is a better alternative to sinning with one's eye: plucking it out. Note that the alternative in this case is the Kingdom of God instead of life. The eye is one of *the doors* into the mind and heart of man. What a man looks at and focuses upon is of extreme importance. Sight can lead to a spirit of lust quicker than any other single thing: the lust...

- for the world and excitement.
- for material goods and possessions.
- for illicit affairs and relationships.
- for recognition and fame.
- for money and wealth.

Every man knows the importance of sight, of being able to see. Most people would rather lose any other sense than to lose the sense of sight. Because of the enormous need for sight and the power of the eye, Christ stacked it up against the Kingdom of God. It would be better to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than to allow an eye to sin and doom one to hell.

3. Sinning with one's eye condemns one to hell. For a third time, Christ has said the very same thing, "If thine eye offend...it [shall]...be cast into hell fire" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Hell*—Mt.5:22).
4. Hell is punishment and it is forever (v.48). (See note, pt.4—Mk.9:43-44.)
5. The Kingdom of God can be entered even if one is without an eye (see note—Mt.19:23-24).

Thought 1. Scripture's warning about the eye is pointed.

> **"Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:28).**
>
> **"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).**
>
> **"He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow" (Pr.10:10).**
>
> **"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccl.1:8).**
>
> **"Neither is his eye satisfied with riches" (Eccl.4:8).**

5 (9:49) **Judgment**: the terrible surety of judgment. Everyone shall be judged: every sacrifice a person has made and every work a person has done shall be judged.

1. "Salted with fire" probably means everyone will be tried with fire. A man's works and sacrifices will be set afire. The wood, hay, and stubble will be burned. Why? Because they...
   - are impure.
   - are worthless and cannot be used.
   - are unpleasing.

But the gold, silver, and precious stones shall last and be proven incorruptible. Why? Because they...
- are pure.
- are beneficial and can be used.
- are pleasing.

2. "Salted with salt" probably means that every sacrifice and work will be preserved, no matter what sort they are. If the sacrifice and work are good, they will be preserved forever in the Kingdom of God. But if the sacrifice and work are bad, they will be preserved forever in hell. There will be no end to the new world that is coming.

> **"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).**
>
> **"Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Lk.6:47-49).**
>
> **"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor.3:13).**
>
> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).**
>
> **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev.20:12).**
>
> **"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev.22:12).**
>
> **"I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).**

6 (9:50) **Salt—Sin, Deliverance from**: the wonderful challenge is to save oneself from sin. Salt is good, beneficial, and useful (see note, *Salt*—Mt.5:13 for a detailed discussion of this point). Christ said three things are necessary to save oneself from the terribleness of sin.

1. Search oneself and labor. Evaluate one's "*saltiness*," one's purity and usefulness.
2. Be sure to be salted, to have salt. One must be pure and useful.
3. Live in peace one with another. This is essential.

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:31-32).**

Note what brought about this great lesson from Christ: the arguing among the disciples (Mk.9:33-37), and the intolerance shown toward a man's ministering in the Lord's name (Mk.9:38-41).

CHAPTER 10

VI. THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

A. The Problem of Divorce 10:1-12
(Mt.19:1-12; cp. Mt.5:31-32; Lk.16:18; 1 Cor.7:10-16)

1 Jesus began to minister in Judea

a. The crowds gathered & Jesus taught

b. The Pharisees gathered & asked a trick question: Is divorce legal?[DS1]

1) Jesus asked what their law said

2) The Pharisees replied: The law grants divorce

2 Jesus saw divorce as hardness of heart

3 Jesus saw marriage as God's way—since creation

4 Jesus saw marriage as the most precious bond, a bond that cleaves

5 Jesus saw marriage as the closest of human bonds—as two becoming one flesh

6 Jesus saw true marriage as a divine, spiritual bond wrought by God

7 Jesus saw divorce & remarriage as adultery[DS2]

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

A. The Problem of Divorce, 10:1-12

(10:1-12) **Marriage—Divorce**: marriage and divorce are always burning questions, extremely controversial within societies heavily influenced by Christian teaching. Opinions vary and interpretations differ. There is always the closed view that says divorce is never allowed by God no matter the cruelty and meanness that may exist within the marriage. And there is always the more open view that says divorce is allowed if the rift between a couple is not reconciled and causes more damage than good.

The former says Jesus gave a complete exposition on marriage and divorce; the latter says He gave guidelines. The former sometimes treats divorce in such a spirit that it appears to be the unpardonable sin; the latter sometimes treats it in such a spirit that it appears to be the escape route to do as one likes (ranging from minor selfish ends to licentious pleasures).

In Jesus' day the two schools of thought were the Shammai School (conservative) and the Hillel School (liberal). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12 for discussion.) As in every generation, there were those within each school that would have nothing to do with anyone who held another opinion. A man's view was made a matter of fellowship.

It was because of these strong feelings that the religionists (Pharisees) thought they could entrap and discredit Jesus. No matter what He said, a great number of people would differ, and they would stop supporting His ministry. He would be discredited and His ministry destroyed.

Note several things.

1. There is always a reluctance to express a different opinion when a great number hold a particular position. Compare for example: slavery, prejudice, smoking, overeating, drinking, mixed bathing, gambling, playing cards, movies, television, and divorce.
2. It is wrong not to face the issues of marriage and divorce, no matter the different opinions and practices of society. Why?
   a. There are always a large number of divorced people. Many of these desperately need help. Their faith, hope, security, children—their whole lives have been drastically affected. If God's people do not open their hearts to them, then a great opportunity to reach them and help them grow in Christ is missed.
   b. There are always a large number of marriages (perhaps most) experiencing some serious difficulty. Hardness and cruelty, ranging from mild withdrawal to physical abuse, just tear and tear away at the marriage commitment. Sometimes it is the fault of one; sometimes it is the fault of both. In either case, great need exists. Again, if God's people do not reach out to help, a great opportunity is lost for Christ.

Note what Jesus did. He did not hesitate to speak up and teach, and the issue was as controversial in His day as it has been in most generations. (Also see outlines and notes—Mt.5:31-32; 1 Cor.7:1-16; Eph.5:22-33.)

1. Jesus began to minister in Judea (v.1-4).
2. Jesus saw divorce as hardness of heart (v.5).
3. Jesus saw marriage as God's way—since creation (v.6).
4. Jesus saw marriage as the most precious bond, a bond that cleaves (v.7).
5. Jesus saw marriage as the closest of human bonds—as two becoming one flesh (v.8).
6. Jesus saw true marriage as a divine, spiritual bond wrought by God (v.9).
7. Jesus saw divorce and remarriage as adultery (v.10-12).

1 (10:1-4) **Judean Ministry**: Jesus began to minister in Judea. Chapters 1-9 of Mark have covered the Galilean ministry of Jesus; now, Chapters 10-15 cover Jesus' Judean ministry. It should be noted that a great deal took place between these two ministries that is omitted by Mark. The omitted section is usually called the Travel-Narrative or Travel-Ministry. It is covered in detail by Luke, chapters 9-18. Matthew also gives isolated events of the Travel-Ministry.

Note that the crowds flocked to Jesus, and "He taught them again" and healed them (Mt.19:2). The success of the Lord's ministry was phenomenal. During the few months of His ministry, it seemed the whole country was flocking to Him. This, of course, aroused the leaders, both civil and religious (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.3:22). Again the leaders of Jerusalem sent an investigating committee to discredit Him before the people. The Jewish leaders (Sanhedrin) were convinced they must break the people away from Jesus. He seemed to be undermining Jewish religion and leading the people astray. And there was always the danger that the Roman authorities would clamp down on the apparent disturbance caused by this so-called Messiah. They feared the Romans would remove them from power and replace them with more capable leaders.

It is this background that caused the investigating committee to confront Jesus. They questioned Him about divorce, and they were thoroughly convinced that Jesus could not answer without entrapping Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.10:2-4).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(10:2-4) **Marriage—Divorce—Schools of Thought—Shammai—Hillel**: the Pharisees came to Jesus tempting Him, trying to discredit Him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?" Matthew adds, "for every cause" (Mt.19:3).

There was a background to this question. The society of Jesus' day was very loose morally—even Jewish society. Marriage was considered nothing more than a piece of paper: if it worked, fine; if it did not work, fine. One could always divorce (see notes—Mt.5:31).

There were two positions or schools of thought on divorce. Moses had said that any man could divorce his wife if "she find no favor in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her" (Dt.24:1).

1. The school of Shammai said that the words "some uncleanness" meant adultery only. A wife could be as loose and as mean as Jezebel, but she was not to be divorced unless she committed adultery.
2. The school of Hillel said that the words "some uncleanness" meant anything that was not pleasing to the man. A person should remember that women were counted as nothing but *property* to be possessed by men. They had no rights whatsoever, except as a man might wish to give. Of course, the position followed by society was the position that allowed human nature to run loose. Women were abused: neglected, used, discarded, and violated. They had no rights whatsoever and were seldom given any. They were nothing but chattel property of men, very often considered of less value than property (whether animals or things). Therefore, divorce ran rampant in Jesus' day.

The Pharisees wished to embroil Jesus in the controversy between the conservative (Shammai) and liberal view (Hillel). They were simply asking Him if He agreed with the school of Hillel: "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for *every* cause?" No matter which position Jesus took, He would offend and stir up a large number of people, becoming embroiled in a mean controversy. He answered as follows.

1. "God made them [Adam and Eve] male and female." He did not make them male*s* and female*s* as He did animals. But He made *one male* and *one female*. Each one was made for the other. They were not made for anyone else, for there was no one else.
2. "A man [shall] leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife." One man shall cleave to his wife and create a new family distinct from the family of his parents. He says "a man," not men, and "his wife," not wives. Note that a man leaves his father and mother. The union between husband and wife is to gain primacy over the union between parent and child. The union, cleaving, is wrought by God and appointed by God; therefore, marriage is a divine institution. Just as parents and children are not to divorce one another, neither are the husband and wife to divorce each other.
3. "A man...shall cleave to his wife and they twain [two] shall be one flesh." There is the molding into one person. The man and the wife cleave: "wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh." What is it that makes them one flesh? Cleaving. They are one body, one flesh, one person. They are not joined to two or three or four other persons, but they cleave only to one other person.
4. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." "A man...shall cleave to his wife...wherefore [cleaving] they are no more twain, but one flesh [joined together by God]. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

The points are clear.

a. The cleaving man and wife are joined together by God.
b. No one is to cut asunder what God joins together. Neither one of them nor anyone else is to step in between the two and cause separation.

2 (10:5) **Divorce—Heart, Harden**: Jesus saw divorce as hardness of heart. The Old Testament (Moses) *did not command* divorce if two people were not compatible and did not get along. The Old Testament *only permitted divorce*. Note four things.

1. The ancient world treated women as nothing more than chattel property. A man could secure as many wives as he wished (polygamy), and he could discard them *whenever*, *wherever*, and *however* he wished. He could *kick a wife out* and dispose of her as he wished. Man's heart was hard in his treatment of women and in his attitude toward marriage and divorce. There was...
   - a total disdain for morality
   - a total defiance against marital law
   - a total disregard of God's will for marriage
   - a total insensitivity to women's rights in marriage

2. The Old Testament (Moses) law was not a loose law, not in the ancient world. It required a *written contract of divorce*, which was unpracticed and unheard of in most societies. It required some time and some thought before a divorce could be issued, and a man could no longer get rid of his wife without involving a third party in the matter. Some official had to approve and write up *the bill of divorce*.
3. The law of the Old Testament (Moses) taught that "A Written Contract of Divorce"...
   - could check the breakdown of the family to some degree.
   - would give time for a person to think about the consequences of divorce.
   - did proclaim that there was a higher law than a man's own whims, urges, and desires. If nothing else, a man had to seek "A Contract of Divorce" from a higher authority.

4. Jesus *saw divorce as hardness of heart*. He said, "For the *hardness of your heart he* [Moses] wrote you this precept." Note that Jesus was saying three things about the Old Testament law on divorce.
   a. Divorce was a concession, *not the will of God*.
   b. Divorce was allowed *only because man's heart was hard, that is, sinful*.
   c. Divorce *was never willed and was not the purpose of God*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Hardness of Heart*—Mt.19:8 for detailed discussion and application of this point.)

3 (10:6) **Divorce—Marriage—Creation—Adam—Eve**: Jesus saw marriage as God's way—since creation. Jesus said, "From the beginning of the creation God made them [Adam and Eve] male and female." What Jesus was saying is that creation is the root basis, the very foundation for marriage. He pointed out three truths in His simple statement.

1. The creative truth. Jesus said that God did not make man and woman plural. He did not make them male*s* and female*s*. He made one male and one female—each made for the other. They were not made for *any* other, for there was no one else—just Adam and Eve.
2. The spiritual truth. Jesus was saying that male and female were created distinctively from animals. Animals were created en masse, to be together with any and many. But male and female were created differently and distinctively. They were created one male and one female, created as spiritual beings, created for a much higher purpose than animals. Since there were not others like them, they were sharing their purpose together in constant fellowship with God. Note: they were sharing their purpose with no other, for there was no other.
3. The logical truth. Reason alone says that if God created all other animals en masse, and then turned around and created one male and one female, then the male and female belonged to each other. They were created to be together, one with one, even as animals were created to be together en masse.

4 (10:7) **Marriage—Divorce—Cleaving**: Jesus saw marriage as the most precious bond, a bond that cleaves. "For this cause shall a man *leave* his father and mother, and *cleave* to his wife." Note several truths.

1. A man (one) shall cleave to his wife and create a new family distinct from the family of his parents. Jesus said "a man," not men, and "his wife," not wives.
2. A man leaves his father and mother. The union between husband and wife is to gain primacy over the union between parent and child. *Leaving* is a permanent act; *cleaving* is also a permanent act.
3. *Cleaving* means more than being close and intimate. It is more than the closeness that exists between parent and child, for it causes a husband and wife to leave parents. By *cleaving,* Jesus meant a spiritual union that could be wrought and given only by God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Cleave*—Mt.19:5). Therefore, marriage becomes the most precious bond that can be known between human beings. Marriage becomes a divine institution.
4. Just as parents and children are not to divorce one another, so husband and wife are not to divorce one another. Note that father, mother, and child comprise a unit, a family. Jesus said father and mother are there when the child leaves, and the child (man) leaves to "cleave to his wife." There is no thought, not even a hint of separation in this statement. It is unquestionably a statement of God's purpose for father, mother, and child. The structure of the family is the means by which man is to carry out the purposes of God on earth. Divorce, tearing down the structure of the family, is not the purpose of God. Father, mother, and child—the structure of a family—is the purpose of God.
5. The relation between father and mother is to be closer, more intimate, and longer than that between parent and child. The day comes when the child (man) leaves the parent and the parents are left with each other—alone. This says much to husband and wife: they must not neglect their life together. The day comes when they are alone, by themselves.

5 (10:8) **Marriage—Divorce**: Jesus saw marriage as the closest of human bonds—as two becoming one flesh. Jesus had just said that a man shall "cleave to his wife." Now he adds, "And they twain [two] shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh." Jesus was pointing out at least three facts.

1. *Cleaving*, when spiritually wrought by God, molds two people into one person. As the husband and wife cleave, as they become more and more spiritually united by God, they become more and more meshed into one being. Each grows into the very being of the other spouse. They become one body, one flesh, one person.
2. The husband and wife are not joined to two or three or four other persons. They can *cleave* only under God and only to one other person.
3. The power of God is enormous to a couple who will obey Him. God can cause their cleaving to bind them so close together that they are as one person.

6 (10:9) **Marriage—Divorce**: Jesus saw true marriage as a divine, spiritual bond wrought by God. Jesus said: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (v.9).

1. God joins together "a man [who] leaves his father and mother and *cleaves* to his wife" (v.7). It is the *cleaving* husband and wife who are joined together by God. But note something of critical importance. By *cleaving,* Christ does not mean what is often thought or pictured: cleaving does not mean taking hold of a wife by civil contract, embracing, or sexual union.

Note the words...

- "cleaving"
- "one flesh" (physical union)
- "what God hath joined together" (spiritual union)

Spouses who are *obedient* to Christ by cleaving to each other (not only physically, but spiritually—in all of their life and being as God intended) are the ones who become one flesh and the ones who God joins together. A civil contract does not bind people together—neither does embracing—neither does sex. Only God can bind a couple together spiritually, and He does so because a couple is obedient to Him. He rewards and blesses obedience, not disobedience.

2. No one is to cut asunder what God joins together. Neither wife nor husband nor anyone else is to step in between the two and cause separation.
3. Marriage is to be a bond so closely and spiritually bound together that it can match the spiritual union between Christ and His church (Eph.5:32) and Christ and the believer. (See outline and notes—Eph.5:22-33; Col.3:18-21; 1 Cor.6:19.)

> **"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:25).**

7 (10:10-12) **Marriage—Remarriage—Divorce—Adultery**: Jesus saw divorce and remarriage as adultery. In a discussion of this point, Matthew is much more thorough in what he covers. For this reason, Matthew should always be studied in looking at divorce and remarriage (see outline and notes—Mt.19:9-12).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:10-12) **Fornication—Adultery**: a person, especially a Christian believer, needs to think about the real meaning of adultery. Adultery is the turning away from a spouse to another person. Many a person would never think of turning away from their spouse to a third person, yet they readily and willingly turn toward self and toward other things. As God said of the nation Israel, "I saw, when for all the *causes* whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce" (Jer.3:8). Many a person has done just as Israel did. They have refused to surrender to God; they have lived in a backslidden state, and day by day they have turned more and more away from their spouse and in many cases from their children.

Day by day a person can take a spouse and children and...

- be mean and ugly.
- be nagging and mentally cruel.
- be neglectful and unthoughtful.
- be physically abusive and life-threatening.
- be deliberately withdrawn and separated.

And the truth of the matter is that many are selfishly that way.

⇒ Some are cruel; others sadistic.
⇒ Some are critical; others sarcastic; still others demonic and hellish.
⇒ Some are mentally abusive; others physically abusive, even to the point of murdering spouse and children—the unthinkable.

The truth of a marriage is known only to God. A husband or a wife can use his or her personality to present a front to the world. Yet within the heart there can be such a hardness toward his or her spouse, such an unwillingness to truly cleave that God just cannot join them together as one flesh. Hardness, very simply, wrecks a marriage by causing one spouse to turn away and separate from the other spouse. If the spouses are not together, then they are separate, not cleaving. There can be no cleaving if the two are not together. And as pointed out earlier, cleaving is the blessing and the gift of God. Cleaving is only possible as each allows God to *join them together* into the spiritual union of marriage.

	B. The Problem of Children & the Truth About Children, 10:13-16 (Mt.19:13-15; Lk.18: 15-17)	said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.	a. They are invited to Jesus[DS3]
		15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.	b. They are citizens of God's kingdom[DS4]
1 The problem with children[DS1]	13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.		c. They illustrate how one receives the kingdom[DS5]
a. Totally dependent			
b. Cause frivolous pride			
c. Interfere with work			
2 The truth about children[DS2]	14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and	16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.	d. They are received & blessed by Jesus[DS6]
			e. They respond to Jesus[DS7]

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

B. The Problem of Children and the Truth About Children, 10:13-16

(10:13-16) **Children—Jesus Christ, Anger**: note that this event with children followed right after the matter of divorce (also cp. Mt.19:13). The family as a whole was being discussed: the husband, wife, and children.

Children are a joy, but many are also looked upon as problems. And tragically, children are sometimes neglected, ignored, oppressed, and even abused.

In this passage, Jesus pulled no punches. It was one of the times He became violently angry, filled and moved with indignation. Jesus is the great defender of children, and every man and woman must heed His words.

1. The problem with children (v.13).
2. The truth about children (v.14-16).

1 (10:13) **Children**: the problem with children. The scene was both touching and tragic. Some parents, tenderly and with hope, were bringing their children to Jesus. Why? That He might simply *touch them*. The parents were hoping that Jesus would simply touch their children, and in touching, their children would be blessed. But this was not the only scene. The disciples were rebuking the parents for bringing the children. The word rebuke (epitimao) is a strong word: it means actively hindering and reproving. The disciples were actually holding the parents and pushing them back, trying to stop them from bringing their children to Jesus. Why? Very simply, the disciples saw a problem with children. They looked upon children just as many others look upon them: they felt the children could contribute nothing to the adult world. In adult affairs, children were useless, unimportant; therefore, they should not disturb the adults when they were busy at work. They felt Jesus was too busy and His work was too important to be disturbed. The disciples, just like so many adults, saw the following problems with children.

1. Children are totally dependent. These children were so young they had to be brought to Jesus. The disciples felt they could contribute nothing significant. They were too young, too helpless, too dependent. Therefore, their place was off to the side someplace. They should not be bothering the Lord right now. Their parents should have known this and should have been more respectful.

2 Children cause frivolous pride. Parents often have a frivolous pride over their children. The disciples may have thought the parents just wanted to show off their children and have Jesus make over them. The frivolous pride of parents is often felt undeserving of interruption. Frivolous pride often aggravates busy men, especially when they are interrupted by parents who merely want to show off their children. The disciples felt that the children were not important enough to be allowed to interfere, certainly not right now.

3. Children interfere with work. The disciples knew that this was one of the major problems with children. They do interrupt work, sometimes important work. They distract, causing a person to lose his thought; they require attention and help. The disciples felt the children were not important enough to be allowed to interrupt at this time.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:13) **Brought** (prosphero): to bring to; to bring unto. It is the word used in connection with offerings. The idea is that whatever is brought is being brought as an offering. It is a dedication to God (cp. Mt.5:23-24).

2 (10:14-16) **Children**: the truth about children. Jesus saw the children's being mistreated, and the Scripture literally says, "He was displeased [moved with indignation]." (See note, Displeased—Mk.10:14.) Children are not a problem—not to Jesus, not ever. He wanted His disciples to learn this, so He began to teach them five truths about children.

1. Children are invited to Jesus.
2. Children are citizens of the kingdom.
3. Children illustrate how one receives the kingdom.
4. Children are received and blessed by Jesus.
5. Children respond to Jesus.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:14) **Displeased—Indignation** (aganaktese): to be indignant; to be moved with indignation; to feel pain; to grieve; to be displeased, sore displeased, and much displeased (cp. 2 Cor.7:11).

The word is very strong, expressing deep, even violent emotion. The Lord was moved with indignation toward the disciples for what they were doing. Note two facts indicated by this experience.

1. Strong indignation against sin and injustice is sometimes justified.
2. Not being moved with indignation toward sin and injustice is sometimes a gross wrong.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(10:14) **Children**: children are to be invited to Jesus. Jesus said let the children come and forbid them not. The word "forbid" (koluo) means to hinder, to prevent. The tense is a *present imperative*, a continuous command: stop hindering, stop preventing the children from coming to Me. In this case His own disciples were hindering the children, continuously preventing their coming to Jesus. No wonder He was moved with indignation. Note four points.

1. Jesus called for and received children. They were welcome, even when they were so little they had to be brought. They may have been too little to understand, but He was big enough to bless them and see to it that the blessing remained all through eternity. He is, after all, God; and as God He is omnipotent, all-powerful, and able to exercise His power as He wills. Children will in no way be rejected.
2. Jesus rebuked those who stopped and disregarded the children. He said that such action was wrong. We are not to stop little children from coming to Christ. Contrariwise, we are to bring them to Him. He is God; and as God He is providential, doing as He wills; therefore, He is the One who determines whom He will bless. No man determines it for Him. Despite the tender age and lack of reason, children are not to be kept from coming to Him. No obstacle is to be put in their way.
3. The benefits of bringing children to Christ are innumerable. Just a few major ones are as follows:
   a. A child learns love: that he is loved by God and by all who trust God, no matter how evil some in the world may act. He is even taught to love those who do wrong.
   b. A child grows, learning power and triumph: that God will help His followers through all trials and temptations. He learns there is a supernatural power available to help, a power to help when mother and dad and loved ones have done all they can.
   c A child grows, learning hope and faith: that no matter what happens, no matter how great a trial, he can still trust God and hope in Him. God has provided a very special strength to carry him through the trials of life (no matter how painful); and He has provided a very special place called heaven where He will carry him and his loved ones when he faces death.
   d. A child grows, learning the truth of life and endurance (service): that God has given him the privilege of life and of living in a beautiful earth and universe. The evil and bad that exist in the world are caused by evil and bad people. But despite such evil, he is to appreciate and to serve life and the beautiful earth. He is to continue to work, making the greatest contribution he can to both life and the earth.
   e. A child grows, learning trust and endurance: that life is full of temptations and pitfalls which can easily rob him of joy, destroying his life and the fulfillment of his purpose. The way to escape the temptations and pitfalls is to follow Christ and cling to Him, enduring in his work and purpose.
   f. A child grows, learning peace: that there is an inner peace despite the turbulent waters of this world, and that peace is knowing and trusting Christ.
4. There are several reasons why parents do not bring their children to Christ.
   a. Some parents (in civilized as well as uncivilized parts of the world) are not aware of the only living and true God. Therefore, they are blind; they just do not know. Christians have failed to take the gospel to the whole world.
   b. Some parents have heard the truth, but they have rejected Christ. They are agnostics or atheists, or else they love the world and the things of the world more than they love the news of the living God who gives eternal life. They do not care about anything beyond the comfort of self and the benefits of this world.
   c. Some parents do believe, at least mentally, but they are complacent and lethargic. They are not concerned enough to come to Christ nor to bring their child to Christ.
   d. Some parents are believers, but unfortunately they are immature and inconsistent in their Christian life. Their own Christian life and worship are weak and neglected, so their child is taught that Christ is not really all that important.
   e. Some parents are liberal-minded. They are not willing to influence and mold their child's thinking spiritually. They want their child to make his own choices. They are willing to teach him what foods to eat and books to read and anything else that will teach him how to care for himself physically and materially. But they leave the care of the spiritual up to him after he becomes an adult.

There are two great errors with all five of the above reasons.

a. The philosophy underlying every one of the reasons is false. Any parent who does not bring his child to Christ is following a false philosophy of life and is not facing reality.

> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am [he], ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

b. A child's mind is molded by those he is with, whether the loose and immoral or the disciplined and moral. If the child's mind is not molded by *godly parents*, it will be molded by the worldliness of the parents and the carnality of those who walk in selfish and corrupt ways.

"And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (1 Ki.22:52).

"And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim" (2 Chron.17:3).

"And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the LORD" (2 Chron.20:32).

"He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly" (2 Chron.22:3).

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did" (2 Chron.26:4).

"But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them" (Jer.9:14).

"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols" (Ezk.20:18).

"And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger" (Mt.14:8).

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Tim.1:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(10:14) **Children**: children are citizens of God's kingdom. Jesus said, "of such [little children] is the kingdom of God." What Jesus meant was at least two things.

1. Little children are citizens of God's kingdom, at least until they are able to reason and make decisions between right and wrong, that is, the age of accountability.
2. Little children show what a man must be like to enter the Kingdom of God. The nature, character, and traits that are essential to get into heaven are seen in little children.
   a. A little child is dependent and trusting. He is totally dependent. He knows little and can do little in taking care of himself. *Big people,* especially mommy and daddy, know everything and can do everything. The child is also trusting. He trusts everyone. Anyone can take the child into his arms. The child has not learned to suspect the world. Everyone is a friend; no one is an enemy, and few are strangers.
   b. A little child is responsive and submissive. A child responds to an adult. He will come, go, pick up, do whatever is suggested to him. He will drop whatever he is doing, surrender whatever is occupying his thoughts and behavior, and respond.
   c. A little child is obedient and learning. He will do exactly what he is asked to do, and he will learn by it. He is ever learning what he sees and is told, whether good or bad.
   d. A little child is humble and forgiving. He is not interested in prominence, fame, power, wealth, or position. He does not push himself forward. He does not want to sit around in the midst of a group of adults. He has not been taught to think in terms of self-importance, not yet. The child also forgives and forgets (unless, of course, it is extreme abuse. We must remember Christ is talking about the child in a normal, healthy environment.)

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(10:15) **Children**: children illustrate exactly how one receives the Kingdom of God. Note the strong words of Jesus—the terrible end of the man who does not come to God as a child. A man has to approach God and receive God's kingdom (His rule, reign, and authority) into his life just like a little child, or else "he shall not enter the eternal Kingdom of God" (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.19:23-24).

What did Jesus mean by receiving the kingdom as a little child? (See note, *Conversion*—Mt.18:3 for a clear illustration of this.)

1. The child trusts and depends upon Jesus: (a) He senses the warmth, tenderness, care, and love of Jesus; and (b) he listens to the call (message, gospel) of Jesus. He trusts what He hears and depends upon Jesus to take care of him now and forever.

"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps.131:2).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

2. The child responds and surrenders to Jesus. He is ready and willing to respond to Jesus. He is willing to give up what he is doing, to surrender whatever is occupying his thoughts, behavior, and time, in order to receive Jesus. He wants the Kingdom of God in his heart (God's rule and reign), and he wants to enter the eternal Kingdom of God someday out in the future.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal.4:4-7).

3. The child is obedient to Jesus and is ever learning of Him. He listens and does exactly what Jesus says, even if it is difficult and requires self-denial. He does it simply because Jesus asks him to do it. He does not act independently or behave selfishly.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children" (Eph.5:1).

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb.12:5-6; cp. v.5-10).

4. The child is humble and forgiving (see note, pt.2—Mk.10:14).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

"Blessed [are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt.5:9).

"But ye [shall] not [be] so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:31-32).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pt.5:5-6).

DEEPER STUDY # 6

(10:16) **Children**: children are received and blessed by Jesus. Note how Jesus took the children "up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." The scene is warm, full of genuine care and truth that we often overlook. It is not so much that we come and touch God as it is that He comes and touches us. It is not so much that we apprehend God as it is that we are apprehended by Him (Ph.3:12-13).

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn.6:37).

God's blessing is not so much due to how rational and capable *we are* as it is to *His purpose and will*. God can choose to touch and bless whom He wills, and He demonstrates beyond all question that He chooses to touch and bless the children brought to Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 7

(10:16) **Children**: children respond to Jesus. They have nothing to give but themselves, and they are ready to give themselves. Their little hearts are tender and responsive to authority. They look to others to provide, teach, protect, and care for them. They are ready to respond; all they need is for someone to present the warmth and tenderness and love of Jesus.

"And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased" (Mt.21:15. See note—Mt.21:15-16 for an excellent example of this point.)

"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk.2:49).

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Tim.1:5).

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.3:15).

"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men" (1 Sam.2:26).

"And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision" (1 Sam.3:1).

"Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Zibiah of Beersheba. And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest" (2 Chron.24:1-2).

"Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images" (2 Chron.34:1-3).

	C. The Rich Young Ruler: The Problem of Eternal Life, 10:17-22 (Mt.19:16-22; Lk.18: 18-23)	steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.	a. Laws of respectability
		20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.	b. His respectable character
1 A rich young man sought Jesus a. Eagerness: Running b. Humility: Kneeling c. Respect: Good Master d. Concern: Eternity	17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?	21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.	**4 Fact 3: To be loved by Jesus is not enough to receive eternal life** **5 Fact 4: To give everything is required to receive eternal life** a. The meaning: Taking up the cross—sacrificial commitment b. The result: The requirement is sad news—He goes away
2 Fact 1: To praise Christ is not enough to receive eternal life	18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.		
3 Fact 2: To be respectable is not enough to receive eternal life	19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not	22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.	

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

C. The Rich Young Ruler: The Problem of Eternal Life, 10:17-22

(10:17-22) **Introduction**: this man is known as "the rich young ruler." He is so called because of the combined picture gleaned from all three gospels.

⇒ He was rich (Mt.19:22; Mk.10:22; Lk.18:23).
⇒ He was young (Mt.19:20).
⇒ He was a ruler (Lk.18:18).

He was a rare young man among the people of his day. This is seen in two facts.

1. He was conscientious, responsible, dependable—traits so often lacking in youth. He had already been placed into a position of leadership.
2. He was eagerly seeking eternal life—a spiritual matter often shunned by young people.

The dominant theme of the young man's experience is his sincerity, his desperate search for eternal life. Jesus takes the man's desperation and shocks the world. Desperation, sincerity, eagerness, and seeking eternal life are not enough. To inherit eternal life takes much more than just being desperate to possess it. Man has a problem in seeking eternal life.

1. A rich young man sought Jesus (v.17).
2. Fact 1: to praise Christ is not enough (v.18).
3. Fact 2: to be respectable is not enough (v.19-20).
4. Fact 3: to be loved by Jesus is not enough (v.21).
5. Fact 4: to give everything is required (v.21-22).

1 (10:17) **Seeking Jesus**: the scene was striking. A rich young man sought Jesus—sought Him with a sense of urgency and desperation seldom seen.

1. The man was *eager*, ever so eager: he was *running* to Jesus.
2. The man was *humble*: he cast himself to the ground, kneeling before Jesus, showing extreme reverence. He esteemed Jesus ever so highly. He bowed the knee to Him.
3. The man was *respectful*: he addressed Jesus as "Good Master," which was the proper and courteous address to a revered Rabbi or Teacher.
4. The man was *concerned* about his spiritual welfare. He asked what he should do to inherit eternal life.

The young man demonstrated how we should seek eternal life. He did exactly what we should do when we wish anything: seek it. We are to *seek* eternal life as the rich young ruler did. But in seeking, there is something critical. We must go to the right *source*. This is exactly what the rich young man did: (a) he approached Jesus, the Source of eternal life; and (b) he asked, confessing his need.

Note two things about the young man's seeking eternal life.

1. He believed that eternal life existed, that there was such a thing as eternal life. He believed there was life in another world, and he was sincere and eager (perhaps desperate) to receive it. He "came running and kneeled" before Jesus.
2. He did a rare thing. He openly confessed his eager concern for eternal life. Few of the rich would ever confess an open concern as he did, and few of the young would ever consider it important enough at their young stage of life. He lacked and had need, and he knew it and openly confessed it. He was seeking for inner peace and a sense of completeness and fulfillment and satisfaction.

2 (10:18) **Eternal Life**: the first fact to know about eternal life is this: to praise Jesus is not enough to receive eternal life. The young man had praised and honored Jesus as much as a person could. He had eagerly sought and reverenced Jesus, not only kneeling before Him but also casting himself into the dust of the ground before Jesus. He addressed Jesus with as high a title as a man could address a revered teacher. He could not praise Jesus more. But note: the man's praise and honor of Jesus were not enough.

He called Jesus "Good Master," but by Master he meant *good teacher, good Rabbi*. He was acknowledging that Jesus was an honorable person to be highly regarded. But he conceived Jesus to be *only* a highly regarded teacher. He did not consider Jesus to be the divine Son of God. He conceived Jesus to be but a mere man, not God. He thought Jesus was a man who had achieved unusual moral goodness and by such had become a *good Master*, one capable of teaching the great truths of God and life. (See note, pt.1—Lk.18:18-23 for another idea and more discussion.)

Jesus had to correct this gross error. He attempted to correct it by simply saying, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but one, that is, God." He was saying to the young man, "God alone is good. No man is good, not in comparison to God, not good enough to ever stand before God in righteousness. *If I am but a mere man*, a good teacher, then I am not 'good' and do not have the words to eternal life. *But if I am God*, then you can address me as 'good,' and I do have the words to eternal life."

Note two things.

1. Jesus told the young man how to enter life, that is, how to receive eternal life. Therefore, Jesus was claiming to be God.
2. Jesus was correcting the young man. He was speaking these words forcefully: "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God." Jesus would not have the young man thinking of Him only as a man, no matter how preeminent a teacher the young man thought Him to be. He is God, God's very own Son; and He is to be known and called the Son of God. Therefore, Jesus tried to lead the young man to acknowledge and honor Him as God. It was the only way the young man could ever receive eternal life.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him" (Jn.14:6-7).**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**

3 (10:19-20) **Eternal Life—Self Righteousness—Respectability**: the second fact to know about eternal life is this: to be respectable is not enough to receive eternal life. Note a crucial point: the young man had asked, "What *good thing* shall I do?" He had a religion of works, not of faith. He thought man himself could secure eternal life by being good. He felt that if he could just keep some great rule or law and live a moral, clean life, then God would accept him. He believed that his acts of morality and good works just piled up a balance sheet and made him acceptable to God.

This was the man's second major error. Again Jesus had to correct the man; He had to strike right at the root of the problem. The man was failing to love his neighbor as himself, and Jesus knew it (this will be brought out later). So Jesus told the young man very simply, "Thou knowest the commandments"; and He proceeded to quote five of the ten commandments, the five laws of respectability that had to do with his duty toward his neighbor (Ex.20:12-16).

The man made the phenomenal claim that he had kept all five of the commandments that Jesus quoted. He, of course, had not kept them perfectly, not in God's eyes, not in the spirit in which God intended them to be kept. He was not generous enough with others, not giving and helping like he should. Jesus was now ready to show him and lead him to do this. In summary, here is what Jesus had said to the rich young ruler: keep the commandments dealing with your neighbor—the ones especially needed by rulers and the rich—the ones so often misunderstood and neglected by rulers and the rich.

But the rich young ruler misunderstood God's law: he had a tragic sense of self-righteousness.

1. He thought some commandments were more important than others.
2. He thought man could keep God's law and build up a balance sheet with God, securing God's acceptance.

Thought 1. "*What shall I do*" to inherit eternal life? It is not the *good thing* that I do nor is it all the *good things* that I do that give me eternal life.

> **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees [religionists], ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).**
>
> **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).**
>
> **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of**

Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:9).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:4-5).

4 (10:21) **Eternal Life—Jesus Christ, Love of**: the third fact to know about eternal life is this: to be loved by Jesus is not enough to receive eternal life. Note the exact words, "Jesus beholding him, *loved* him." Jesus' eyes penetrated into the man's innermost being and sensed a deep, deep longing and earnestness. The man's longing and ache for eternal life touched Jesus deeply. Jesus was drawn to the man and loved him in a very, very special sense.

But note the crucial point: the love of Jesus for a man's soul—even the very, very special love of Jesus for a man—was not enough to save the man. The man still lacked one thing.

Thought 1. The love of Christ is great, and it is touching and encouraging. But it is not enough. The Lord's love cannot save us, not by itself, not against our will, not if we refuse to *surrender all*—all we are and all we have.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt.23:37).

"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded" (Pr.1:24).

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).

5 (10:21-22) **Eternal Life—Self-Denial—Cross**: the fourth fact to know about eternal life is this: to give everything is required to receive eternal life. *Giving everything* is the one thing lacking, the one thing that causes so many to lose eternal life.

Jesus knew exactly what the young man needed. His rejection of Jesus showed this. He was hoarding wealth instead of distributing it. God had given wealth to him that he might be able to help others, but he was failing to love and help his neighbor as he should (Eph.4:28).

What the young man needed to hear was just what Jesus said: "If thou wilt be perfect [receive heaven, really keep the commandments, as you say you have], then demonstrate to all publicly and without question that you love your neighbor. Go and sell all you have, and give to the poor...and come *follow me.*"

In our struggle to protect the glorious truth that man is saved by grace and grace alone, we often forget and neglect another great truth: *to follow Christ is to serve and minister to our neighbor.* To follow Christ is to deny self completely—*all that we are and all that we have* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). When we love our neighbor as ourselves, then we show that we truly love God. If we do not love and minister to our neighbor (above self), then we do not love God.

When we deny self and give all we are and have (1 Jn.4:20), then and only then do we receive heaven; but more importantly, we receive treasure in heaven. To deny self, *to give all we are and have,* is a hard saying, but Christ demands it. Our attempt to soften it does not annul His demand (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.3:3).

The young man rejected Jesus for three reasons.

1. Unbelief: he was not willing to entrust his life to Jesus. There was some lack of belief that the Man Jesus standing before him was really God.
2. Self-righteousness and pride: his concept of religion was keeping laws and doing good in order to secure God's acceptance. He felt that he, as well as other men, had the power and goodness to make God approve and accept him.
3. Love of the world: he was rich and was unwilling to give up the comfort and possessions he had obtained. He made the fatal mistake that so many make with wealth, power, and fame.
   a. He loved the things of the world more than he loved people. He preferred hoarding and extravagance, living sumptuously and comfortably to helping those who were so desperately needful.
   b. He loved the things of the world more than he loved the hope of eternal life.
   c. He loved the position, recognition, esteem, and power of the earth more than he loved Christ.

Now, note a critical point: the subject of *giving all* is a sensitive subject, so sensitive that the words of Christ are seldom taken or preached at face value. The words of the Lord are *watered down* to mean no more than an ideal in the mind of a man—an ideal that is left up to every man to decide within his own selfish, deceptive, and corrupt heart. Is the man *willing to give all*? Then his willingness is said to be acceptable to God. The fact that he does not give all is said not to matter. However, the critical point seldom crosses the mind of men: the God of all men *can never justify keeping and storing and banking and hoarding and even holding back as long as a single need exists and is going unmet.*

If all men are truly God's by creation, then God is bound to expect all needs to be met; and He is bound to hold accountable the man who has and keeps, stores and banks, hoards and holds back. The point is easily understood by the hon-

est and thinking person when he thinks about the issue. The thinking and honest person sees both the single person and the masses...

- who are starving
- who are without clothes, housing, medicine, treatment, education, and skills
- who are lost from God and doomed eternally because they have never heard the gospel

Imagine the millions who have never heard about Christ even once. When the thinking person sees the picture and is honest, he can no longer refuse to accept Jesus' words at face value. Yet, so many do not think and so many refuse to be honest. So they continue to *spiritualize and idealize what Jesus was saying* to this young man. Why? Do we fear the strictness of what Christ says? Do we fear the reaction of people? Do we fear what we will have to give up? Do we lack the faith within to trust God? (See outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28; note—Mk.10:23-27 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. God expects us to work so that we can have enough to help others (Eph.4:28). We are to help as we are able, but we are to be *honest* about our ability to help.

Thought 2. Note a crucial point. God gives us *a talent* to use in taking care of our own needs, but after our needs are met, the talent entrusted to us is to be used to help others in their need.

Thought 3. The young man had a serious flaw—the very same flaw that exists within so many today: he did not believe heaven was glorious enough to *merit the giving up* of his possessions.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Distributing [giving] to the necessity of saints" (Ro.12:13).

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor.13:3).

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor.8:12).

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor.9:6).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good [give] unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:17-18).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).

"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Pr.11:25).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Pr.22:9).

	D. The Problem of Wealth and Its Dangers, 10:23-27 (Mt.19:23-26; Lk.18: 24-27)	hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!	b. Their trust is not in the valuable, not in God
		25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.	**3 Rich men face great difficulty—spiritually**
1 The rich young ruler[DS1] a. The earth-shaking statement[DS2] b. Peril of wealth: Bars from God's kingdom	23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!	26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?	**4 Rich men are set on a pedestal by the world**
2 Rich men tend to trust in riches a. Their trust is in the world—in riches	24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how	27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.	**5 Rich men have only one hope—God alone** a. God alone can save b. God alone judges

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

D. The Problem of Wealth and Its Dangers, 10:23-27

(10:23-27) **Introduction**: Jesus took the rich young ruler's rejection of heaven and warned all men about the problem and dangers of wealth. Wealth is fraught with dangers and pitfalls, both for the man who is seeking to be rich and for the man who is already rich. The dangers are many, and they are entangling and enslaving, so much so that Jesus made the shocking statement, "It is difficult, extremely difficult, for a rich man to be saved."

The words are strong; the idea is shocking. Yet Jesus must be truthful, for He loves and cares for all men. He must warn all men: it is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter heaven. The dangers which face the rich are real and terrible, so the warning must be real and truthful.

1. The rich young ruler (v.23).
2. Rich men tend to trust in riches (v.24).
3. Rich men face great difficulty—spiritually (v.25).
4. Rich men are set on a pedestal by the world (v.26).
5. Rich men have only one hope—God alone (v.27).

1 (10:23) **Wealth, Danger of**: this passage is tied to the rich young ruler. The picture is this: as the rich young ruler turned and walked away from Jesus, Jesus stood for the longest of times watching the young man fade into the distance. Jesus was heart-broken and thoughtful, for the young man had so much potential. Quickly, full of energy and authority, perhaps even bordering on anger (against the enslaving power of wealth), Jesus "looked around about" and made an earth-shaking statement: "How hardly [difficult] shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

The terrible peril of wealth is that it so easily bars a person from the Kingdom of God. Wealth, riches, and possessions (such as property, money, televisions, cars, recreational equipment) all pose a serious problem and an eternal danger for man.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(10:23) **Riches** (chremata): money, things, gadgets—what one has and uses—material things or goods. It means all the things which a person has, all the things that have value and are worth something. Jesus chose a word that is applicable to every generation and every man who has possessions or has things of value.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:23) **Riches—Wealth**: Who are the rich? Realistically, in comparison to what the vast majority of the world has, *the rich person is anyone who has anything to put back beyond meeting the true needs of his own family.*

This is exactly what Christ and the Bible say time and again (cp. also Mk.12:41-44; Lk.21:1-4; Acts 4:34-35; etc.).

In a summary statement, who is rich? *The rich person is any person who has anything beyond what he needs.* What Christ demands is that we give *all that we are and have* to meet the needs of those in such desperate need, holding back nothing. This is often the great complaint against Christians, that we do not believe what Christ says. The evidence of our unbelief is seen in Christ's insistence that we give all we have to feed the starving and to meet the desperate needs of the world, and yet we refuse to obey Him. Gandhi, the great leader of India's independence, is said to have never embraced Christianity for this very reason: because Christians live lives of hypocrisy. Christians do not follow the teachings of Christ; they do not give all they are and have to meet the desperate needs of the world. How many others have rejected Christ because of our hypocrisy?

"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Lk.12:31-34).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:35).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:33).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).

2 (10:24) **Wealth—Materialism—Worldliness**: rich men tend to trust in riches (money and things). Jesus made this statement because of the things that *pulled* the rich young ruler away. Wealth does pull a person away from heaven. There is a lure, an attraction, a force, a power, a pull that reaches out to draw any person who looks at or possesses wealth. There are pulls so forceful that they will enslave and doom any rich man that fails to turn and embrace God. There are three reasons given by Christ for this.

1. A man tends to trust in the world and in his riches. His wealth attaches him to the world. Wealth enables him to buy things that...

- make him comfortable
- please his taste
- stir his ego
- expand his experience
- challenge his mental pursuit
- stimulate his flesh
- stretch his self image

If a man centers his life upon the things of the world, his attention is on the world, not on God. He tends to become wrapped up in securing more and in protecting what he has. He gives little time and thought to heavenly matters. Wealth and the things it can provide can and usually do consume the rich.

2. A rich man's trust will more than likely not be in the most valuable, that is, in God. Wealth leads a man to trust himself, his abilities, his energy and efforts. Wealth creates the *big I* (cp. v.17, 20). The wealthy are usually looked up to, esteemed, honored, envied. Wealth brings position, power, recognition. It boosts *ego*, making a person self-sufficient and independent in this world. As a result there is a tendency for the rich man to feel that he is truly independent and self-sufficient, that he needs nothing. And in such an atmosphere and world of thought, God is forgotten. Man forgets that there are things that money cannot buy and events from which money cannot save. Peace, love, joy—all that really matters within the spirit of man can never be bought. Neither can money save a person from disaster, disease, accident, death, and on and on.

3. A rich man tends to hoard, to be selfish with *most* of his money. He trusts in his riches, keeping *most* of everything for himself (see note, pt.2—Mt.19:23).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:9-10).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).

"If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much....this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above" (Job 31:24-25, 28).

"Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness" (Ps.52:7).

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch" (Pr.11:28).

3 (10:25) **Wealth—Camel—Needle**: rich men face great difficulty—spiritually. It is extremely difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. It is so difficult that Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

There have been various interpretations of "camel" and "needle" in an attempt to soften the words of Jesus. For example, some have said that the needle was a small gate in the wall surrounding Jerusalem. It sat right beside the large gate. At night the large gate was closed to protect the city from marauders and enemies, and the small gate was used. The small gate is said to have been called "The Needle's Eye" because it was so small that it was difficult for even a single person to pass through. Others have said that the Greek word Jesus used was *Kamilos* (a ship's rope or cable) not *Kamelos* (camel). Note the only difference between the two words is the second vowel.

Three things need to be noted about these interpretations.

1. There is no doubt that Jesus meant a literal needle. He as much as said so: "With men this is impossible" in v.27. What He did was use a proverbial saying for an *impossibility*. Most if not all countries have proverbs that express the impossibility of some things. The camel was the largest animal among the Jews, so Jesus simply used a well-known proverb among the Jews or else created one. There is also the point that when Jesus chose to speak in parables, He chose the most common and ordinary thing to express His meaning.

2. Attempts to soften the Lord's point are just that: attempts to soften. But nothing can be softened with v.27: "With men this is impossible." No man, not even the rich man himself, can save a rich man. The danger of riches is very real and terrible. Wealth entangles and enslaves a man so much that it is extremely difficult for a rich man to let go and give his wealth to help the desperate needs of the world. He just cannot accept the fact that he is to "labor...[so] that he may have to give to others" (Eph.4:28). It is so difficult not to live in personal luxury and build large estates. Heavy and fancy meals, full and fashionable wardrobes, a fine and large house, the largest and latest automobile—so much is so difficult to let go. It is the ego that refuses to let go.

3. It is just as difficult for the softening interpretations to be performed as it is for the literal interpretation. How does a camel trying to get through a gate made only for a man soften anything? It would be impossible. And how does threading a needle with a ship's cable soften anything? Again, it is impossible.

Thought 1. Few rich men will enter the Kingdom of God. Why? Scripture spells out the reasons in clear terms.

1) Riches and worldliness choke the Word of God.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

2) Riches give men a sense of false security.

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).

3) Riches bring a flood of temptations and snares upon a person.

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

4) Riches cause men to be highminded (conceited, proud, arrogant, haughty).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit" (Pr.18:11).

5) Riches tend to make a man forget God.

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God...." (Dt.8:13-14).

6) Riches strengthen a man in his wickedness.

"Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness" (Ps.52:7).

4 (10:26) **Wealth—Salvation**: rich men are set on a pedestal by the world. The Jews considered wealth a special blessing from God. It was the measure of a man's spiritual standing with God. This is the concept of *natural religion*. Throughout history a person who has been rich in wealth, intellect, talents, or personality has been thought to be especially blessed by God and to have all things easier.

Note: the disciples were astonished twice—beyond imagination (vs.24, 26). Why? Because they failed to see that riches are two things to a man: an acid test from God, and a responsibility for man to prove just how responsible he will be to God and to his fellow men in meeting their desperate needs. (See note—Jas.1:9-11.)

Jesus was saying something diametrically opposed to what they and everyone else had always thought. They had always been taught (as have succeeding generations, even the church):

⇒ that prosperity (wealth, comfort, and things) is God's blessing.
⇒ that a person receives and has because God is blessing him.
⇒ that prosperity is the reward of righteousness and obedience.
⇒ that God blesses a person with the things of this earth if they are righteous and obedient.

But in this passage, Jesus was saying the very opposite: a prosperous person would most likely never enter heaven; prosperity posed such a dangerous threat to a person that his eternal doom was almost assured. The disciples knew that God would never put a person in such a precarious, dangerous position. They knew that Jesus was attacking the world's most cherished and ardent belief: be good (righteous) and you will be blessed by God (and the thought of blessing was always of material blessings. See note—Eph.1:3 for a discussion of God's blessings.)

They were shocked, thoroughly dismayed: Who then can be saved? The vast majority of people were threatening their own eternal destiny. They were dooming themselves. Since prosperity was not the reward (sign) for righteousness, and the rich were barred from heaven, that meant that the poor, too, were barred; for they were spending most of their time in dreaming and seeking prosperity.

The idea that prosperity is the reward for righteousness, that God blesses a person with the things of this earth if they are righteous and obedient, is so prevalent a view that a comment is needed at this point.

1. God's concern is spiritual blessings, not material blessings. God does promise a man the necessities of life (food, clothing, shelter) if he seeks Him first (Mt.6:33; cp. 6:25-34). And God can, if He chooses, bless any of us with whatever He wishes so that we may "have to give to him that needeth." But just because a man is prosperous does not mean he is righteous, and just because a person is righteous does not mean he is going to be blessed materially. Righteousness and prosperity have nothing to do with each other. In fact, "a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."
2. Wealth is *seldom* a good thing. As Jesus teaches in this passage, wealth is fraught with dangers that make it extremely difficult for the rich to enter heaven. Yet the whole world, rich and poor alike, believer and non-believer, puts its primary attention upon dreaming and getting more and more.
3. Wealth is secured by man himself, by his own energy and effort. Man secures wealth by dreaming how to make it (a clear vision, perspective), and by having the initiative to make it (acting and timing). A man may trust God to help him secure wealth, but a man may also have nothing to do with God and secure wealth on his own. There is a sense in which a man's strength and mind are from God, but that has nothing to do with a personal, active relationship with God. Most rich men control their own lives and go about securing their treasure on this earth *without God* (Mt.6:21).

On the other hand, a man may trust God to bless him so that he may help others, and God may choose to bless him. But God's choosing to bless him is for the purpose of helping others, not to hoard and live above what is needed (extravagantly and sumptuously). In fact, what Jesus teaches is that *the rich are to live just as sacrificially as the poor in order to meet the desperate needs of a starving, doomed, and dying world. May God grant that we never forget this*! Our eternal destiny depends upon our living it, upon our living sacrificially. Because of this, the truth bears repeating: what Jesus teaches is that *the rich are to live just as sacrificially as the poor in order to meet the desperate needs of a starving, doomed, and dying world*. (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.19:23; note—Mk.12:42. See outline—Lk.21:1-4.)

Thought 1. One of the most tragic and dangerous tendencies of men is to set the rich (the powerful, the athletic, the gifted) up on a pedestal. Scripture is clear: a person's hope and security must not be placed in other men.

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes" (Ps.118:9).

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Is.2:22).

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).

5 (10:27) **Wealth—Salvation—Repentance**: rich men face the possibility of God alone. Christ said two things.

1. God alone can save. A rich man must turn to God and away from the world. No man can save him, not himself nor any other man.
   a. No man has the strength or know-how to break the power of *seeking things* that holds sway over him. The natural urge within man is to seek more and more comfort and ease and possessions. No man has the power to break that *natural urge*. The entanglements are too pleasing and enslaving.
   b. No man can re-create the soul of a man; no man can change the soul of another man so that he seeks "those things which are above" and sets his "affection on things above, *not on things on the earth*" (Col.3:1-2). No philosophy, no psychology, no medicine, no education, no politics, no social movement can change the soul of a man.

"A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven...Who then can be saved [for even the poor dream and seek]?...With men this [salvation] is impossible" (Mt.19:23, 25-26).

A rich man must turn to God and His power. God is the only hope for a rich man. Only God can break a rich man's enslavement to this earth—only God can convert, change, turn, and save the rich man from the danger and doom of wealth. How? Very simply. The words of Jesus to the rich young ruler tell the rich man what to do:

"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

This is a hard saying, a difficult thing for any of us to do—so difficult we try to escape from its stringent demand, and soften and explain it away. But *it is what Jesus said.* The disciples understood it perfectly (v.25-27). In very practical terms, to receive eternal life we must give *all we are and have.* This is, naturally, more difficult for the rich; for "he has great possessions" (v.22).

2. God alone judges. God shall judge rich men on the basis of how they got their wealth and how they used their wealth.

There are four practical steps that will help a rich man be saved.

a. Listen and heed immediately the inner voice, the pricking of conscience to give one's life and possessions to God. Turn immediately to God. Never turn away.
b. Study God's Word for direction—every day—and talk to and trust God to keep one's heart free from the lure and deception of possessions.
c. Use one's wealth to help the desperate needs of others. *Realize, know, and acknowledge that the vast majority* of the world is hungry, hurting, and needing help—desperately so; and that God expects us to use all we have *to meet those needs, not to hoard and live extravagantly in the midst of so much need.*
d. Develop a strong desire for heaven, knowing that our sojourn on earth is ever so short, as brief as the lily of the field.

Thought 1. If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner (the rich) appear (1 Pt.4:18)?

Thought 2. Christ is forced to let every rich person make his own decision. He had to let the rich young ruler walk away to his own eternal doom. He has to let us walk away if we choose. He cannot violate our free will. He cannot make us robots.

Thought 3. Money and possessions cannot take care of us. Money and gadgets have no life. They are material. They cannot look after us. We have to look after them. But not so with God. God can take care of and look after our welfare, both now and eternally.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

	E. The Problem of Rewards: What One Receives for Following Christ, 10:28-31 (Mt.19:27-30; Lk.18: 28-30)	house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,	family b. Whether property & wealth
1 Peter asked about rewards	28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.	30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to	**3 He receives persecution**
2 He receives a hundred times what he gives up a. Whether housing &	29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left	come eternal life. 31 But many that are first shall be last; and the last first.	**4 He receives eternal life** **5 He receives an immediate assurance & warning**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

E. The Problem of Rewards: What One Receives for Following Christ, 10:28-31

(10:28-31) **Introduction**: the idea of rewards in heaven is foreign to many; it is rejected by others, feeling the idea of God's rewarding people is mercenary. They feel rewards of rank and position, of possession and levels of responsibility have no place in a perfect world. However, Christ Himself endured the cross "*for the joy* that was set before Him" (Heb.12:2). And it is said of Moses that he esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt" (Heb.11:26; cp. Heb.11:1-40). Scripture abounds with the teaching of rewards "in the world to come" (v.30).

Reward is the point of this passage. Jesus deals with the problem of rewards, of just what a true disciple shall receive both in this world and in the world to come. (See notes—Lk.16:10-12; Jn.4:36-38.)

1. Peter asked about rewards (v.28).
2. He receives a hundred times what he gives up (v.29-30).
3. He receives persecution (v.30).
4. He receives eternal life (v.30).
5. He receives an immediate assurance and warning (v.31).

1 (10:28) **Rewards**: Peter asked about rewards, for he had just been shocked. He had seen a rich young man with enormous potential turn and walk away from Jesus. The man had rejected Jesus because he was unwilling to forsake all he had, unwilling to forsake his wealth and use it to meet the needs of the world. Then Peter had heard Jesus give an earth-shaking discussion on riches—just how difficult it is for people with riches to enter heaven. Why? Because they are unwilling to give their wealth to meet the needs of the world. A person must forsake all to enter heaven; he must give all he is and has to save a desperate world.

The demand sounded hard and stringent. Peter was shocked and stunned. He felt he and the disciples had given all. He was *almost sure they were holding nothing back, but he wanted to make absolutely sure*. Anyone would need assurance after what Jesus had just said. Few sell everything and give it all away, and few (rich or poor) control their dreams and urges to have more (see note—Mt.19:25). The disciples, as all honest men, knew this. They also knew the extreme demands Jesus was making to be a true follower of His. *They, unlike so many of us in our attempts to soften His words, understood exactly what He was saying*. The extremity of His words was shocking. They could not see how anyone could be saved. And the answer Jesus gave to their question about salvation said nothing to give them personal assurance: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).

The disciples sensed a deep need for assurance. Had they done enough, given up enough? They thought so, were almost sure they had, but had they? Peter, somewhat meekly, said, "Lord, behold [look] we have forsaken all, and followed thee. We have surrendered all to you. What shall we have therefore? Shall we receive eternal life...?" (Cp. Mt.19:27.)

Jesus used Peter's question to teach a wonderful truth. They, His own dear apostles, and all who follow Him thereafter, can rest assured—they shall all be enormously rewarded.

1. "We have left all." What a glorious testimony! Just think about these men. They had "left all" for Christ's sake and the gospel's (v.29). They had left family, friends, businesses, professions, wealth—left all in order to meet the needs of a desperate world. It should be noted that they readily met the needs of their family (cp. Mt.8:14). Even Jesus saw to the care of His mother (Jn.19:26-27). *Leaving all does not mean the desertion or shirking of one's responsibility. It means centering one's life and possessions upon Christ and using all one is and has to serve Him and to meet the needs of the world.* It means putting Christ first (Mt.6:33).
2. "We...have followed thee." They had followed Jesus and His gospel; they had not followed some other self-proclaimed Messiah or false message (cp. Gal.1:6-9). They knew Him to be the true Messiah, the Son of the living God; and they had committed their lives and possessions, all they were and had to Him and His gospel.

Leaving all and following Christ are the two bases for reward. Any person who leaves all and follows Christ can expect reward. This is the wonderful truth Jesus was about to teach His disciples. They were uneasy because of what had just happened to the rich young ruler and because of Jesus' comments about the incident. Jesus wanted to assure them. They were very dear to Him because they had left all and were following Him. He wanted them to know they would be rewarded and rewarded abundantly.

2 (10:29-30) **Reward—Fellowship—Blessings**: Jesus made an astounding promise. The *true disciple* will be abundantly rewarded; in fact, he will receive a hundred times what he gives up and sacrifices. But note the crucial point: what is given is given "*for Christ's sake, and the gospel's.*" The person's motive has to be that he is giving for Christ and the spread of the gospel. He is sacrificing and giving what he has for the Lord and His cause. He is doing his part, all that he can, to accomplish the mission of redemption and the helping of mankind. Note what Jesus mentioned.

1. The giving of housing and family. There are two ideas here.
   a. Some have been rejected by family and lost their home. When they turned to Jesus for salvation or set out to serve Jesus, their family rejected them and turned them out.
   b. All *true disciples* serve Jesus, putting Him first. They take all they are and have, including family and house, and use it "for Christ's sake, and the gospel's." The house and family are sacrificed for Him, that is, centered around Him and used for Him. The house and family are known...
      - as a place where He is honored.
      - as a place that is used to spread the gospel.

There is also the fact that a true disciple serves Jesus away from the house and family. The disciple has to sacrifice, to leave his house and family to serve Jesus out in the world through visiting, ministering, preaching, doing whatever his missionary call is. This often involves being away from home and family for extended periods of time (for example: evangelists, missionaries, even ministers who are on call day and night).

Now, note the glorious promise of Christ. The true disciple who gives up his house and family for Christ's sake and the gospel's will receive a hundredfold. He will receive...

- a spiritual bond and kinship with a much larger family, the family of God throughout both heaven and earth. (See outline and notes, *Brotherhood*—Mt.12:46-50; Lk.8:19-21.)
- a fellowship and communion, a very present and practical help when needed through the local church, the fellowship of believers within his own community (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1-5—Acts 2:42).
- the presence of the Spirit of God who communes with and directs him day by day.

Thought 1. A true believer needs to make sure that he is in a local church or fellowship that is truly centered on Christ and His gospel. Not every church is.

Thought 2. Every church needs to search its heart and make sure that it honors Christ and His gospel, that it does have the warm heart and spiritual bond, the open arms and strong fellowship, that are needed among God's people.

> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).**
>
> **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).**
>
> **"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Ro.12:5).**
>
> **"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:63).**
>
> **"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Mal.3:16).**

2. The giving of property and wealth. The promise of being *blessed materially*, of receiving a hundredfold is astounding to the world, but not to the believer. The believer understands what Jesus is saying. Jesus is laying down God's principle of money, of finances, of riches, of possessions, of material goods, of giving, of stewardship—whatever we wish to call the *mammon* and *things* of this world that we value (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Riches*—Mk.10:23). The principle is simple. It can be stated several ways.

⇒ The true believer seeks the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and then all the necessities of life are given to him (Mt.6:33). He simply gives all he is and has to the Kingdom of God, and God sees to it that he has what is needed to take care of his necessities. The idea is a present experience, a continuous process. The believer keeps on giving of himself and what he has, and God keeps on giving to the believer.

⇒ The true believer works so that he may have enough to give to others. His very purpose for working is not only to take care of his own needs but also to earn enough to help others. Again the idea is a continuous process. The believer works and earns and gives to others, so God continues to give to him so that he can continue to spread the gospel and help others.

⇒ A true disciple gives all he is and has to meet the needs of a desperate world. God sees to it that the believer receives more. But what the believer receives is not given to keep and store up. God replenishes the believer so that the believer can continue to reach and help the world. The true believer keeps on giving, and God keeps on giving to him, so that the believer, as long as he lives, can continue to spread the gospel and meet the needs of the world.

The whole idea is that the believer never sees an end to what he receives from God. The giving and receiving goes on and on, never ending. The resource is unending, never ceasing.

There is another idea behind what Jesus was saying: the idea of security and confidence and assurance. The man who seeks God first, who gives all he is and has, is assured of being taken care of—always. God promises the true believer that he will always have food, clothing, and shelter—if he truly seeks God first. A price tag cannot be put upon such assurance, confidence, and security. It is invaluable, more than a hundredfold. As long as the true believer is to remain on earth, until God is ready to take him home to heaven, the believer is assured of God's taking care of him. And then on top of all this, there is life eternal, the glorious experience of living forever in all the majesty and glory of God and serving Him forever.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33; cp. Mt.6:25-34).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over" (Ps.23:5).

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8).

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Ps.68:19).

"Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures" (Is.30:23).

"And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed" (Joel 2:26).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

3 (10:30) **Reward—Persecution**: the true disciple also receives the reward of persecution. This statement is shocking. How can persecution be considered a reward? Peter tells us.

"If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (1 Pt.4:14).

The words "reproached for...Christ" mean that a believer suffers for righteousness; that is, he is persecuted or abused or ridiculed for Christ. When a disciple suffers for Christ, "the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon [him]." He is given a very *special closeness*, a oneness with Christ that is beyond imagination, unexplainable (Acts 7:54-60). The Holy Spirit infuses him with a deep, *intense consciousness* of the Lord's presence, a consciousness so deep that it cannot be experienced apart from some severe experience of suffering.

In suffering for Christ, the disciple also experiences a very special identification with Christ. For as the Lord suffered on behalf of the disciple, so now the disciple suffers on behalf of the Lord. There is a sense in which the disciple's sufferings "fill up the sufferings of Christ" and complete the sufferings of Christ for the church (see note—Col.1:24).

These two experiences, gaining a deeper consciousness of the Lord's presence and being used to complete the sufferings for the church, are gained only through suffering. They make suffering a privilege and a joy for the disciple, for the disciple suffers even as his Lord suffered (Mt.10:24-25; Acts 5:41).

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Mt.5:11-12).

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

"But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled" (1 Pt.3:14).

4 (10:30) **Reward—Eternal Life**: the true disciple receives eternal life. Christ not only promises to reward the disciple in this life, He promises to reward him "in the world to come [with] eternal life." Imagine the reward: to *live forever in a perfect state of being*. Imagine the heavens and earth's being made into "a new heavens and earth," being made perfect and eternal. Living forever in that *perfect world* is what Christ promises to the true disciple, the man who gives all he is and has for Christ's sake, and the gospel's (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3).

> **"One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk.10:21).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

5 (10:31) **Reward—Judgment**: Jesus both assured and warned the disciples. God is going to switch and change and reverse the order of men in heaven. Many who are first in this world are going to be placed last, and they are going to be last forever, for all eternity. But many who are last are going to be placed *first* by God forever.

God is going to place every man exactly where he belongs. He is going to rectify injustices. No matter what the esteem and rank are on earth, if a man belongs last, God is going to place him last. If he belongs first, God is going to place him first. And Christ actually says that "many" changes are coming. The idea is that the majority of people will be switched. In God's eyes, some of the dearest, most repentant, heart-broken, and diligent people are now last; but He is going to exalt them to be ever so near and close to Him.

> **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).**
>
> **"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:13-15).**
>
> **"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Lk.1:52).**
>
> **"Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Lk.6:25).**
>
> **"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented" (Lk.16:25).**
>
> **"But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another" (Ps.75:7).**

	F. The Third Prediction of Death: The Problem of Christ's Death, 10:32-34 (Mt.20:17-19; Lk.18:31-34)	pen unto him,	
1 Jesus' iron determination	32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them:	33 Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:	**4 Jesus' magnificent love & courage** a. He shall be delivered to the Jews & condemned b. He shall be delivered to the Gentiles & tortured & killed
2 Jesus' amazing drawing power	and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid.	34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.	**5 Jesus' great purpose**
3 Jesus' thoughtful consideration	And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should hap-		a. To die b. To arise

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

F. The Third Prediction of Death: The Problem of Christ's Death, 10:32-34

(10:32-34) **Introduction**: this is the third time that Mark stresses the death and resurrection of Christ. Christ was constantly drilling the fact into His disciples. (See outline and notes—Mk.8:31-33; 9:30-32; Mt.16:21-23; 17:22-23; 20:17-19. These passages should be studied along with this passage. Mt.17:22-23 includes most of the New Testament passages on the death and resurrection of Christ.) This passage gives a striking portrait of Jesus and deals very straightforwardly with the problem of His death.

1. Jesus' iron determination (v.32).
2. Jesus' amazing drawing power (v.32).
3. Jesus' thoughtful consideration (v.32).
4. Jesus' magnificent love and courage (v.33).
5. Jesus' great purpose (v.34).

1 (10:32) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the iron determination of Jesus. The picture was graphic. Jesus had set the course for Jerusalem. As He walked along, He became engrossed in thought—the thought of the cross that lay ahead. As He had said earlier, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straightened [constrained] till it be accomplished" (Lk.12:50). The time had now come. He was to go up to Jerusalem for the last time, go up to receive the baptism, the immersing of the cross. As He walked along thinking about the cross, He became so engrossed He lost consciousness of all around Him. God gave Him a spirit of determination, a determination so strong that He unconsciously quickened His pace and moved out far ahead of the disciples, so far that it perplexed the apostles. However, the point to see is the iron determination of Jesus. He was determined to face the cross. The cross lay right ahead of Him, yet it held so much meaning that He set His course to bear it. He was driven, constrained, pressed, compelled, determined (an iron determination) to bear the sufferings of the cross. Why?

1. The cross was the way to save the world.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

2. The cross was the way to please God His Father (see note—Eph.5:2).

> **"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:30).**
>
> **"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (Jn.12:27-28).**
>
> **"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence [to the cross]" (Jn.14:31).**
>
> **"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do [die]" (Jn.17:4).**

3. The cross was the way to assure His own joy.

> **"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).**

2 (10:32) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the amazing *drawing power* of Jesus. Note the two words used to describe the people's reaction to Jesus: amazed and afraid. We cannot be sure if the ones who were "afraid" were His apostles or some other disciples following Him. In either case, the reaction was amazement and fear. There were at least two reasons for these reactions.

1. Jesus' behavior was unusual. He usually walked along with the disciples, utilizing every moment as a teaching opportunity. It was His practice not to lose a moment, other than when He needed to be alone for meditation. When the disciples saw His striding out ahead of them, they knew somethimg serious and unusual was occupying His mind. His pace and His preoccupation amazed and perplexed them.
2. Jesus' depth of thought and serious, foreboding countenance amazed and perplexed them. They marvelled that He could be so lost in thought that He would become unconscious of all around Him. He seemed to be focused on some happening that lay right before Him in Jerusalem. Whatever it was, He had to get there.

The point is this: Jesus' unusual behavior and foreboding countenance caused amazement and fear in the disciples. They could tell by Jesus' unusual actions that apparently something dreadful was about to happen. They had no idea what it was. Therefore, they were *bewildered, apprehensive, and hesitant* to move on. They were gripped with both amazement and fear. Yet note something: despite their not understanding and their fear, they followed right behind Jesus. They did not withdraw nor forsake Him. Why? Because they were drawn to Him through love. Jesus was their life. He had done so much for them, He was their all—all there was worth following. And they were thoroughly convinced that He was the true Messiah. They knew that to follow Him would be well worthwhile.

Thought 1. Many do not understand the behavior (sinless nature) or the depth of thought (teachings) of Christ. In such cases Christ demands the same response He demanded of the disciples: faith. He expects us to follow Him even when we may not understand.

Thought 2. The love of Jesus drew the disciples to Him. They loved Him because He loved them. It was love that kept them following after Him, even when they feared and did not understand.

> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).**
>
> **"Perfect love casts out fear" (1 Jn.4:18).**

3 (10:32) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the thoughtful consideration of Jesus. This can be stated very simply. Jesus became aware of the disciples' bewilderment and fear. They were distressed, caught in the dark and unable to see what lay ahead. They needed His help. They needed to be prepared for the onrushing tragedy. They were hard to teach and slow to learn. Jesus had already informed them of His impending death and of God's concept of the Messiah. Of necessity, He had to consider the disciples and their slowness and dullness of heart and continue to teach them until they grasped God's Messiahship. As always, He took them aside to meet their need. (See notes—Lk.18:31-34.)

Thought 1. Note three important lessons.

1) Jesus will always meet our need, no matter how small or large.
2) It is not Jesus' will for us to be bewildered or gripped by fear.
3) We must, however, remember that we are to walk by faith. Therefore, it is not God's purpose for us to know all things.

> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).**
>
> **"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb.10:38-39).**
>
> **"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps.23:4).**
>
> **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).**
>
> **"Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Ps.46:2).**
>
> **"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Is.12:2).**
>
> **"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Is.64:4).**

4 (10:33) **Jesus Christ, Death; Love**: there was the magnificent love and courage of Jesus. The great love of Jesus is seen in many things, but the epitomy of His love is seen in one supreme act: the *willingness* of Jesus to be sacrificed for man.

Note that Jesus knew what lay ahead of Him in Jerusalem. He made two points.

1. He would be delivered to the Jews and condemned. The word "delivered" (paradothesetai) means to be delivered over into. It means that His death was determined, ordained, set in the plan and counsel of God. Note that Jesus said, "The

Son of Man shall be delivered." His death was *right before His face*, ready to take place.

Jesus had already named the men who would kill Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.16:21). The betrayal would be by *Judas* who would identify Him for the *elders*, *chief priests*, and *Scribes*; and they in turn would deliver Him to the *Gentiles* (or Romans) for execution (Mt.20:19).

Peter, in preaching to the Jews right after Pentecost, accused the Jews: "Ye have taken [Him] and by wicked hands [the hands of the lawless Gentiles and Romans] have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

The fact that Jesus was being condemned by the Jews, the people who had been chosen to bring salvation to the world, must have cut Him deeply. "He came unto His own [the Jews] and His own received Him not" (Jn.1:11).

2. He shall be delivered to the Gentiles and tortured and killed. Note that the prosecutors of Jesus were named. They were to be the Jews, in particular the leaders among the Jews: the chief priests and Scribes and elders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.16:21; note—1 Th.2:15-16). But note, they were to be only the prosecutors, not the executioners. They were forbidden by law to execute anyone (Jn.18:31). They had to deliver Him over to the Gentiles for execution.

There is symbolism seen in this fact: (1) both Jew and Gentile (the world) are guilty of the death of God's Son, and (2) Jesus was to bear the sins of both Jew and Gentile (the world) in His death. He was to reconcile both to God. (See outline and notes—Eph.2:14-15; 2:16-17.)

Jesus was to be delivered to the Gentiles for torture and execution. Note the four forms of torture mentioned.

1. Mockery: to ridicule, scorn, insult, humiliate, defy, jeer.
2. Scourge: to beat with a rod or a whip weighted with either jagged metal or bone chips. Thirty-nine or forty lashes were inflicted. The whole purpose of scourging was to inflict severe pain.
3. Spitting: a sign of utter contempt (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.14:65).
4. Crucify: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44 for the terrible suffering of the cross.

Jesus bore the sins of man, suffering the ultimate degree of pain. He suffered pain in an absolute sense.

1. Mentally, while He was being tortured, His mind was bound to be upon why He was suffering. He was thinking about the sin of man and the problem sin had caused God. Imagine the world's sin—all of it, the enormity and awfulness of it—consuming His mind. He was suffering mentally to the ultimate degree.
2. Spiritually, His heart was being broken. Those whom He loved so much were committing a sin so horrendous it defied imagination. They were rebelling against God so much that they were killing God's own Son.

In addition, and more terrible, His own Father was to turn His back upon Him. He was to be separated from God, bearing the condemnation of sin for man (see notes—Mt.27:46-49; Mk.15:34). He was beginning to bear and was going to bear spiritual pain in an absolute sense (1 Pt.2:24; 2 Cor.5:21. Cp. Is.53:4-7 for a descriptive account of His bearing our sin.)

3. Physically, His pain was to be more severe because of the mental and spiritual pressure He was having to bear at the same time. There is also truth to the fact that the more ridicule within a persecutor's heart, the more he tortures his victim (cp. the crown of thorns, royal robe, and excessive mockery of the soldiers). The fact that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God aroused the hearts of the persecutors to inflict more scorn and torture.

Thought 1. Magnificent is the glorious love of Christ—His *willingness* to bear so much for us!

> **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).**
>
> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).**
>
> **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).**

5 (10:34) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the great purpose of Jesus. He was to die and rise again.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**

The summit of pain was experienced in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. He suffered pain to the ultimate degree, in an absolute sense. Yet in the midst of such terrible suffering, there is something that is very precious—a thought, a truth that should be very, very precious to us. It is this: *Jesus' death was dear to his heart*—dear despite the terrible suffering He was to endure. In a way unknown to man and which can never be understood by man, Jesus set His heart and

face toward the cross. He was consumed and obsessed with the cross. Why? Because the cross was the focus of God's purpose throughout all eternity.

1. The cross was dear to His heart because it was His Father's will. In dying, He could please His Father, and pleasing His Father was the supreme objective of His life (see note—Eph.5:2).

> **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:18).**
>
> **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**

2. The cross was dear to His heart because it was the means by which He was to gain many brothers (see note—Ro.8:28-39).

> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**
>
> **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).**

3. The cross was dear to His heart because through death He was to be made "the captain" of man's salvation.

> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).**

4. The cross was dear to His heart because by His death He was to destroy the power of the devil over man, that is, death.

> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

5. The cross was dear to His heart because by the cross He was to reconcile all men, reconcile them both to God and to one another (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18).

> **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us....And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:13-14, 16).**

6. The cross was dear to His heart because through death He was to arise and return to His former glory which He had with the Father before the foundation of the world (Jn.17:1-5). (See notes, *Resurrection*—Mt.17:23; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 1:3; DEEPER STUDY # *4*—2:24.)

> **"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was....Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:4-5, 24).**

	G. The Problem of Ambition, 10:35-45 (Mt.20:20-28; cp. Lk.22:24-47)	baptized withal shall ye be baptized:	
1 The deceitfulness of wrong ambition a. A secret approach, cp. v.41 b. An unlimited request	35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.	40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.	**4 The exclusive right of God regarding ambition**
2 The possible motives for ambition a. Favoritism & wealth b. Power & social status c. Love, faith, loyalty	36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? 37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.	41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.	**5 The potential conflict among men with ambition** **6 The greatness of good ambition** a. Not to rule, not to exercise authority
3 The great price of ambition[DS1] a. The cup: Sacrifice & suffering b. The baptism: Immersed & submerged c. The prophecy: The certainty of paying the price[DS2,3]	38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? 39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am	43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: 44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. 45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.	b. To be a minister c. To be a servant, a bond-slave **7 The supreme example of ambition** a. Supreme humiliation b. Supreme mission c. Supreme price[DS4]

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

G. The Problem of Ambition, 10:35-45

(10:35-45) **Introduction**: Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. This was to be a momentous visit to the capital. This was the visit when the crises of His death and resurrection were to take place. He had just shared the fact of the crisis again (v.17-19). For months it had consumed His attention and private messages to the disciples (Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27; 20:17). There was no question in the disciples' minds: this visit to Jerusalem was the momentous event for which they had long looked. Jesus was about to free Israel and set up His kindgom on earth.

We, who live today, know what Jesus meant by His death and resurrection. He was to die for our sins and be raised again to impart new life to us. But the disciples did not know this. Jesus had not yet died and been raised from the dead. To them He was speaking of an earthly and material kingdom. Therefore, if He was about to set up His kingdom, now was the time to seize the positions of power in His kingdom. Now was the time to secure the positions of rule and authority. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23.)

This is what James and John were doing. They were assuring themselves of key positions in Jesus' government. (See outlines and notes—Mt.18:1-4; Lk.22:24-30.)

1. The deceitfulness of wrong ambition (v.35).
2. The possible motives for ambition (v.36-37).
3. The great price of ambition (v.38-39).
4. The exclusive right of God regarding ambition (v.40).
5. The potential conflict among men with ambition (v.41).
6. The greatness of good ambition (v.42-44).
7. The supreme example of ambition (v.45).

1 (10:35) **Ambition**: the deceitfulness of wrong ambition. Note what James and John did.

1. They made a secret approach to Jesus. They wanted to get the upper hand on the other disciples; they were aware that the other disciples were also ambitious for position (cp. Lk.9:46). They knew that they must get some kind of inside track. They persuaded their mother to go with them, and they approached Jesus when He was off by Himself (Mt.20:20-21). Remember that Salome was probably the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus. Most likely James and John felt she would add weight to their request. Therefore, they made a secret approach to Jesus. The ambition that was gripping their heart was not healthy ambition; it was evil ambition. And evil ambition is sneaky. It tries to get an inside track, the upper hand, by hook or crook. It uses any means whatsoever, including the use and misuse of people, even loved ones (cp. Salome).

2. They made an unlimited appeal. Note their words, "Do for us whatsoever we shall desire." Again, they were being sneaky. They tried to get a commitment before they revealed their request. They sensed their desire might be wrong and evil; but they subdued the sense of conscience, blinded by the lust for honor, position, power, wealth, and recognition.

Thought 1. Wrong or evil ambition is *always deceitful* and *sneaky*. When a man wants something he should not have and he is determined to get it anyway, he becomes sneaky.

⇒ He will sneak to get things of the world.
⇒ He will sneak to get things of the flesh.
⇒ He will sneak to use and misuse people.

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).

2 (10:36-37) **Ambition—Motive**: the possible motives for ambition. Jesus asked the two men what their request was. They answered straight to the point, wasting no time, as any conscientious leader would: "Grant us the top positions in your kingdom [glory, government] which you are going to set up when we get to Jerusalem." The men were extremely ambitious. They wanted to be the top ministers of state in Christ's government.

What needs to be noted is that ambition can be good or bad. The determining factor is motive. One's motive makes ambition either good or bad. The ambition of James and John exposes several possible motives. Each one touches a sensitive spot within every man and urges every man to examine the motives of his heart (see note, *Ambition*—Mt.20:20-21).

1. There was the motive of favoritism. James and John, along with Peter, formed an inner circle around Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.9:2). They apparently had some feeling that they were special, the favorites of Christ; therefore, they were due the top positions.

Thought 1. Feeling special, as though one is a favorite of God, is a common sin—a sin of pride. How many of us have felt we are one of God's specials or favorites? How often have we felt this way?

Thought 2. The inner circle, or the multi-gifted, often feel as though they are the special ones of God or of the church. Some often feel as though they are due special favors.

"God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).

(Remember James' and John's desertion of Christ at the cross.)

2. There was the motive of wealth. Zebedee, the father of James and John, was apparently wealthy. He owned a fishing business large enough to furnish fish for the palace (see note—Mk.1:20; Jn.18:15-18). They were better off financially than some of the other disciples. There was the possibility that the two men were acting as selfish, pampered young men seeking more. Wealth did carry weight with monarchs of their day, and they knew it.

Thought 1. Note two points.

1) Wealth can make a man self-centered. It can pamper and make one selfish. It can cause one to expect more attention, more honor, more recognition, more favor.
2) Those who have wealth often want more. And they set out to get more, whether wise or unwise, whether right or wrong. The wisdom and righteousness of having wealth are determined by a person's motive and true need.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

3. There was the motive of power, position, influence, and authority. This was clearly one of the motives of James and John. They wanted to be right next to Jesus in position and influence, power and authority. It is the very thing they asked.

Thought 1. Men want position. Men think in terms of position and influence. Within the business world, men want a position that assures influence and reward. Within the church, some want a position of leadership and of influence. Men seldom think in terms of service or in terms of how they can help the company or the church. Too often their thoughts are on the honor, the reward, the influence, the position they will receive.

Thought 2. How many seek to be next to the boss, the pastor, the leader, or the teacher, seeking to curry his favor; seeking to be recognized by him or by others as knowing him well and as being favored by him?

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (1 Cor.10:24).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:33).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:4).

4. There was the motive of social status. James and John did have some social standing. They were somewhat wealthy and were accepted within the palace and were personally known by the High Priest (see notes—Mk.1:20; Jn.18:15-18. Cp. Jn.18:16.)

Social standing often makes a person feel that he is entitled to more—more position, more recognition, a higher seat. Social standing can also make one feel he is better or above others. Perhaps James and John had a tinge of both feelings.

5. There was the motive of love, faith, and loyalty. When ambition is rooted in the Lord and steeped in love and loyalty, it is *always right and healthy*. There is the possibility that James and John wanted to be next to Jesus because they were sensing some degree of love and loyalty to Him. Their love and loyalty to Him would not be the dominant force in their ambition right now, but it was definitely present.

⇒ They definitely believed Jesus: His Word, His promises, His kingdom, His power. They were showing loyalty to Christ by expressing confidence in His power to usher in the Kingdom of God. They were asking for positions in His kingdom. They knew He was the true Messiah, the Son of the living God who was to become the King of kings and Lord of lords.

⇒ They definitely wanted the positions because they wanted to be next to Him. To them He *deserved* the kingdom and the honor. He deserved it because He had done so much and was going to do so much for them and for the people of God.

"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:27-30).

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

3 (10:38-39) **Ambition—Cup—Baptism**: the great price of ambition. Jesus was straightforward, pulling no punches with these two ambitious men. "Ye know not what ye ask. Can you drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" Jesus was asking the ambitious believer, "Can you go through the terrible experience I have to suffer? Can you drink the cup of my terrible agony, of my inward agony and pain? Can you bear the baptism of my terrible sufferings?" (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Cup—Baptism*—Mk.10:38-39 for discussion.)

Note: the two men accepted the Lord's challenge, and they responded immediately, very positively: "We can." Of course, they did not know what they were doing, not fully. Nevertheless, at this particular moment they were willing to die for Christ in Jerusalem if necessary.

Note also that Jesus foretold them that they would pay the price for their ambition (see DEEPER STUDY # 2,*3*—Mk.10:39 for discussion).

Thought 1. The same challenge is issued to every man. We are to drink the Lord's cup and be baptized with His baptism.

1) We are to suffer for His sake, to labor and serve to the point of exhaustion in getting the gospel out and in ministering to a lost world.
2) We are to bear persecution if necessary to fulfill His mission. In essence, we are to deny self, do whatever is necessary (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.10:38-39).

Thought 2. We should follow the example of James and John. We should accept the Lord's challenge...

- accept it immediately, not hesitating at all.
- accept it even though we may not fully understand what it involves.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

Thought 3. There is a price to pay for ambition. If a man really wants to achieve, he must get to it, and getting to it takes time and work. It involves sacrifice and pain, sweat and tears, isolation and loneliness, and often involves sacrificing his social life. In all honesty, few are willing to pay such a price.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(10:38-39) **Cup—Baptism**: there is a difference between drinking the cup of suffering and being baptized with suffering. The cup refers more to what one takes into himself and bears within himself. It is more internal suffering, inward agony. The baptism refers more to what is put upon one from the outside. It is more external suffering.

The cup means drinking the bitterness and agony of trials, pain, hurt, sorrow, heartbreak, suffering, disappointment, and tears (cp. Christ's experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, Mt.26:36-46; His sufferings, Mt.20:19; 27:46-49; and John's experience on Patmos, Rev.1:9; cp. Introduction—Date).

The baptism of suffering means being immersed in the rapids of affliction, rejection, abuse, ridicule, opposition, persecution, and martyrdom.

The Christian believer who truly lives and witnesses for Christ will drink His cup and be baptized with His baptism. Just think for a moment. Christ demands *all we are and have* in order to help people and to carry the message of salvation to a lost world. If we should be serious and give *all we are and have*, just imagine the cost to us. That is how different we would be from the world. Imagine the world's reaction to us. That is the reason Jesus and the apostles met with so much opposition so often. They gave *all they were and had* and lived so differently. They lived for God instead of living for self and the world. Therefore, the world could not understand them. Some ignored and others ridiculed, abused, persecuted, and even killed them. They had the Lord's cup and baptism of suffering and sacrifice to bear. And so do all who truly follow Christ. (See outlines and notes—Mt.10:16-23; 10:24-33; 10:34-42; 19:23-26; 19:27-30. Cp. Mt.10:22; Ph.1:28; 2 Tim.3:12; 1 Pt.2:21; 4:1-5; 5:10; Mt.19:29; Ro.8:16-17.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:39) **James**: was killed by Herod. He was the first apostle to drink the cup of martyrdom.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(10:39) **John**: lived to be around one hundred years old. Just how John died is unknown; however, he drank the cup and was baptized with suffering in a most distressful way.

1. He witnessed the sufferings of Jesus' death.
2. He lived through the murder and deaths of all the other apostles.
3. He lived a long life of banishment and exile on the island of Patmos (see Introduction, Revelation—Date).

4 (10:40) **Ambition**: the prerogative of God in ambition. Note the exact words of Jesus: "To sit...is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." Two things are being said.

1. Jesus said that some *will sit* on His right and some on His left hand. God is preparing to bestow such honor upon some. This points toward degrees of glory in heaven.
2. Jesus said that the right to reign with Him is to be determined by God alone (that is, His absolute justice). He also makes a distinction between the *great*, who only commit themselves to minister and the *chief* (greatest), who commit themselves to be *bond-slaves*. (See note—Mt.20:23-28.)

"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Mt.10:27).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:16).

"For ye are bought with a price [Christ's blood]: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor.7:22).

"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col.3:24).

5 (10:41) **Ambition**: the potential conflict among men with ambition. How did the other ten disciples hear what James and John had done? They probably saw the two approach Jesus off in the distance. They saw them bow before Him

(Mt.20:20). Such was most unusual because of their daily association with Him. They knew something unusual was happening. When James and John returned, the ten asked what was going on. Of course, James and John were hesitant to reveal the truth. But, as would be expected, this only aroused the disciples' curiosity and cross-examination more. They pressed and pressed the issue until James and John had to tell their evil and ugly plot.

⇒ Anger was aroused.
⇒ Tempers flared.
⇒ Arguments became inflamed.

The ten were indignant with James and John. What right did they have to do such a thing? Why did they deserve a higher position than any of them? Jealousy, envy, pride, self-centeredness, and bitterness bred within the heart of each against the two. Perhaps even hatred was being expressed. One thing is certain. The band of disciples was threatened; their cohesiveness and the very work of the Lord was at stake. A divisiveness beyond repair was possible.

Thought 1. Selfish ambition can cause some terrible things among men. It can cause...

- jealousy
- envy
- bitterness
- anger
- hatred
- sneakiness
- conflict
- self-centeredness
- suffering
- divisiveness
- death
- destruction

"He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction" (Pr.17:19).

"It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory" (Pr.25:27).

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

6 (10:42-44) **Ambition**: the greatness of good ambition. Jesus did not find fault with ambition on the whole. There is good and true ambition just as there is bad and false ambition. But Jesus was quite clear about the difference between the two. One is of the world, the other of God. Note exactly what He said. True ambition, ambition that is good and healthy, is an ambition that does not seek to rule and to exercise authority.

1. The world's view of ambition is twofold. Most men are caught up to some degree in worldly ambition, seeking more and more. Few are void of worldly ambition.

"Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world" (Ps.49:11).

a. There is the internal view of ambition. A man should have some degree of freedom to seek what he wishes. A man should be allowed some recognition, some position, some influence, some fame, some wealth, some gadgets, some vehicles, some machines. A man should be allowed to fulfill his ambition, seeking and securing whatever he wishes.

b. There is the external view of ambition. A man's ambition (greatness) is judged successful by...

- his wealth
- his home
- his vehicles
- his gadgets
- his position
- his influence
- his recognition
- his social standing
- his fame
- his authority

2. The Lord's view of ambition is fourfold.

a. True ambition or greatness is not exercising lordship and authority over people. It is not desiring the chief positions. True ambition is not self-centered and selfish, not worldly-minded.

b. True ambition does desire greatness. Note Jesus' exact words: "Whosoever will be great among you." But there is a crucial point to note: the greatness desired must focus upon Christ if it is to be true ambition. A man becomes great by doing what Christ says. The greatness sought *must not* be greatness for oneself, but in doing what the Son of God says. It is greatness due to obedience, due to doing what Christ has revealed.

c. True ambition (greatness) seeks to minister, not to be ministered unto (cp. Mk.10:45). It looks for people to help and for ways to help them, whether at work, home, play, or church. It is always seeking those who need a visit, care, attention, company, food, clothing, shelter, money. It seeks for the sake of ministering (cp. Mt.25:34-40).

d. True ambition (greatness) becomes the *servant of all*. The word servant (doulos) means a bond-slave (see note—Ro.1:1). Christ made a significant distinction between the terms *great* and *chief*. Note the difference.

⇒ The "great" are they who "minister."
⇒ The "chiefest" are they who are "servants" or *bond-slaves*.

What Jesus was saying is that among His disciples, *they who minister are great*, but they who are *bond-slaves are the chief*. The idea of ministering is that of occasional service, whereas the bond-slave is a person who is bound to the Lord every moment of life, always serving—regardless of hour or call or difficulty.

The idea of degrees of service is unquestionably in mind. Not every believer serves with the same fervor or commitment. The idea of degrees of reward for works is also conveyed by our Lord's teaching.

What Christ means is this: a person is to be a minister and a servant. True greatness is not found in being a lord or a master, but in ministering and serving others. True ambition and greatness is a person's becoming a *minister and a servant by nature*. He assumes the role of a servant, of a bond-slave (see notes, *Servant*—Ro.1:1).

> **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).**
>
> **"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Mt.18:14).**
>
> **"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).**
>
> **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (Jn.13:14).**
>
> **"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).**
>
> **"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb.12:28).**
>
> **"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life" (Pr.22:4).**
>
> **"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).**

7 (10:45) **Ambition—Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the supreme act of ambition is seen in Jesus Christ. He set His face like a flint to accomplish His purpose. This is seen in three supreme acts.

1. The supreme humiliation. This is the act of coming to earth: "The Son of Man *came*." The incarnation is the Son of God becoming man. To most men, mankind is the summit of creation on this earth. But within the span and scope of the universe and before God, man is nothing—not to an honest and thinking man. He is as a microbe on a speck of sand floating through what seems to be infinite space and lasting only about seventy years if he can.

In all reality, for God to become a member of so low a race of beings is unimaginable. It is the most humiliating act possible.

2. The supreme mission. There is the act of ministering: "[He] came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He was treated as the lowest by the men to whom He came. Impossible, yet true! They gave Him no place to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58), and only three years after publicly announcing that He had come to save them, they killed Him. Now note: Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, yet He secured his kingdom by becoming a minister and a servant to all. He did not "lord it" over men. He ministered to and served men. Because He became the servant to all, God has now highly exalted Him (Ph.2:8).

3. The supreme price. This is the act of giving His life "a ransom for many" (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mk.10:45 for discussion and verses).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(10:45) **Ransom for many** (lutron anti pollon): a ransom in exchange (anti) for many, a ransom for many, a ransom instead of many.

Ransom (lutron) is a means of setting loose in the Old Testament. It is the setting loose (ransom) of a life (Ex.21:30); it is the ransom price, the redemptive price for something, for example: a slave (Lev.19:20), some land (Lev.25:24), a captive (Is.45:13).

The Greek word for ransom (anti) is significant. There is no question that the idea of *exchange* is present. Christ gave His life in *exchange*, as a substitute for many. The word is used two other times in the New Testament, in the equivalent passage in Mt.20:28 and in 1 Tim.2:6. In 1 Tim.2:6 the words are a "substitutionary ransom for all" (antilutron huper panton). In the Greek *huper* is the preposition for the idea of substitution. It is a substitution in behalf of all.

> **"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for [huper] them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for [huper] us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for [huper] the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb.7:27).**
>
> **"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:13-14).**
>
> **"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself " (Heb.9:25-26).**
>
> **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).**
>
> **"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God....For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb.10:12, 14).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Pt.2:24; cp. 1 Cor.5:7; Eph.5:2).**

	H. The Steps for Getting Help: Blind Bartimaeus, 10:46-52 (Mt.20:29-34; cp. Lk.18:35-43)	mercy on me. 49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.	**5 Step 4: Eagerly expecting to receive Jesus' help** a. Jesus stood still, and then He called to the man
1 Jesus in Jericho a. The disciples & the crowd	46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people,	50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.	b. The man cast aside the impeding garment
b. A blind man sat begging	blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging.	51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him,	**6 Step 5: Requesting precisely what is needed**
2 Step 1: Believing the reports about Jesus	47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have	Lord, that I might receive my sight. 52 And Jesus said unto him,	
3 Step 2: Acknowledging personal need[DS1]	mercy on me.	Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And im-	
4 Step 3: Persisting, persevering after Jesus[DS2]	48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have	mediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.	**7 Step 6: Following Jesus**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST PUBLIC MINISTRY: JESUS DEALS WITH SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS, 10:1-52

H. The Steps for Getting Help: Blind Bartimaeus, 10:46-52

(10:46-52) **Introduction**: this is the picture of a man's needing help and needing it desperately. As we read the story, there is no question but that the man's blindness is a picture of the blindness, darkness, and needs of a world that reels in desperation for help. The need may be physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual; it may be some problem with the mind, some desperate loneliness, or some tragic sin. Whatever it is, this passage spells out the steps for getting help.

1. Jesus in Jericho (v.46).
2. Step 1: believing the reports about Jesus (v.47).
3. Step 2: acknowledging personal need (v.47).
4. Step 3: persisting, persevering after Jesus (v.48).
5. Step 4: eagerly expecting to receive Jesus' help (v.49-50).
6. Step 5: requesting precisely what is needed (v.51-52).
7. Step 6: following Jesus (v.52).

1 (10:46) **Jericho—Bartimaeus**: Jesus had been in Jericho (how long we do not know). In the days of Jesus, Jericho was one of the most important cities of Palestine. One of the world's main commercial roads ran right through the city, north to south. The city was only about seventeen miles from Jerusalem, and it is thought to be the oldest city in the world.

It was the Passover season, which means that thousands of pilgrims were making their way to Jerusalem. The pilgrims were passing right through Jericho. Blind Bartimaeus knew this, and he also knew that religious people were more sensitive to the needs of helpless people who had to beg for a living. It is also possible that Bartimaeus had heard that Jesus was in Jericho (cp. Lk.18:35-43). If so, he knew that his best chance to find Jesus would be to station himself at the city limits where Jesus would be passing as He left the city. Whatever the case, Bartimaeus had to beg for a living, so he "sat by the [main] highway...begging."

> **Thought 1.** A man must go where he knows Jesus is, where Jesus "passes by." A man must go where he can hear Jesus, or he may miss the chance of eternal life.
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
> **"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:10).**

2 (10:47) **Belief**: the first step to getting help is believing the reports about Jesus. Sitting there, Bartimaeus heard all kinds of noises coming from the people passing by—the noise of individuals, of groups, of whole caravans. He heard the noise of feet tramping along, of animals, of conversation, of laughter, of play among children. He heard all kinds of talking: serious, jovial, commercial, vain, rude, off-colored, religious. But then something happened: the size of the crowd and the noise and talk changed. The passers-by became a throng, a multitude of people; and the noise and talk were about Jesus, the One for whom he had hoped and longed.

Bartimaeus had been blind for years, maybe for life, with no hope of ever seeing. Apparently he was a beggar with no one to care for him. But then the most glorious event of his life happened. He heard about One called Jesus of Nazareth who was claiming to be the true Messiah. For the first time in his life, hope swelled up in him. He knew there was a possibility that he might be healed and enabled to see. From the very first day that he had heard about Jesus, he had hoped and longed for the chance when Jesus might pass by. Why? Because he *believed the testimonies* about Jesus.

Note another fact. Sitting there by the road as Jesus passed by, he had no way to know it was Jesus. He could not see Him. He could only hear people walking and talking. When he heard people talking about Jesus, he believed it was He. He believed and trusted what he was hearing.

Thought 1. A man must believe the report, the testimony about Jesus. All Bartimaeus ever had was what he heard. He had never seen or been around Jesus. He only knew the testimony people were sharing: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of David. And he believed the testimony.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" (Is.53:1).**
>
> **"The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn" (Is.61:1-2).**

3 (10:47) **Decision, Public—Profession—Mercy—Messiahship**: the second step to getting help is acknowledging personal need. As soon as Bartimaeus heard that it was Jesus, he instantly began shouting out to attract Jesus, creating as much fuss and noise as he could above the crowd and its noise.

The point is this: Bartimaeus acknowledged his need, and he confessed it publicly. He did not approach Jesus secretly or quietly by asking someone close by to appeal to Jesus in his behalf. He had a desperate need and he accepted the fact. He wanted the help of Jesus no matter what. Note two facts.

1. He cried to the "Son of David." This was an inadequate concept of Jesus. But Bartimaeus approached Jesus as his hope, his savior, his deliverer, his leader. He used what knowledge he had of Jesus and cried out to Him.

Thought 1. No man has an adequate concept of Jesus when he first comes to Jesus. No man understands Jesus until after he is saved and has received the Holy Spirit into his life and learned of Christ.

2. He cried out for mercy, not for anything else. He was blind and he was a beggar, yet he did not cry for housing or clothing or food. He cried for his most basic need to be met—for mercy.

> **"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified" (Lk.18:13-14).**
>
> **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).**
>
> **"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Ps.38:9).**
>
> **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).**
>
> **"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Ps.61:2).**
>
> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**
>
> **"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:47) **Son of David**: see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # *3*—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23.

4 (10:48) **Persistence**: the third step to getting help is persisting and persevering after Jesus. Many among the crowd tried to hush Bartimaeus, but he was desperate and determined and in dead earnest. He would not be discouraged, silenced or stopped. He repeatedly cried to the top of his lungs: "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

The point is that Bartimaeus persevered. He had need, and he would not stop seeking to have his need met. Note the voices raised against him, and they were "many." His faith in Jesus was strong. He believed Jesus could really help him. His faith stood against all the voices of *discouragement* and against the feelings of so many that it was *useless*.

Thought 1. Perseverance is the answer to desperate need—persevering prayer and persevering faith (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.7:7; note and DEEPER STUDY # *1*—Lk.11:5-10 for discussion).

> **"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:8).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**

Thought 2. Worldly voices will rise up against us, attempting...

- to pull us away
- to tell us all is useless
- to convince us that our need is too desperate to be met
- to encourage us to try the world's way

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:48) **Persistence—Perseverance**: persistence always grabs the Lord's attention (see outline and notes—Mt.7:7-11. Cp. Lk.18:1.) Note Jesus' question. He already knew what the blind man wanted. He had probably heard him as well, but He wanted the blind man to experience persistence. Why does Christ teach perseverance instead of just meeting our needs immediately? There are at least five reasons.

1. Having to persevere sharpens, increases, and grows our faith. It teaches endurance, experience (victorious living), and hope (Ro.5:2-4).
2. Having to persevere sharpens and makes us more aware of our minds. It gives us more time for thought and meditation and for the searching of the truth about ourselves and our needs. It focuses in on real needs.
3. Having to persevere teaches us to pray and to seek God more. It creates more awareness of our helplessness and our need for His presence and help. It necessitates more fellowship and deep communion with Him.
4. Having to persevere gives us more part in His work and worship. It creates a sense within us of having a greater part. This is not a need on God's part, but a need on our part. Serving Him is a great privilege which He allows us.
5. Having to persevere allows more time for a greater number of people to be reached with God's power. Perseverance is a greater witness for God. When God answers and moves, more people are aroused to observe God's working.

5 (10:49-50) **Expectation**: the fourth step to getting help is eagerly expecting to receive Jesus' help. There are two significant acts in this point.

1. "Jesus *stood still*." The crowd must have been huge. Jesus had to send for the man. Jesus *stood still*...
   - because of the man's need. He could not reach Jesus by himself.
   - because the man had persisted in crying despite many's opposing him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.10:48).
   - because Jesus never turned away from a man who cried for help.

> **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jn.6:37).**
>
> **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).**

2. The man cast aside his coat, cast aside all impediments. This was an interesting act. Bartimaeus wanted nothing to hinder him from reaching Jesus as quickly as he could. All in one motion, he cast aside the hindrances, sprang to his feet (ana pedesas), and moved toward Jesus. The stress is on his eagerness to reach Jesus and allowing nothing to hinder him.

Thought 1. What a lesson for us! How few are so eager! How many hang on to that which hinders and hampers and keeps them from reaching Christ?

> **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph.4:22).**
>
> **"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb.12:1).**
>
> **"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pt.2:11).**
>
> **"If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles" (Job 11:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**

6 (10:51-52) **Conversion**: the fifth step to getting help is requesting precisely what is needed. Note several facts.

1. Bartimaeus knew exactly what he needed and had no difficulty stating his need. He did not waver at all. He was not like many who are vague in their prayers and requests. He had examined himself and knew precisely what he needed.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

2. Bartimaeus needed, however, to make a personal confession to Jesus. Jesus, of course, knew what Bartimaeus needed; but the Lord's knowing about the man's need was not enough. The man had to make a personal confession to Jesus.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

3. Bartimaeus needed to confess his faith in Jesus' power for the sake of the others standing there. They needed to know that it was faith in Jesus that saved a man.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

4. The word for Lord (Rabboni) means *my Master*. It is a title of reverent respect. Note the possessive "my." Bartimaeus' heart reached out to Jesus, desiring to belong to Him.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

5. A specific request got a specific answer: "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (see notes—Mk.11:22-23; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:24; notes—Ro.10:16-17; Heb.11:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:6).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

7 (10:52) **Discipleship—Following Jesus**: the sixth step to getting help is following Jesus. This was a very tender scene. Note what Jesus had told Bartimaeus, "Go thy way." But Bartimaeus did not go, not after his Master had touched him. Bartimaeus clung to Jesus. Nothing was going to pry him away. He "followed Jesus in the way."

Thought 1. There are several lessons here.

1) There is a heart of appreciation, of being grateful and thankful.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col.1:12).

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col.3:15).

"When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee" (Dt.8:10).

2) There is the idea of genuineness of conversion. He followed through.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

3) There is the idea of growing, wanting to learn more and more about this Savior of men.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke [service and discipleship] upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:28-30).

4) There is the testimony of loyalty and faithfulness.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

	CHAPTER 11	door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.	
	VII. THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44	5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?	
		6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.	
	A. The Triumphal Entry: A Dramatic Warning, Jesus is the Messiah,[DS1] **11:1-11** (Mt.21:1-11; Lk.19: 28-40; Jn.12:12-19)	7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.	c. The homage of the disciples[DS4]
		8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.	**2 Scene 2: The triumphal entry—Christ came to save now (Hosanna)**
1 Scene 1: The colt—Christ came in peace[DS2]	And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,	9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:	a. The people's concept: A national hero—Hosanna, save now[DS5,6]
a. The painstaking details that must be followed	2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.	10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.	b. The Lord's meaning: Spiritual peace[DS7,8]
1) The colt never sat upon 2) The owner & his question[DS3]	3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.	11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.	**3 Scene 3: The investigation of the situation—Christ came obediently** **4 Scene 4: The seclusion at Bethany—Christ prepared spiritually**
b. The details minutely followed	4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

A. The Triumphal Entry: A Dramatic Warning, Jesus is the Mesisah, 11:1-11

(11:1-12:44) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus Christ, Ministry—Jerusalem**: three significant points needs to be made about Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem.

1. The first three gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) say little about Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem. The present passage is the first mention of a specific visit. The three synoptic gospels give only a hint that Jesus was ever in Jerusalem, hints such as...
   - "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children" (Mt.23:37). This indicates He had been in the city and made appeal after appeal to the people.
   - His warm family-like relationship with Martha and her sister and brother, Mary and Lazarus. Their home was His home when in Jerusalem (see note—Jn.11:1-3).
   - His friendship with Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea. They were both involved in His burial, indicating a close friendship probably developed in several meetings (see note—Mt.27:57-60. Cp. Jn.19:38-42.)

The first three gospels concentrate on Jesus' ministry in Galilee. It is the fourth gospel, the Gospel of John, that covers Jesus' ministry in Judea and Jerusalem. John tells us that Jesus was in Jerusalem quite often, especially during the great feasts. (Cp. Jn.2:13f; 5:1f; 7:1-10f; esp. v.10 to get an idea of His ministry in Jerusalem.)

2. When Jesus visited Jerusalem, His ministry differed entirely from His Galilean ministry. In Galilee Jesus taught many subjects, but in Jerusalem He focused only upon one theme: His Messiahship. He spent His time proclaiming strongly that He was beyond any question the Messiah. There was a reason for this. Jerusalem was the capital of Palestine, and the temple itself was there. Jerusalem was the hub and center of Jewish life and worship. The population of Jerusalem and the surrounding suburbs and cities ranged in the hundreds of thousands (for example, Bethphage and Bethany. Even Jericho, a city of sizeable population, was only about seventeen miles away.) The temple required over twenty thousand priests alone, not counting the Levite helpers who must have numbered even more. If there was any place where Jesus would proclaim His Messiahship, it would be in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a city that held every sort of man who had been born and who was yet to be born. Jerusalem was to hear the truth of God's Son and of God's great love for the world. The men of Jerusalem and all men born thereafter were to be left without excuse.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem [world, world], thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt.23:37).

3. Note the following visits to Jerusalem.
   a. John 2:13f: Jesus cleansed the temple proclaiming it to be "My Father's house" (Jn.2:16); He proclaimed that He was the Son of Man (Jn.3:14); and God's only begotten Son (Jn.3:16).
   b. John 5:1f: Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. Then He proclaimed that He had the right to break the Sabbath law because He was the Son of the Father. He was equal with God in every sense of the word (Jn.5:1-16; 5:17-30).
   c. Jn.7:1-10f: He declared that He was sent of God (Jn.7:16-17, 28-29; 8:18, 26, 29, 42); the Source of life (Jn.7:37-39); the Light of the World (Jn.8:12; 9:5); the Messiah (Jn.8:24, 28); the Spokesman of God (Jn.8:26-28, 40); the Son of Man (Jn.8:28); that God was His Father (Jn.9:28, 36, 38, 49, 54); that He had come from God (Jn.8:42); that He was the great "I Am" (Jn.8:58); the Son of God (Jn.9:35-37); the Great Shepherd of Life (Jn.10:1-42); and on and on (cp. the verses in Jn.10-21 and the Master Index).

(11:1-11) **Introduction**: there is no louder declaration of our Lord's Messiahship than the triumphal entry. He was picturing that He was *the Messiah*, deliberately proclaiming that He was "the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16). But the triumphal entry was something else as well. Jesus was *dramatically warning* the people. They must change their concept of Messiahship. He was not coming as the *national hero* to save the world physically and materially by overthrowing the Roman and Gentile governments of the world. He was coming as the *King of Peace* to save the world spiritually and eternally. Spiritual and eternal salvation must occur first, then He would *return* to bring peace and national salvation to all men everywhere. He had to come first as the King of Peace; then He would come as the King of Conquest.

1. Scene 1: the colt—Christ came in peace (v.1-7).
2. Scene 2: the triumphal entry—Christ came to save now (Hosanna) (v.8-10).
3. Scene 3: the investigation of the situation—Christ came obediently (v.11).
4. Scene 4: the seclusion at Bethany—Christ prepared spiritually (v.11).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(11:1-11) **Jesus Christ, Last Week—Holy Week—Palm Sunday**: this was the beginning of Jesus' last week on earth. He had spent the night before (the Sabbath evening) in Bethany with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (Jn.12:1f). The last week of our Lord's life has been known as Holy Week from the earliest times by Christians everywhere. The triumphal entry was the first event of the week, taking place on the first day. It is called Palm Sunday.

1 (11:1-7) **Jesus Christ, King; Purpose**: the first scene involved the colt, which symbolized that Christ came in peace. Note an important fact. The stress of these verses is the painstaking details that must be followed, and they were followed to the most minute detail. Christ had a reason for making such detailed preparations to enter Jerusalem. He was deliberately fulfilling the prophecy of Zech.9:9. The prophecy said four things.

1. "Tell ye the daughter of Sion [that is, Jerusalem]": Jerusalem was to be told, given a threefold warning. Why must she be warned? Because what she expected was not going to happen, not like she anticipated.
2. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee": this was the first warning. Jerusalem's King was coming, just as Jerusalem had expected. The people were correct in this part of their expectation. But there was danger in their expectation, the danger of being so fervent in their own expectancy and ideas that they missed what really happened. "Thy King cometh," but He came somewhat differently than expected.

Thought 1. What a lesson for us! We must guard against reading into Scripture what is not there, especially in looking toward the return of our Lord. We must not dictate *how* Jesus is to return; we must not add to what God has revealed in His Word.

3. "Thy King cometh...*meek*": this was the second warning. The Messiah was coming in meekness, not as a reigning monarch. He was coming to win men's hearts and lives spiritually and eternally, not physically and materially (see notes—Mk.11:1-11; Eph.1:3. Cp. Mt.11:29.)
4. "Thy King cometh...sitting upon an ass, and a colt": this was the third warning. The Messiah was coming not as a conqueror riding a white stallion, but as a King of peace riding a young colt. He was coming to save the world peacefully, to reconcile the world to the God of love and reconciliation, not to the God of hate and retaliation and war. He was not going to kill men and overthrow their governments (the Romans and Gentiles). He was coming to win men's hearts and lives through the glorious news (gospel) that God loves and reconciles (see outline and notes—Eph.2:13-18).

Again, note the prophecy and the careful preparation Christ made to fulfill the prophecy. This says something: Christ was dramatizing His Messiahship so clearly that men could not fail to see and understand that He was God's Messiah. This was God's will, prophesied generations before Christ came. God wanted His Son to proclaim His Messiahship so clearly that the people could not mistake what He was doing. God wanted the world to know that He was bringing peace to earth through His Son Jesus Christ.

"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk.1:78-79).

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk.2:13-14).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)" (Acts 10:36).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:14).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

"The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace" (Ps.29:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(11:1-7) **Ass—Colt**: in ancient days the colt was a noble animal. It was used as a beast of service to carry the burdens of men. But more significantly, it was used by kings and their emissaries. When they entered a city in peace, they rode a colt to symbolize their peaceful intentions (cp. the judges of Israel and the chieftains throughout the land, Judg.5:10; 10:4). This differed dramatically from a conquering king. When a king entered a city as a conqueror, he rode a stallion.

Jesus was dramatically demonstrating two things for the people. First, He was unquestionably the promised King, the Savior of the people; but secondly, He was not coming as the conquering king. He was not coming as a worldly potentate, in pomp and ceremony; not coming as the leader of an army to kill, injure, and maim. The people must change their concept of the Messiah. He was coming as the Savior of Peace, the Savior of all men. He was coming to show men that God is the God of love and reconciliation.

1. The colt was a symbol of peace. Jesus came to bring peace, as pointed out in the above discussion.
2. The colt symbolized service. It was a noble animal, an animal used in the service of men to carry their burdens. Jesus came upon the colt symbolizing that He came to serve men, to bear their burdens for them.
3. The colt symbolized sacredness. It had never been ridden before (v.2). Animals and things used for sacred or religious purposes had to be animals and things that had never been used before (Num.19:2; Dt.21:3; 1 Sam.6:7). This detail points to the sacredness of the event. It pictured for everyone that Jesus was deliberately proclaiming that *He is the sacred hope*, the promised Messiah of the people.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(11:3-6) **The Owner of the Colt**: see note, *Prophecy*—Mt.21:2-5.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(11:7) **Disciples, Homage to Jesus—Obedience**: Christ deliberately received the homage of the disciples (reverence, recognition). They did exactly what He asked despite the uncertainty of the matter. They probably had no money to buy or rent the animals, and they were to be questioned about why they wanted the animals; yet they obeyed, not questioning or doubting.

Note the other act of homage. There was no saddle for their Lord. They cared about Him and His comfort, so they took their own outer garments and threw them across the animal. The two men, by following Christ, would have accepted a life of poverty, so they would have little clothing. It cost them to use their clothing for such a humble act. The clothing would become soiled and smelly. Nevertheless, they cared and they worshipped through this act.

The point is that Christ was now unmistakably claiming the dignity and rights of a king. He was not washing feet now, nor portraying Himself as the servant of men; He was deliberately accepting the people's homage and reverence.

But note something of critical importance. In claiming the dignity and rights of a king, He was doing it in the most humble practice of His day: entering the city as a king of peace riding a young colt instead of the conqueror's stallion. He was disclaiming all ideas of an earthly and material kingdom. He had come to save Jerusalem and the world through peace, not war.

2 (11:8-10) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the second scene was the triumphal entry itself. This symbolized that Christ came to save now (Hosanna). Note the word "many" (v.8). There was a "very great multitude" (Mt.21:8). They were proclaiming Jesus to be the Messiah, the Son of David, who had come to deliver them from the bondage of Roman and Gentile rule (see DEEPER STUDIES # 5-8—MK.11:9-10). Of course by riding the colt, Jesus was proclaiming that *He had come to save now*, but to save by bringing peace spiritually, not militarily (see notes—Mk.11:1-11; 11:1-7).

Note, however, that Jesus deliberately received the homage of the people. Apparently what happened was this. The multitude had begun to gather since early morning, excitedly looking for Him who had raised Lazarus from the dead. John tells us this. In fact, he says there were so many people that the Pharisees said "the world is gone after Him" (Jn.12:17-19). There was the crowd of disciples already accompanying Him, the pilgrims on their way to the Passover Feast who

had joined His caravan, the residents of Bethany and Bethphage who had heard of His presence and the miracles, and those who were already in Jerusalem, citizens and pilgrims who rushed out searching for Him.

We are led to imagine an enormous crowd of teeming thousands lining the roadway as Christ was helped atop the colt to begin His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. There are several facts that point toward this conclusion.

1. Two million pilgrims or more gathered in Jerusalem every year for the Passover Feast (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2). Thousands upon thousands were strict religionists, believing in the Jewish Messiah.

2. The news being spread throughout the city and surrounding area concerned the miracles Christ had performed—a concentration of miracles for some days now which included the raising of Lazarus from the dead (Jn.11:1f; 11:55-56). The very atmosphere was electric with the exciting news that Jesus was God's promised Messiah. Multitudes had heard that He was in Bethany and Bethphage (Mk.14:1-9). As is said above, there was the multitude who turned around from Jerusalem to meet Him (Jn.12:17-19). There was the multitude already travelling with Him (Mt.21:29). And there was the multitude of citizens in Bethany and Bethphage who had begun gathering around Him (Mk.14:1-9; Jn.12:1f). The whole thrust of the picture points to teeming thousands searching for Him and rushing out to welcome Him when they heard He was coming. (Note the words of Matthew: "the multitudes that went before, and that followed," v.9.)

The multitudes did two things.

1. They received Him as King. This was shown by two acts that were always done for kings when they entered a city. They stripped off their cloaks and cut down tree branches, and they spread both out on the roadway before Him. They wished to honor and pay Him the homage of a King. They wished to show Him that they received Him as the promised King of Israel.

2. They received Him as Messiah (see notes—Mt.21:8-9).

> **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**
>
> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
>
> **"Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1 Tim.6:15).**
>
> **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:11-12).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(11:9) **Hosanna**: means save now, or save, we pray.

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(11:9) **Blessed...of the Lord**: means blessed is He who is sent by God to save His people; blessed is He who is sent with the authority of God.

DEEPER STUDY # 7
(11:10) **Kingdom of David**: see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—2:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23.

DEEPER STUDY # 8
(11:10) **In the Highest**: means God save, we pray; thou who art in the Highest, save now through Him whom You have sent.

3 (11:11) **Obedience**: the third scene was the investigation of the temple, of the situation. This symbolized that Jesus came obediently. The scene was descriptive. Jesus "entered into the temple: and...looked round about upon *all things*." He stood there, off to the side someplace where He had the vantage point of seeing all that was happening. Evening was approaching and He was tired. He stood all alone. The point to see is that He was doing God's will. It took great courage to stand there. The Jewish authorities were seeking some opportunity to take His life, and they were upset more than ever now, for He had not discouraged the homage of the people (cp. Lk.19:39).

⇒ The Romans sensed that a popular uprising might be boiling.
⇒ The Jewish Herodians (ruling party) feared being blamed and replaced by the Romans.
⇒ The Pharisees were stirred to new depths of envy and malice.

But despite all, He had to be courageous; He had to stand there. It was God's will. He had to investigate the situation, investigate God's house. He had to prepare all things for the salvation of God's people. He had come obediently; He had come to obey God.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:30).

"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).

Thought 1. There are two lessons in this point.

1) We are to obey, no matter the threat and opposition.
2) We should investigate before entering into any situation that is threatening or involves corruption (see note—Mk.11:15-19).

4 (11:11) **Preparation—Prayer**: the fourth scene was the seclusion at Bethany. This symbolized that Christ prepared spiritually. Jesus retired for the night in the surrounding area of Bethany. No doubt He spent a good deal of time alone in prayer. Much lay ahead of Him in this last week of His life. He knew it, sensing every detail and emotion He was to experience. He needed the strong hand of His Father upholding Him. He needed to prepare spiritually. (See note, *Preparation*—Lk.21:37, where we are told that Jesus spent the nights of His last week in prayer on the Mount of Olives.)

"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Lk.5:16).

"And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (Lk.6:12).

	B. The Fig Tree Cursed: A Warning Against a Fruitless Life, 11:12-14 (Mt.21:17-20)	off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.	**3 Jesus examined the fruit**
1 Jesus had need	12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:	14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.	**4 Jesus condemned profession without fruit**
2 Jesus saw potential	13 And seeing a fig tree afar		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

B. The Fig Tree Cursed: A Warning Against a Fruitless Life, 11:12-14

(11:12-14) **Introduction—Fig Tree—Judgment—God, Severity**: Why did Jesus destroy the fig tree? Many say that such destruction was contrary to His character. They say He would never lash out at a tree just for not bearing fruit, especially when it was not even time for the figs to be ripe (v.13). But two things always need to be remembered.

1. God is both good and severe. As Paul says, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God" (Ro.11:22). We are to stress both the goodness and severity of God, not just His goodness. God is love, but He is also pure and just. He demonstrates care and forgiveness, but He also holds men responsible and accountable. God is not an indulgent Father who is never severe. He is not weak and foolish in dealing with men, winking at and never punishing their unfruitfulness. Unfruitfulness and sin lead to destruction, and God is not *a bad Father* who is going to allow the whole human race to destroy itself. God is good to men. He punishes unfruitfulness so that others will bear fruit.
2. Jesus always acted either to teach men or to save and help men. In the destruction of the fig tree, Jesus was teaching men a much needed lesson—a lesson that shouts loudly, "*Be fruitful*! Guard against profession without bearing fruit."

1. Jesus had need (v.12).
2. Jesus saw potential (v.13).
3. Jesus examined the fruit (v.13).
4. Jesus condemned profession without fruit (v.14).

1 (11:12) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: Jesus had need. Mark says very simply, "He was hungry." Jesus had spent the night in Bethany. Matthew says He was walking into Jerusalem "in the morning." It was early morning before most had arisen from bed (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.21:18). Most likely, Jesus had been up praying for some time. He needed to be spiritually prepared; He needed very special strength in this final week of His life upon earth.

He left Bethany before breakfast. The point is He was hungry; He had need. And His need painted a picture of His craving for fruit—much fruit in the lives of men. Christ wants men, and He wants fruitful men. This is His hunger, His craving, His longing. This is the very purpose of His being.

> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing...Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:5, 8).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost [unfruitful]" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Ro.6:21-22).**
>
> **"Ye also are become dead...by the body of Christ...that [ye] should bring forth fruit unto God" (Ro.7:4).**
>
> **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).**

2 (11:13) **Hypocrisy—Unfruitfulness**: Jesus saw potential. Jesus saw the tree "afar off," a great distance away. The tree was so full of foliage (despite the early date) that it appeared to be fully developed. This, of course, meant that there were figs on the tree; for the fig tree puts forth its buds before its leaves (see note 3 —Mk.11:13). One would at least expect the tree to have fruit even if not ripe. It was a natural expectation. The full foliage, fruitful appearance was openly professed. Note four things. (See outline and notes—Mk.4:3-20.)

1. The leafy appearance indicated fruit. So it is with men who profess: their profession indicates fruit.
2. The leafy appearance indicated healthiness, the lack of disease. Profession indicates that the disease of sin has been taken care of, sprayed, and destroyed.

3. The leafy appearance, full foliage stirred expectation. Jesus expected fruit to be present. He expected His hunger to be satisfied by the fruit of the tree. Profession stirs expectation among all who observe, especially among those who are close.

4. The leafy appearance, full foliage necessitates fruit. Profession necessitates that fruitfulness follow. If there is no fruit, then profession is empty and good for nothing. It may as well not exist (cp. Mt.5:13; Jn.15:6).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

3 (11:13) **Judgment—False Profession—Unfruitfulness**: Jesus examined. When Jesus came to the fig tree, He looked, inspected, and examined; but He found *nothing*—no fruit whatsoever. Despite its foliage and appearance, the tree was barren and destitute. It *appeared fruitful*, declared itself to be fruitful; but after inspection, the tree had nothing *but leaves* (appearance). Note two warnings.

1. The appearance of full foliage attracted attention. It was the very appearance of the tree that drew Jesus. Thus it is with profession. Christ is definitely attracted to any man who professes Him. He comes to the man desiring to love, help, and fellowship with him.

2. The appearance of full foliage invited inspection. Jesus was hungry for the fruit. When He arrived, He looked and looked, but found no fruit. So it is with man. Christ craves fruit from man. If He sees a man profess Him, Christ is going to draw near and inspect. A man who professes Christ is inviting Christ to inspect him, and Christ will inspect; in fact, He will inspect a man who professes much quicker than the man who does not profess. The professing hypocrite is much more accountable than the non-professor.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor.3:13).

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

"For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad" (Mk.4:22).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl.12:14).

4 (11:14) **False Profession—Unfruitfulness**: Jesus condemned profession without fruit. Standing there, Jesus saw no fruit. The tree had life; it was existing. It had the sap to produce a rich foliage of leaves; but the sad fact was, despite all the appearance of fruit-bearing, the tree had none. Its very purpose for existing was to bear fruit, but it did not. It failed at three points.

1. The tree had an empty profession. So do men. Men profess, but their profession is empty. Their lives do not match their profession. They lack life, behavior, works, purity, holiness, faith, love, and on and on. There is no distinction between them and the world.

2. The tree had an unfulfilled purpose. So do men. They profess Christ, but they continue in their own worldly pursuits, forgetting God's purpose entirely. Many who profess Christ spend their time, energy, and money to pursue their own desires and ambitions instead of God's will and purpose.

3. The tree deceived instead of serving. So do men. They profess to serve, and perhaps do show a little service; but their commitment is to self, family, business, property, society—to an innumerable list of things. Service to God is only an *addition* to everything else. God is not the true Lord of the professor. The professor has no intention of serving the Lord. He looks upon God as merely *being there*, along with everything else.

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Mt.7:17).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

"For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter" (Dt.32:32).

	C. The Temple Cleansed: A Warning to Those Who Abuse God's Temple, 11:15-19 (Mt.21:12-16; Lk.19: 45-46; cp. Jn.2:13-16)	that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.	God's house
		17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.	c. Those who affected the atmosphere of prayer d. Those who shut people out e. Those who changed the purpose of the temple
1 Jesus entered the temple	15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into	18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and	**3 Jesus caused a reaction when the truth of the temple was proclaimed**
2 Jesus cast some out of the temple a. Those who commercialized or secularized religion	the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;	sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.	a. Some sought to persecute Him b. Some were astonished
b. Those who desecrated	16 And would not suffer	19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.	**4 Jesus left when the truth was rejected**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

C. The Temple Cleansed: A Warning to Those Who Abuse God's Temple, 11:15-19

(11:15-19) **Introduction—Temple, Cleansing**: the cleansing of the temple took place on Monday, the day after the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The scene was this: teeming thousands had lined the roadway for Jesus' triumphal entry. As He rode along to the shouts of welcome from the multitudes, He was led right up to the steps of the temple. He entered the temple and "looked round about upon all things" (v.11), observing all that was going on. He stood off to the side observing all the corruption. After some time, heartbroken and weary, He left, returning to Bethany to spend Sunday night. When He arose on Monday morning, He returned to the temple and cleansed it of those who profaned its sacredness.

Four things should be noted about the temple during this last week of our Lord's life.

1. Jesus was ending His ministry in the temple, His Father's house of prayer, the place where God's presence dwells in a very special way. He was about to complete His life upon earth—a glorious ministry fulfilling the will of God perfectly. The night before, as He had stood off by Himself in the temple observing all that was taking place, His thoughts must have been very contemplative: meditating upon His Father, His life now about completed, the great sacrifice He was to pay for man's sins, the corruption of the temple taking place all around Him, the worshipping that should be taking place, and so much more. His heart was probably drawn ever so close to God, yet broken and weeping within. Right before Him was a picture of the terrible sin for which He was to die. The temple itself, the place where men should be able to draw close to God, was corrupted by men. It had become anything but a house of prayer. It was a place for commercialism, for man's greed.
2. Jesus was revealing who He was by cleansing the temple. He was proclaiming to all generations that He had the right to determine how the temple was to be used and to purge it of corruptions. As God's Son, the temple was His dwelling place, the place where the worship of God was to be especially known.
3. In cleansing the temple, Jesus was revealing how men were to treat and use the temple of God.
4. Jesus began and ended His ministry by cleansing the temple. The two cleansings were separate events which marked the opening and closing of His ministry. The importance of the temple as God's house of prayer and worship was thereby demonstrated.

When our Lord entered Jerusalem, He did not go up to the palace of a King, nor to the courts of the rulers; but He went up to the temple, to the House of God. His kingdom was not of this world; it was not a physical kingdom. It was of heaven; it was a spiritual kingdom. His authority and rule were in the temple of God and in the hearts of men. Therefore, He went up to the temple of God to cleanse it and to teach us how the temple is to be used.

1. Jesus entered the temple (v.15).
2. Jesus cast some out of the temple (v.15-17).
3. Jesus caused a reaction when the truth of the temple was proclaimed (v.18).
4. Jesus left when the truth was rejected (v.19).

1 (11:15) **Temple**: Jesus entered the temple. A person must understand the layout of the temple in order to see what was happening in this event. It sat on top of Mt. Zion, and it is thought to have covered about thirty acres of land. The temple consisted of two parts, the temple building itself and the temple precincts or courtyards. The Greek language has two different words to distinguish which is meant.

1. *The temple building* (naos) was a small, ornate structure which sat in the center of the temple property. It was called the Holy Place or Holy of Holies, and only the High Priest could enter its walls; but even he could enter only once during the year, on the Day of Atonement.
2. *The temple precincts* (hieron) were four courtyards which surrounded the temple building, each decreasing in their importance to the Jewish mind. It is critical to remember that great walls separated the courts from each other.

a. The Court of the Priests was first. Only the priests were allowed to enter this court. Within the courtyard stood the great furnishings of worship: the Altar of Burnt Offering, The Brazen Laver, the Seven Branched lampstand, the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Showbread.
b. The Court of the Israelites was next. This was a huge courtyard where Jewish worshippers met together for joint services on the great feast days. It was also where worshippers handed over their sacrifices to the priests.
c. The Court of the Women was the third courtyard. Women were usually limited to this area except for worship. They could, however, enter the Court of the Israelites when they came to make sacrifice or worship in a joint assembly on a great feast day.
d. The Court of the Gentiles was the last courtyard. It covered a vast space, surrounding all the other courtyards, and was the place of worship for all Gentile converts to Judaism.

When Jesus entered the temple, it was the Court of the Gentiles that He entered. It is this court, the outer court, that is the center of Jesus' anger.

Thought 1. Note two significant points.
1) Great barriers are built between people in their worship. Imagine the huge walls (barriers) separating people from God and the various courtyards favoring Jewish men before women and all Jews before any Gentile. Imagine the self-righteousness, pride, self-centeredness, prejudice, envy, and jealousy. Where is love, care, ministry, evangelism, social consciousness, and a sense of human need in such a scheme of religion? Every generation of believers must search their hearts for any sign of prejudice and division and purge their hearts of such sins.
2) Christ cleansed the *outer court*, not the *inner court*. It was not just the worship center that was *set apart* to God; it was the worship precincts as well. All thirty acres were hallowed ground and were to be treated as such. This is a warning to the church that must be heeded (see note—1 Cor.3:17).

2 (11:15-17) **Temple—Church**: Jesus cast some out of the temple. This whole scene took place in the court of the Gentiles. There were five offenses, five defilements or corruptions, that caused Jesus to cast men out of the temple.

1. Jesus cast out those who commercialized and secularized religion. The outer court of the temple, the court of the Gentiles, was the place where Gentiles worshipped. But it was tragically abused. It had become nothing more than a commercial marketplace owned, and in many cases operated, by the priests. It was used for the selling and buying of sacrificial animals which included oxen and sheep as well as smaller doves and pigeons. It was used for the inspection of the animals' purity, and it was also used for the exchanging of foreign currencies. Every Passover season found thousands of pilgrims from all nations travelling great distances to come to the temple. It was usually impossible for a pilgrim to bring his own animal for sacrifice; but if he did, he had to get it by the inspector, which often cost a fee. The bickering back and forth created an atmosphere of utter chaos that apparently gave off the sound of a human volcanic uproar (see note, pt.2—Eph.2:14-15).

Hundreds of thousands of animals were sold at the great feasts; and, unfortunately, the High Priest and other priests were often in the middle of the commercialism. It was this commercialism and secularism of religion that Jesus struck out against. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.21:12-16 for detailed discussion and thoughts.)

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:30).
"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab.2:20).

2. Jesus cast out those who desecrated God's house. Note that people were using the temple grounds as a thoroughfare (v.16). The temple and its grounds were so large that the entrances had become a shortcut from one section of town to another, especially if one were carrying a heavy load. Jesus was forbidding such disrespect and desecration of God's house.

Thought 1. Note how hallowed the temple was to Jesus. He forbade people to walk across its outer courtyard, even if they were carrying a heavy load and had to travel a much longer route. This should speak loudly and clearly to the church in every generation. God expects His church and its grounds or courtyards to be held in the highest respect and esteem.

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).
"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Ex.3:5).

3. Jesus cast out those who affected the atmosphere of prayer within the temple. The temple was more than just a building and grounds. It was a "house of prayer." In fact, note Jesus' exact words. He said three things about the temple.
a. The temple is "My house." "My" is possessive. Christ possesses the temple. He is the Lord, the Owner of it. Any who are within its walls are either His guests or His servants. No one has the right to mistreat someone else's house. The guest and servant are to respect the property of the Owner.
b. "My house shall be called...the house of prayer." The purpose of the Lord's house is prayer. It is to be used for prayer *so much* that it becomes known as and called "the house of prayer." Prayer is to be its distinctiveness, its function, the very thing for which it is known (communion, sharing, praising, requesting, giving thanks, listening, and worship).

c. "My house shall be called *of all nations* the house of prayer." The temple is to be the same in all nations: a house of prayer. No nation, no people is to use it for any other purpose. Within all nations, the temple is to be used for prayer and to be known and called "the house of prayer."

Thought 1. The atmosphere for prayer is hindered by...

- noise
- other religious activities
- secular activities
- personal barriers
- disturbed spirits
- divisive spirits
- spiritual unpreparedness
- religious barriers

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jn.4:24).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker" (Ps.95:6).

"Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy" (Ps.99:5).

4. Jesus cast out those who shut people out. The temple was to be a house of prayer for *all* nations. Note two things.
   a. Neither the Gentiles nor anyone else were to be excluded. The women and Gentiles were to have as much *access* to the inner court of worship as the Jewish men (cp. Is.56:7).
   b. The Court of the Gentiles was to have an atmosphere of prayer as much as any other court of the temple. There were no *sections for worship* within the temple, not in the Lord's mind. All the temple and its courtyards were for prayer and worship.

Thought 1. This is a critical lesson—a lesson that God has tried and tried to teach men and nations down through the years. There is no caste system, social crust, superior race, or inferior race. There is not even a *better person or worse person or favorite person or special person*, not in God's eyes.

"God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

"For God so loved the world [every nation, every man equally], that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

Thought 2. Every person is to have access to the temple of God. No one is to be barred, not even ignored in the temple. The temple (church) is to be opened wide for all, and all are to know that it is *God's house of prayer* for each one. Each one is to know that he can pray therein, being welcomed, comforted, and put at ease. This includes...

- the poor
- the destitute
- the widower
- the widow
- the dirty
- the smelly
- the divorced
- the sick
- the ragged
- the sinner
- the child
- the retarded
- the hungry
- the orphan
- the elderly

5. Jesus cast out those who changed the purpose of the temple. Tragically, it was the priests themselves who altered the purpose of the temple. It is not known just when, but at some point in history the priests decided to take advantage of the worshippers' need for sacrificial animals and supplies. The priests saw how they could reap some of the profit for the welfare of the temple and for themselves. They began to set up booths within the Court of the Gentiles for the convenience of the pilgrims and to help defray the cost of the temple and to meet their own needs.

Note a crucial point that issues a severe warning to God's people. The people were sold items that were necessary for their worship. They were not just items that would *help them* in their spiritual growth and their worship, but they were items that were absolutely necessary. They had to have the items.

Now think for a moment. If the items were necessary for their worship and growth, what was wrong with what the priests did? The words of v.15 tell us: "Jesus...cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple." The buying and selling of the items for worship and growth was necessary and good, *but not within the temple*. It was to be done outside the temple walls, off the temple grounds. The temple and church were not the place for commercialism.

"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (Jn.2:16).

"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (1 Cor.11:22).

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it" (Jer.7:30).

"Her [the temple, the churches] prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (Zeph.3:4).

3 (11:18) **Temple—Jesus Christ, Reaction Against**: Jesus caused a reaction when the truth of the temple was proclaimed. There were three reactions against Him.

1. Some were so angered they began to persecute Jesus. In fact, they sought to destroy Him. The Greek word "destroy" (apolesousin) means to utterly destroy. This violent reaction was, of course, from those who were abusing and desecrating the temple. They wanted to immediately stamp out His influence. They feared lest what He was doing would catch on, forcing them to stop their secular activities within the temple. The only way they saw to stamp out His influence was to get rid of Him.

Thought 1. How many today would be *gotten rid of* if they really sought to cleanse the church of the abusers and secular activities often allowed and promoted within its walls?

> **"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).**
>
> **"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).**
>
> **"Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right" (Pr.16:8).**
>
> **"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).**

2. Some were astonished at Jesus' doctrine, at what He was teaching by His action.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Ps.38:9).**
>
> **"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Is.26:9).**

4 (11:19) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: Jesus left when the truth was rejected by the leaders. His life was being threatened; it was dangerous to stay overnight in the city. He could not foolishly expose Himself—He still had some things to do for God. His hour had not yet arrived, so He returned to the Mount of Olives which was safer during the night hours. (See note 2 and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Mount of Olives*—Lk.21:37.)

Thought 1. In doing things for God and in carrying out His will, we are not to foolishly expose ourselves to danger and threats.

	D. The Conditions of Prayer, 11:20-26 (Mt.21:21-22)	into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.	faith: Prayer 1) Not doubting—in your heart 2) Believing—in God's authority d. The results of faith
1 The fig tree was noticed, cp. v.12-14 a. The tree had been cursed by Jesus b. Peter was surprised at the answer to Jesus' prayer	20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.	24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.	**3 Condition 2: Expectancy** a. Emotions: Desire b. Will: Ask c. Spirit: Believe
2 Condition 1: Faith in God a. The object of faith: God	21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away. 22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.	25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.	**4 Condition 3: Forgiveness** a. While praying, forgive
b. The purpose of faith: To remove mountains c. The way to possess	23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast	26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.	b. God's forgiveness is conditional

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

D. The Conditions of Prayer, 11:20-26

(11:20-26) **Introduction**: prayer has its conditions. Jesus used the fig tree to teach what the conditions of prayer are.

1. The fig tree was noticed (v.20-21).
2. Condition 1: faith in God (v.22-23).
3. Condition 2: expectancy (v.24).
4. Condition 3: forgiveness (v.25-26).

1 (11:20-21) **Prayer**: the fig tree was noticed as the disciples returned to the temple on Tuesday morning. It had not been noticed the evening before because they either took a different route out of the city to Bethany or it was too dark to notice when they passed by.

There are those who say the fig tree represented Israel. The fig tree was full of leaves, appearing fruitful, but it had no fruit. Israel appeared to be full, to be religious, professing spiritual fruit; but the nation bore no fruit. Its religion was barren, legalistic, and fruitless. Thus, the tree was a sign of disappointment and of coming justice and punishment.

We must note, however, this was not the lesson drawn by Jesus. There may be many lessons drawn from the event, including Israel's experience; but the application made by Jesus was clearly power, power that comes through faith and prayer (see outline and notes—Mt.21:17-22). Mark approaches the subject from a slightly different angle, an angle that can be titled "*The Conditions of Prayer.*"

Peter was *surprised* at the answer to Jesus' prayer or pronouncement in cursing the fig tree. His surprise was both at the *effectiveness and the quickness of the answer.*

> **Thought 1.** The man who meets the conditions of prayer will be more effective and be more likely to have quick answers to his prayers.

2 (11:22-23) **Faith—Prayer**: the first condition to prayer is faith in God. But note four significant facts.

1. The object of faith is God Himself. The critical words are "in God." There are three significant things that need to be noted about the object of faith.
   a. Jesus did not say, "Have faith," but "Have faith *in God.*" Faith has to have an object. "In God" is where one is to have faith, where one is to place his faith. Faith has no value by itself; only the object (God) has value.

      The Bible never says to have faith in faith, yet this is the experience of many. Too often, a great difficulty or problem arises, and the believer feels he has to *arouse* his faith. He feels that if he can just *stir up* enough faith, he will whip the problem. But in reality he has had faith in faith. His mind, his attention, and his heart have been focused upon faith—not upon God.
   b. Faith has no power; it is the object that has power. A man's faith is not going to remove the mountain. God is going to remove the mountain. The strength of faith is not faith, but God. In the Bible practically everyone who came to God had weak faith. Only a few had strong faith, yet God saved them and granted their requests (cp. Mt.14:22-33).
   c. Faith requires knowing the object. The more one knows the object of faith, the more one believes in the object (cp. Heb.11:6). For example, consider two men who want to go out on a frozen lake to fish. One man is told to go ahead and cross the lake. He is assured by his friend that the ice will hold him up. Yet, when he begins to step out on the ice, he cautiously and tremblingly takes step after step—usually until he can stand it no more and returns. But the other man walks out courageously and boldly, cuts a hole in the ice, sits down, and begins to fish.

Note three important questions.

⇒ What supported the man sitting out on the ice? Not his faith, but the ice—the object of his faith.

⇒ Who had the strongest faith? Of course the man out on the ice. The one with the weak faith is the man who slowly inched his way back.

⇒ What made the difference between the faith of the two? One thing. One man *knew* the ice, and the other man *did not know* the ice.

2. A second fact to note about faith is its purpose. The purpose of faith is to remove mountains. Jesus' teaching says, "Have faith in God...[and then] say unto this mountain, Be thou removed." Mountains represent the immovable, the impossible. It is something almost too steep to climb, almost too high to cross, almost too awesome to see beyond.

This is the reason Jesus discussed prayer and communion along with faith. One learns to have faith in God as He prays and communes with God. And the more he prays and communes with God, the more he will know God; and the more he knows God, the more he can experience faith in God and experience the removal of mountains that slow his progress through life. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.17:20 for more discussion.)

3. A third fact to note about faith is the way to possess faith. The way is prayer. Jesus explicitly says, "Whosoever...shall not doubt...but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." There are two crucial points in this promise.

a. Not doubting at all. This means never having a thought whether a thing can be done or not. It means not hesitating, not wondering, not questioning, not considering, not being concerned at all. Realistically, only God Himself can know if a thing will happen or not—know so perfectly that no wondering thought would ever cross His mind. What Christ is after is that we grow in belief and trust. He wants us to believe that all things are possible through Christ who strengthens us (Ph.4:13). (See outlines and notes—Mt.17:15-16; 17:17-18; 17:19-20; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.9:18.)

b. Believing in God's authority. Note the words "shall say" (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.17:20). The power of Christ came from the authority of God. All He had to do was *say*, that is, speak the word and it was done. That is the very point He was making to us. If we believe, doubting not, then we stand in the authority of God. We may *say*, speak the word, and it shall be done.

4. A fourth fact to note about faith is the result of faith. A man who prays having faith, truly "having faith *in God,*...has whatsoever he saith." The mountains which confront him will be removed, *effectively and quickly* (see note—Mk.11:20-21).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:12-14).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Is.41:17).

3 (11:24) **Prayer**: the second condition to prayer is expectancy. A man must believe and expect the answer to his prayer. He must be confident and assured, must anticipate and look for the answer (see note—Mt.21:22). The exact words of Jesus' promise are interesting (glance at the verse). Expectancy involves all of man's being. The spirit of expectancy...

- involves a man's emotions: he desires.
- involves a man's will (volition): he asks.
- involves a man's spirit: he believes.

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:6).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

4 (11:25-26) **Prayer—Forgiveness**: the third condition to prayer is forgiveness. This is a critical condition in prayer, a condition that is stressed time and again by Jesus (Mt.6:14-15; 5:23-24; 18:32-33). Note, it is while a person is *actually praying*, "when ye stand praying," that he must forgive. It does no good to pray unless he does forgive. When praying, there must always be forgiveness of those who have wronged us. Hard feelings or anger against a person is sin. It is evidence that we have not truly turned from our sins and are not really sincere in seeking forgiveness. (See outline and notes—Mt.6:14-15 for detailed discussion.) Note the stress Jesus puts upon the condition of receiving forgiveness in prayer. No request for forgiveness is granted unless a man has completely forgiven all others.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Mt.6:12).

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt.6:14-15).

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt.5:7).

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven" (Lk.6:36-37).

	E. The Authority of Jesus Questioned: Two Choices Concerning Jesus, 11:27-33 (Mt.21:23-27; Lk.20:1-8)	swer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. 30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. 31 And they reasoned with	
1 Jesus was in the temple a. He was walking b. The religionists approached & questioned Him	27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,	themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? 32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that	a. Choice one: He was from God b. Choice two: He was a mere man
2 The question of Jesus' authority a. Authority of works b. Authority of person	28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?	he was a prophet indeed. 33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering	**4 The tragic answer: No decision**
3 The choices for man: Illustrated by John the Baptist	29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and an-	saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.	

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

E. The Authority of Jesus Questioned: Two Choices Concerning Jesus, 11:27-33

(11:27-33) **Introduction**: this is an important event. It began a series of six combative situations for Jesus. Both religionists and civil leaders confronted Jesus head-on, doing all they could to trap and discredit Jesus before the people so they could arrest Him and have Him killed. All the events of this section as well as the Olivet discourse (Mt.24-25) seem to have taken place on Tuesday (cp. Mt.22:23; 25:1; 26:1-2). A quick reading of this section is an eye-opener into the great tragedy and problem with self-righteousness and unbelief. Jesus was very forceful in attacking self-righteousness and unbelief. He delivered a *sustained attack*, leaving no doubt that a person, even a religionist, who continued in self-righteousness was unworthy of God's kingdom. Obstinate unbelief would doom any man.

1. Jesus in the temple (v.27).
2. The question of authority (v.28).
3. The choices for man: illustrated by John the Baptist (v.29-32).
4. The tragic answer: no decision (v.33).

1 (11:27) **Temple—Solomon's Porch—Jesus Christ, Opposition**: Jesus was in the temple, apparently walking through one of the arcades meditating and praying. He seems to have been alone. The scene was dramatic when one pictures the background.

The temple actually had two arcades surrounding the Court of the Gentiles. They were just as films picture the arcades of the Greek and Roman eras: stately, magnificent, and awe-inspiring. There was an east arcade and a south arcade. The east arcade was known as Solomon's porch. Several Biblical events took place in this magnificent arcade (Jn.10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12). It was an arcade for teaching, and Rabbis often strolled among the colonnades while teaching their pupils. The arcades were also large enough to allow large crowds to gather for classroom type instructions. Their magnificence can be imagined by picturing the stately columns which towered thirty-five feet above the ground. The arcades provided both shelter from rain and sun and an inspiring setting.

Jesus was apparently walking along in one of the two arcades when the religionists approached Him. Again, they were an official delegation from the ruling body of the Jews, that is, from the Sanhedrin. Representatives from the three major groups were there: the chief priests, the Scribes, and the elders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.16:21). They were upset, infuriated, enraged. All that had happened—the triumphal entry, Jesus' acceptance of the people's homage and the title of Messiah, the cleansing of the temple and the disruption of the priests' profits from those who sold and bought, the healing of the blind and lame, the worship of the children—naturally created a crisis for the ruling body. What Jesus was doing simply infuriated them, sending them into a rage. It aroused them to question: "Who does this Jesus of Nazareth think He is?" (Mt.21:10-11).

Note that the question they asked was one of contempt, not of seeking. The question was an attempt to discredit, not to learn the truth. The question was aroused because their own position, esteem, and gain were disturbed; not because they really wanted to know if He were the Messiah. Their minds were closed and shut to His claims. They had many claims and many proofs of His Messiahship, but they wilfully ignored and denied His divine mission. They had plenty of opportunity to learn the truth (see note—Jn.3:1-2), yet they would allow nothing to change them. They were gripped by obstinate unbelief (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9. These notes will give some background to the opposition against Jesus.)

2 (11:28) **Jesus Christ, Opposition; Authority Questioned; Deity—Man, Basic Question**: the question of authority. This was the basic question that should have been asked, a question that probed into the very nature of Jesus: What

was His authority? Who sent Him? Who empowered Him? Who gave Him the right to do as He was doing? Where had He come from?

The leaders wanted to know what right He had to interfere with their lives and area of responsibility. They were the authorized guardians and rulers of the temple and of the people. He was interfering with their management and had no right to interfere. Note, they asked Him two questions.

1. What was the authority for His works? "By what authority doest thou *these things*?" He marched triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem as a King, receiving the homage of the Messianic King from the people; He cast the market traders out of the temple; He healed the blind and lame (Mt.21:14); and He accepted the homage of small children's proclaiming Him to be the Messiah. What authority did He have to do these things?

The leaders were asking the basic question that needed to be asked. Perhaps they were unaware of it, but they were asking the question that would determine their eternal fate. Every man needs to ask, "What is the authority, the explanation, for the works of Christ?" There are the works of...

- ministry
- raising the dead
- healing
- ascending into heaven
- preaching
- teaching
- rising again
- foretelling the future
- calming the storms of nature
- dying & fulfilling Scripture

2. What was the authority of His person: "*Who gave thee* this authority?" He *was claiming*...
   - to be the promised Messianic King by entering the city as He did.
   - to be the Head, the God of the Temple: "My house."
   - to be the Light of the world to the blind and the Messianic Healer to the lame (Mt.21:14).
   - to be the Messianic fulfillment of Scripture by receiving the praise of the children.

The authorities knew who He was claiming to be. They just rejected His claims and refused to believe. They chose the course of obstinate unbelief. They had proof upon proof, but still refused to believe.

There are two possible answers to the question about who Jesus is.

a. Jesus could have claimed to act by His own authority, could have said the power was His own. This would have made Him an ego-maniac or a great imposter, the greatest in history. Of course, if He had claimed to act of His own authority, the authorities would have been able to discredit Him immediately and to arrest Him for causing so much havoc.

b. Jesus could have claimed to act by the authority of God, to be of and from God. Now note: Jesus did make such a claim time and again. But if He had made it in the face of the authorities, they would have arrested Him immediately for blasphemy. They would have claimed that God would never have given orders to cause such turmoil in the temple.

   Again the leaders were asking the basic question that needs to be asked by every man: *Who gave Jesus His authority*? Who is He: a mere man or truly the Son of God? Is He of man or of God? Is His authority of men or from within, of His very own nature as God?

3 (11:29-32) **Decision—Jesus Christ, Deity; Opposition—Messiah**: the choices for man—illustrated by John the Baptist. Jesus knew what the authorities were plotting. Note what He did.

First, He met them on their own ground. He said He would answer them, but they must first answer a question, then He would answer them.

Second, He formulated and asked a question that was astounding in its effect.

⇒ It actually answered their question.
⇒ It silenced them, for if they answered they would indict themselves.
⇒ It ended the discussion and their questioning of Christ and immediate threat to Him.
⇒ It revealed their obstinate unbelief and made them even more inexcusable before God (heaping wrath upon themselves).

Jesus simply asked them, "The baptism of John, was it from heaven [of God], or of men?" The question posed two choices to man.

1. The first choice: Was John from God? If so, then Jesus was from God. Why? Because being from God, John would not lie, and John testified:

> **"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world....And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:29, 34).**

2. The second choice: Was John a mere man? If so, then Jesus could be a mere man. But how could this ever be? If John's and Jesus' ministry were really of men, then how could so many *changed lives* and *marvelous works* be accounted for? This one question alone shows the absurdity and sin of unbelief, not only of unbelievers in Jesus' day but also of unbelievers in our day as well (see outline and notes—Mt.3:1-17).

> **"And all the people that heard him [John] and the publicans, justified God, being baptized of John" (Lk.7:29).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I**

do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).

"And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracles: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there" (Jn.10:41-42).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

Note the words, "They reasoned with themselves" (par eantois). This means they discussed their answer among themselves. They did not just reason in (en) themselves, with each left to his own thoughts. This was a planned attack against Jesus, a deliberate rejection of Jesus.

The Lord's questioners immediately knew their predicament. If they replied that John's ministry was of God, then Jesus would ask them why they did not believe John's testimony about the Messiah. If they replied that John's ministry was of men, they would arouse the people against themselves, for the people believed strongly that John was a true prophet from God.

Note how the questioners reasoned with themselves. Their concern was not to discover the truth; but to save face and protect their position, esteem, and security. They, therefore, committed a threefold sin.

1. They deliberately denied Jesus. To confess that John was of God would force them to acknowledge Jesus. And they were not willing to confess Him. They feared the loss of all they possessed (position, power, wealth, esteem, image, security).
2. They feared men; they were deliberately cowardly. They feared the reactions of men (abuse, ridicule, persecution).
3. They chose expediency, to deliberately be ignorant. They feared being shamed, embarrassed, ridiculed. To confess Jesus would mean confessing *they* had been wrong all along. It would mean denying self completely and doing so publicly. Most men...
   - choose expediency rather than principle.
   - choose to play it safe rather than to stand for the truth.
   - choose to say I don't know rather than to speak the truth.

Thought 1. We have the same two choices that the authorities did. Christ is either a mere man (ego-maniac or imposter) or He is as John declared, "the Lamb of God...the Son of God" (Jn.1:29, 34). Every man has to choose and make a decision.

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

4 (11:33) **Decision**: the tragic answer—no decision (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.8:21-22). The authorities said, "We cannot tell." They lied. They knew perfectly well that John's baptism was of God. They just were not willing to run the risk of losing their position, prosperity, and security. They loved the world more than they loved God and the hope He extended toward them. Therefore, they denied, acted cowardly, and chose the route of expediency.

These unbelievers made no decision. It was tragic. Indecision and agnosticism are always tragic. They just would not be convinced of the truth. It was not that they *could not* be convinced, but they *would not*. Such obstinate unbelief seldom, if ever, sees the truth of Christ. Even if Christ openly revealed the truth to them, they would reject.

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (Jn.5:40).

"[God] sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come" (Mt.22:3).

"And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not....And I will cast you out of my sight" (Jer.7:13, 15).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days" (Dt.30:19-20).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

	CHAPTER 12 **F. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: God and Israel, 12:1-12** (Mt.21:33-46; Lk.20: 9-19; cp. Isa.5:1-7)	and killing some. 6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.	**5 God is love: He sends His very own Son to the world**
1 God is generous: He gives everything needed	And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.	7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.	a. Man's plot: To kill the Son*psi*
2 God is trusting: He gives responsibility & freedom to govern life		8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.	b. Man's reason: To secure inheritance c. Man's crime: They killed the Son
3 God is exacting: He expects payment	2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.	9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.	**6 God is just: He shall come to destroy evil keepers**
4 God is patient: He sends a messenger to receive payment a. One suffers mild abuse	3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.	10 And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:	**7 God is trustworthy: He fulfills His promises** a. The promise of the Messiah—the stone
b. Another suffers severe abuse	4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.	11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? 12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.	b. The exaltation of the Messiah **8 Concl.: The great tragedy** a. Reacting instead of repenting b. Holding the wrong view of Messiah c. Going their own way
c. Still another suffers capital abuse	5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some,		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

F. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: God and Israel, 12:1-12

(12:1-12) **Introduction**: this is one of the most interesting parables ever told by Jesus. It is interesting because it is both historical and predictive. Jesus covered the history of Israel from God's perspective, just as God sees it (v.1-5). And then He predicted or revealed exactly what was going to happen to Israel: they were going to reject God's own Son (v.6), and because of their rejection and cruelty, God was going to reject them by giving the Kingdom of God to another people (v.9).

What is said throughout this passage is applicable to all people as well as to Israel. God has entrusted the vineyard of the church and of the world to us (Mt.28:19-20), the new nation, the new creation of God (see notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4—Eph.2:14-15; 4:17-19). Every point covered in Israel's history should, therefore, be a dynamic message speaking to our hearts.

1. God is generous: He gives everything needed (v.1).
2. God is trusting: He gives responsibility & freedom to govern life (v.1).
3. God is exacting: He expects payment (v.2).
4. God is patient: He sends messengers to receive payment (v.2-5).
5. God is love: He sends His very own Son to the world (v.6-8).
6. God is just: He shall come to destroy evil keepers (v.9).
7. God is trustworthy: He fulfills His promises (v.10-11).
8. Conclusion: the great tragedy (v.12).

1 (12:1) **God, Provision—Care—World—Israel**: God is generous. He gives everything needed. Note three marvelous, generous things that God did for His vineyard. He provided every conceivable thing to take care of His vineyard and the cultivators. Everything was provided to assure growth and fruitfulness. The cultivators have no excuse for not producing.

1. God "hedged it round about." This was a wall built around the vineyard to keep the animals away from the grapes. The hedge or wall *assured* growth and fruitfulness.
2. God dug a winepress. This was a trough or vat into which the wine was pressed. The trough was sometimes dug in rock, sometime built out of wood. The trough stands for the equipment which God provides to get His work done.
3. God built a tower. It was a watchtower used to guard and protect the vineyard from thieves. The tower stands for the assurance and security of God's care which He gives to His cultivators (cp. Mt.6:25-34).

Thought 1. God is generous to every man.

1) God has given every man the world and his space in it to look after. (See note—Mk.12:1 for discussion and verses.)
2) God has hedged His followers and the church round about. He protects them and assures growth and fruitfulness (Jn.15:1-8).

> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).**
>
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col.1:10-11).**

3) God gives His followers the gifts, the equipment they need to carry out their task on earth (1 Cor.12:4-11).

> **"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" (Mt.25:15).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us" (Ro.12:6).**
>
> **"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor.12:4).**

4) God gives His followers the assurance and security of His care (Mt.6:25-34).

> **"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Mt.6:31-32).**
>
> **"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Lk.12:7).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).**

2 (12:1) **Freedom of Will—Responsibility—Trust**: God is trusting. He gives responsibility and freedom to govern life. God entrusted His vineyard to cultivators. The cultivators were the nation and people of Israel, in particular the leaders (both religious and civil). Everyone was to take care of the whole body of people. Everyone was responsible, thereby contributing to the welfare and provision of all. (Cp. the whole body of the church and every member's responsibility to labor in the vineyard doing his part.)

Note two things.

1. God trusts men. Think what a glorious privilege it is to be trusted by God. Imagine how dear God's vineyard is to Him, and then think about how He entrusts its care to us and not to angels or some other higher form of being. What a wonderful and marvelous thing that God would trust us with His most precious vineyard!
2. God gives man freedom. God left the cultivators to care for His vineyard as they wished. They were to exercise their will, their choice, their drive to care for the vineyard. They had the glorious privilege of freedom, of not having someone looking over their shoulder forcing behavior.

Thought 1. Two of the greatest gifts God has given men are *trust* and *freedom*. The very fact of being trusted by God is one of the most glorious privileges of life. And being given the freedom to care for God's immense creation is beyond comprehension. How marvelous are these two glorious gifts! Yet, note how men have neglected, abused, violated, and even worked to destroy these great gifts.

> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen.1:27-28).**
>
> **"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps.8:6).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods" (Mt.25:14).**
>
> **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).**
>
> **"Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Tim.6:20).**
>
> **"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:13).**

3 (12:2) **Accountability**: God is exacting—He expects payment. He is businesslike; He holds men accountable. God sent messengers to gather the fruits of His vineyard. The messengers would be the prophets and the good and godly leaders throughout Israel's history (judges, kings, and priests).

Note two things.

1. Fruit was expected. Every cultivator, that is, every person responsible for the vineyard, was expected to labor and produce.
2. A day of accountability did come. Every man was expected to pay his dues, to make his contribution for the wonderful privilege of living in the beautiful vineyard and being blessed by it. (The Kingdom of God, the world, the church—however one applies this passage—all are wonderful vineyards for which we are responsible to contribute what fruit we can.)

> **"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).**
>
> **"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn.15:2).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:5-6).**

4 (12:2-5) **God, Patience of—Long-Suffering**: God is patient—He sends messengers to receive payment. All through Israel's history, God loved and showed His loving-kindness by not reacting and rejecting the nation. God gives man chance after chance. He sends messengers across our path time after time. He loves and aches for us to pay our dues, to bear fruit by living as we should.

Tragically, most cultivators continue as always: rebelling and claiming all rights to the vineyard and to their own lives. Therefore, they continue to react against God's messengers. This was true of Israel. They rebelled and refused to pay the Master. In fact, their rebellion led to the persecution and murder of God's servants.

1. Men do deliberately rebel against God. Men want to rule the vineyard themselves. They want to be the kings of the kingdom, the rulers of the earth, and even the heads of the church. They want things to go their way and to rule and reign as they desire and will. They want no authority above themselves. They want to live and do things as they wish, and they want to claim the fruits for themselves.
2. Men want their own way so much that they ridicule, slander, persecute, and even murder the true servants of God.

> **"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:52. Cp. Mt.23:34-37; Heb.11:36-38.)**

3. The servant of God must understand that he is called to suffer (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23). Note the detailed description of the world's treatment of God's messengers.

⇒ They *beat and gave no fruit* to the first messenger.
⇒ They cast stones, wounded, and shamefully handled the second messenger.
⇒ They killed the third messenger.
⇒ They beat "many others."
⇒ They killed "many others."

> **"Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down" (Lk.13:7-9).**
>
> **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).**
>
> **"For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off" (Is.48:9).**

Thought 1. How many believers, laymen and ministers alike, are mistreated by the world!

> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).**
>
> **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13; cp. 1 Pt.2:21; 4:5-6; Mt.19:29; Ro.8:16-17).**

5 (12:6-8) **God, Love of**: God is love. Therefore, God sent His very own Son to the world, wanting to speak personally to men. He condescended and asked His Son to leave the glory of eternity and to bring His Word to earth, speaking face to face with man. Perhaps they would listen to His voice and reverence His rights.

Note five facts.

1. Jesus claimed to be God's Son. He was different from all the servants sent before. He was more than another man-servant; He was God's very own Son. There is no question that Jesus was clearly making this unique claim for Himself.
2. The cultivators saw God's Son. There were all kinds of evidence: Old Testament prophecies, the testimony of John the Baptist, Jesus' own claim and the miraculous works to prove His deity, the fulness or signs of the times (Gal.4:4). There was a feeling that He was the promised Messiah even among those who opposed Him (see note—Jn.3:1-2; cp. Jn.11:47-53). This is the tragic indictment against the Jews. Down deep within, they had a sense that Jesus really was the Messiah; but sin and greed for position, esteem, power, and security kept them from acknowledging Him. Their unbelief was deliberate and obstinate (see outline and notes—Mt.21:23-27).
3. The cultivators plotted His death (cp. Mt.12:14; Jn.11:53).
4. The cultivators planned to seize His inheritance. Men wanted to possess the kingdom, the nation, the property, the power, the rule, the reign, the position, the esteem, the fame, the recognition, the wealth. Whatever the possession is, men want the possession themselves. And they will deny, deceive, lie, cheat, steal, and even kill to get it. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.)
5. The cultivators murdered the Son. They committed the worst crime of human history: they killed the Son of God Himself. Note two things: (1) Jesus' death was being prophesied. He was predicting His death Himself. And (2) Jesus' death was a willing act on His part. He knew death lay ahead, so He could have escaped. But He chose to die. It was in "the determinate counsel of God" (Acts 2:23).

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:7) **Man, Error**: man feels God is too far away to do anything about his rejection. He feels God is too inactive and irrelevant. This is known by the "far country" (v.1), and the continuous rejection (v.3-5), and the final denial of God's Son (v.6-8).

6 (12:9) **God, Justice of**: God is just—He shall come and destroy evil keepers. There are three important points here.

1. Jesus said the Lord of the vineyard is coming. He is coming to revenge the death of His only Son.
2. God is coming to destroy the wicked. The destruction is to be miserable (kakos), terrible. Note that it was both the rulers and the people who said that justice would be executed. Man, by his very nature, expects injustice to be punished.
3. God is going to trust His vineyard to others. Again, it was the crowd who said this. Even man knows that a vineyard will not lie unkept. It will be cultivated by someone. God will raise up a new people to care for it (the church, the new creation of God. See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.21:43; notes—Ro.9:25-33; Eph.2:11-18; pt.4—Eph.2:14-15; 4:17-19 for more discussion.)

> **"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).**
>
> **"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).**

7 (12:10-11) **Jesus Christ, the Stone—Promise Fulfilled**: God is trustworthy—He fulfills His promises. Christ is the Head cornerstone (see note—Lk.2:34). This is a quotation from Ps.118:22-23. It was recognized as a Messianic prophecy. The Messiah was to be the head cornerstone who was to begin building the Kingdom of God and who was to support all other stones or leaders who came later. The religious leaders standing around Christ knew that Christ was referring to the Messiah (Is.28:16; Dan.2:34; Zech.3:9).

But note the promises. The stone was to be rejected at first. It was to be considered unsuitable and useless for the building. The builders would not allow the stone to be a part of the building; they would cast it aside and treat it as unusable.

However, the great Architect overruled the builders. He raised the stone from the graveyard of rejected stones and exalted it to the position of head cornerstone, the stone which supports all other stones and which holds the building of God's kingdom both up and together (cp. Ph.2:9-11. See notes—Eph.2:20.)

The symbolism of the head cornerstone says at least two significant things to us.

1. The cornerstone is the first stone laid. All other stones are placed after it. It is the preeminent stone in time. So it is with Christ. He is *the first* of God's new movement.

⇒ Christ is the captain of our salvation. All others are crew members or soldiers who follow Him.

> **"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:10).**

⇒ Christ is the author of eternal salvation and of our faith. All others are the readers of the story.

> **"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).**
>
> **"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).**

⇒ Christ is the beginning and the end. All others come after Him.

> **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev.1:8; cp. 21:6; 22:13).**

⇒ Christ is the forerunner into the very presence of God. All others enter God's presence after Him.

> **"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb.6:19-20).**

2. The cornerstone is the supportive stone. All other stones are placed upon it and held up by it. They all rest upon it. It is the preeminent stone in position and power. So it is with Christ. He is the support and power, the Foundation of God's new movement.

⇒ Christ is *the head cornerstone*, the only true foundation upon which man can build. All crumble who are not laid upon Him.

> **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).**

⇒ Christ is *the chief cornerstone* upon which all others are fitly formed together. All who wish to be fitly formed together have to be laid upon Him.

> **"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:20-22).**

⇒ Christ is *the living stone* upon which all others are built up a spiritual house. All others have to be built upon Him if they wish to live and have their spiritual sacrifice accepted by God.

> **"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:4-5).**

Note it is all God's work. He is the One who raises up the Savior. Note also, the Savior is the object of marvel and wonder.

8 (12:12) **Jesus Christ, Response—Decision**: the conclusion of the parable was a great tragedy, a tragedy that has been seen in so many people down through the years.

1. There was the tragedy of reacting instead of repenting. The leaders saw that Jesus was speaking to them. But their consciences were seared by obstinate unbelief (1 Tim.4:2). They were insensitive to His warnings (v.9). Therefore, they reacted instead of repenting. They should have heeded His warnings, but they did not. They were set against Him, seeking to destroy Him and thereby silencing His claim.
2. There was the tragedy of holding the wrong view of the Messiah. This is seen in the people. The leaders were afraid to arrest Jesus because of the people. The people saw Jesus as some great prophet (a great Teacher) and not as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. This, too, was tragic; but God was able to use their respect to protect Christ until the appointed time for His death.
3. There was the tragedy of leaving Jesus and going their own way. Note this was exactly what they did. (See note, *Decision*—Mk.11:33 for Scripture application.)

	G. The Question of Civil & Religious Power: The State & God, 12:13-17 (Mt.22:15-22; Lk.20: 20-26)	to give tribute to Caesar, or not? 15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it.	truth, condemnation **3 Life within the state depends upon God, not money: Jesus does not have even a penny**
1 The false views of the state a. Religion is supreme[DS1] b. The state is supreme[DS2] **2 The sins common to false views of the state**[DS3] a. Selfish ambition: Leads to compromise b. Deception: Leads to false flattery & destruction c. Obstinate unbelief: Leads to denial of	13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. 14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful	16 And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Caesar's. 17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.	**4 The state is ordained by God** a. Some things belong to the state b. Some responsibilities are due the state **5 The state is limited in its power: God is due the things that are God's**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

G. The Question of Civil and Religious Power: The State and God, 12:13-17

(12:13-17) **Introduction**: this was the second challenge of the leaders against Jesus. The Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews, had met officially and plotted how they might "catch [Jesus] in his words" (v.13). They devised a question dealing with taxes and a person's citizenship in the state: "Is it lawful to give tribute [taxes] to Caesar, or not?" A *yes* answer would discredit Jesus with the people because they opposed paying taxes to a foreign conqueror (Rome). A *no* answer would cause Him to be arrested by the Roman authorities for opposing the law and threatening a revolt.

Jesus, being the Messiah, the Son of God Himself, saw through their plot. And Jesus used the occasion to teach the truth about citizenship, a truth which was both astounding and earth-shaking to the people of that day. It was earth-shaking because the Jews had always believed that the loyalty of a citizen belonged only to God, and the rest of the world believed that their loyalty belonged to the ruling monarch of their territory. Jesus astounded the world of His day by declaring that there is an earthly citizenship to which some things are to be given, and there is a spiritual, heavenly citizenship to which some things are to be given.

1. The false views of the state (v.13).
2. The sins common to false views of the state (v.14).
3. Life within the state depends upon God, not money: Jesus does not have even a penny (v.15).
4. The state is ordained by God (v.16-17).
5. The state is limited in its power: God is due the things that are God's (v.17).

1 (12:13) **State—Citizenship**: the false views of the state are seen in the Pharisees and Herodians. But it must be remembered that the world did not know the concepts were false until this experience.

1. The first false concept is that religion is supreme. This is seen in the view of the Pharisees (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8). They believed strongly in the heavenly, spiritual world, so much so that they believed all obedience and loyalty were due God and God alone. In fact, all things on earth were due God. The state and all other power and authority were to be subject to religious rule. Therefore, they were strongly against paying taxes to a foreign king. Paying taxes to a secular government was an infringement upon God's right.
2. The second false concept is that the state is supreme. This is seen in the view of the Herodians (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk.12:13 for discussion).

Picture the scene, how strange it was. The Pharisees held that religion was dominant over government. They despised Roman authority and taxation. The Herodians held that government was dominant over religion. They would agree that taxes must be paid to Caesar rather than to God. They and the Pharisees were bitter enemies. To find them together was strange indeed. But their hatred of Jesus had brought them together against One whom they considered a common enemy. (See notes—Mk.3:6; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:13) **Pharisees**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:13) **Herodians**: the Herodians were not a religious party, but a political party of Herod, the King of Galilee. They were supportive of Rome, compromising wherever they could in order to preserve their own power and influence. They had compromised to such a point that they gave some degree of consent to pagan temples. Religiously, they were mainly Sadducees who gave their first loyalty to the state (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8). Therefore, they opposed all Messianic

claims because of the disturbance such claims caused among the people. They would agree that taxes must be paid to Caesar rather than to God.

2 (12:14) **Citizenship—Sins**: there are the sins common to false views of the state. On the surface the question which these men asked was innocent. It was a question asked by some in every generation: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar [the state] or not?" But the answer was dangerous. If Jesus had said taxes were due Caesar, the people would have called Him a traitor and turned against Him as a Roman stooge. If He had said it was unlawful to pay taxes, the religionists would have reported Him to the Romans and accused Him of insurrection.

There was something even more repulsive and horrible than their trickery. It was the camouflage of their trickery with flattery. Note how the flattery flowed on and on, distastefully so. They hoped the flattery would make Jesus think they were sincere and do away with any suspicions He had.

There are sins that are often committed by those who hold false concepts of citizenship. Some of these sins are seen in the plot of the Pharisees and Herodians against Jesus.

1. There is *selfish ambition*, which often leads to compromise and intrigue. Nothing could be more surprising than to see the Pharisees and Herodians working together. They stood diametrically opposed to one another. The Pharisees thought the Herodians were no better than the heathen doomed to hell. Yet they are seen working with the Herodians against Jesus. What was it that brought them together? Selfish ambition. They feared the loss of their position, influence, power, wealth, and security (see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9. These notes will help considerably in understanding why the rulers feared Jesus so much.)

The depth of sin in selfish ambition is seen in that the primary plotters were religious leaders. They were not only willing to plot evil, they were trying to put a man to death. Just *how evil* selfish ambition can be, in both government and religion, is clearly seen in this passage.

> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**

Thought 1. A man who lives for this world will become a bedfellow with almost anyone to protect his security. The degree or strange appearance of the compromise will seldom matter.

2. There is *deception*, which usually leads to flattery and destruction. The deception is seen in two facts.
   a. Deception is seen in that the Pharisees themselves did not go to Jesus. They sent "their disciples with the Herodians." The disciples were learners, students who would actually be seeking the answer to such a question. The Herodians were along to give the appearance that the disciples had asked them first but were not satisfied with their answer. It would seem they wanted to know what He (One who claimed to be the Messiah) would answer. Thus, Jesus would think the question was the legitimate question of a student, never suspecting a plot to entrap Him.
   b. Deception, the lowest kind of deception, is seen in the words of flattery which are used in approaching Jesus.
      ⇒ "Master...
      ⇒ "we know that thou art true...
      ⇒ "and carest for no man:...
      ⇒ "for thou regardest not the person of men...
      ⇒ "but teachest the way of God in truth...."

Note that everything they said about Jesus was true.
- ⇒ He was Master: a rabbi, a teacher. He was even more: He was the Master and Lord of the universe.
- ⇒ He was true and truthful: a teacher from God. (Contrast their hypocritical approach with the sincerity of Nicodemus, Jn.3:2.)
- ⇒ He did teach the way of God: how a man was to live and behave if he wished to please God.
- ⇒ He did not care what men said about Him: it did not influence Him or His action.
- ⇒ He did not regard man's person: He did not show partiality or favoritism.

The problem was that they did not mean what they were professing, not in their hearts. What they were professing about Him was coming from an evil motive. They wanted to use Him to secure their own selfish purposes. In the end they were successful; they were able to do what they were plotting. They were able to have Him destroyed.

Thought 1. Deception always destroys that which is truthful and strong and lovely.

> **"For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty" (Job 15:5).**
>
> **"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulcher; they flatter with their tongue" (Ps.5:9).**
>
> **"A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved" (Pr.12:3).**
>
> **"A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet" (Pr.29:5).**

3. There are *close-mindedness and obstinate unbelief* which lead to denial of the truth and self-condemnation. The question asked of Jesus was simple: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?"
   ⇒ The Pharisees, sincere Jewish religionists, would shout, "No!"
   ⇒ The Herodians (and those securing position and wealth by Roman rule) would say, "Yes!"

Standing there, the questioners thought they had entrapped Jesus. If He said, "No, taxes should not be paid to Caesar," then the authorities would arrest and remove Him; and the people would soon know that His claim to be the Messiah was false.

If He said, "Yes, taxes should be paid to Caesar," then He would be denying the Sovereignty of God; and the people, who strongly opposed Roman rule and taxes, would rise up against Him. Both the Pharisees and Herodians were close-minded. They would see nothing beyond themselves and the threat to their position and wealth. They were steeped in obstinate unbelief. Therefore, they rejected the truth; and, as results from all rejection of the truth, they condemned themselves (cp. Jn.3:18-21).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(12:14) **Tribute—Tax**: the tax asked about was the poll tax. It was a tax that had to be paid by every person between the ages of twelve or fourteen and sixty-five. The poll tax amounted to about one days wage in that time (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.13:6).

3 (12:15) **Citizenship—Needs—Necessities**: life within the state depends upon God, not money. This is seen in the fact that Jesus did not have a penny. He was living in the state of Israel and living under the rule of another state, the rule of Rome. He was, theoretically, a citizen of two states, yet He did not have a penny. His sustenance and existence did not rest in the state nor in the things of the state. It rested in God's hands. His trust was in God, not in the state.

Thought 1. The state is not necessary for life, but God is. The state can be and should be helpful, but it is not necessary. However, God is necessary, for man does not live by bread alone. He cannot live an abundant life apart from God. With God man has purpose, fulfillment, and life—eternally. But without God he has none of these life-giving qualities, not permanently. The state can offer some liberties that allow some opportunities to pursue life; but God can make life free, completely free, instilling within the human heart a perfect assurance that one shall live forever.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).

"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day" (Dt.8:18).

"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full" (Dt.11:13-15).

"And I have also given thee [Solomon] that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days" (1 Ki.3:13).

"Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps.136:25).

4 (12:16-17) **Citizenship**: the state is ordained by God. Jesus confirmed this fact in two points. He clearly demonstrated that there are some things which *belong* to the state. Therefore, there are some responsibilities *due* the state. What belongs to Caesar belongs to Caesar. He is responsible primarily for three functions: law and order, community services, and protection. No man is an island within a state. He owes the state for the services and goods the state provides. Citizenship carries with it responsibility.

Jesus was brilliant and brief as He dealt with the Pharisees and their false concept of citizenship. "Bring me a penny...whose is this image?" He simply asked.

Note two things.

1. He forced the Pharisees (religion is supreme concept) to admit that some things belong to an earthly power. There is an *earthly citizenship*. The image was Caesar's; the superscription was Caesar's; and the coin had been made or coined by Caesar's government. Therefore, the coin was Caesar's if Caesar said it was due him. The point was clear. Since the religionists *used what was owned and provided by Caesar*, they owed to Caesar what was due him. He strikingly said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

2. He revealed a very important truth for believers of all time. They *have a double citizenship*. They are citizens of heaven, yes, but they are also citizens of this world. Therefore, they have an obligation to the government under which they live. They receive the benefits of government just as the worldly-minded do (for example, roads, sewage, water, protection, and public transportation). Therefore, believers are to pay their due share. (See note—Ro.13:1-7. This note is a thorough discussion of citizenship.)

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).

"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee" (Mt.17:27).

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Tit.3:1).

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pt.2:13-15).

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Pt.2:17).

"And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment" (Ezra 7:26).

"I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God" (Eccl.8:2).

5 (12:17) **Citizenship**: the state is limited in its power. God is due the things that are God's. A heavenly citizenship belongs to God. Jesus was just as brilliant in dealing with the Herodians and their false concept of citizenship. The Herodians not only subjected religion to the state, but they were worldly-minded and denied much of the supernatural, including life after death and the spiritual world or dimension of being.

Note two things.

a. Jesus declared unequivocally to the Herodians: there is a spiritual world. God is; He does exist; therefore, there are some things which belong to God. "Render therefore...unto God the things that are God's." Again, the point is clear. Since the Herodians (the state is supreme concept), as citizens of the world and of life itself, used what was owned and provided by God, they owed God what was due Him.

b. Jesus revealed a very important truth to all generations of men. They are beings of God as well as of this world, spiritual as well as physical beings. Therefore, they are responsible to live as citizens of God as well as citizens of this world. All men have received so much from God...

- life that was made to exist with God forever; therefore man owes God his life.
- a spirit that can be *born again* and live a self-denying life of love and joy and peace for the sake of all men everywhere (Gal.5:22-23).
- a mind and body that have the power to enjoy the aesthetic beauty of the earth and to learn, reason, and produce for the betterment and service of all mankind.

Thought 1. All men receive these benefits and many more from God. Therefore, men are to pay their due share to God.

1) They are to love God supremely.

> **"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mk.12:29-30).**

2) They are to seek the Lord.

> **"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:24-27).**

3) They are to know that the Lord is God, and He alone is to be worshipped.

> **"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Ps.100:3-4).**

4) They are not to forget the Lord.

> **"And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?" (Is.51:13).**

5) They are not to profane God's covenant.

> **"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Mal.2:10).**

	H. The Question & Proof of the Resurrection, 12:18-27 (Mt.22:23-33; Lk.20: 27-38)	23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.	
		24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?	**3 The resurrection is based on the Scriptures & the power of God**
1 The Sadducees attempted to discredit Jesus	18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,	25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.	**4 The resurrection is different from any earthly experience: It is of another dimension**
2 The resurrection is denied & scoffed at	19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.	26 And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?	**5 The resurrection is a living relationship that cannot be broken** a. God is the God of past saints
	20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.	27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.	b. God is the God of the living
	21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.		c. Any other belief is a great error
	22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

H. The Question and Proof of the Resurrection, 12:18-27

(12:18-27) **Introduction**: it was still Tuesday of the Lord's last week. On this day the challenges to His authority had been pressing in ever so heavily upon Him.

First, the chief priests and lay leaders (elders) had challenged His authority (see outline and notes—Mt.21:23-27). Jesus had met the challengers head-on and routed them. But in so doing, His mind had been focused upon His death and Israel's rejection. The very thought that Israel, in whom God had put so much trust, was failing God by putting His Son to death was bound to be ripping out the heart of Jesus (see outline and notes—Mt.21:33-46; 22:1-14).

Second, the Pharisees and Herodians (Herod's political party) had attempted to discredit Jesus by pitting Him either against the government or the people (see outlines and notes—Mt.22:15-22). Again, Jesus had met and routed His challengers. But the struggle had been tiring and pressuring, hard and heavy.

Now, for a third time, the Lord was confronted and challenged. And again, it was a different group who tried to outargue and discredit Him. His challengers were the Sadducees, the religious and political liberals of the day. As Matthew points out, "[They] say that there is no resurrection" (Mt.22:23). Luke adds, "The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit" (Acts 23:8) (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.16:12; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8). Their liberal position caused two things.

1. It caused them to stumble at the spiritual and supernatural. They ridiculed and scorned both. Therefore, in their minds, the teachings of Jesus were the teachings of an unthinking and illogical man, lacking philosophical analysis and natural proof.
2. Their liberal position caused them to feel threatened and to oppose Jesus. The people were flocking to Jesus and soaking up His teachings. This meant the Sadducees were losing their grip on the people. Their position and wealth were being jeopardized; therefore, they were compelled to attack and discredit Him before the people.

1. The Sadducees attempted to discredit Jesus (v.18).
2. The resurrection is denied and scoffed at (v.19-23).
3. The resurrection is based on the Scriptures and the power of God (v.24).
4. The resurrection is different from any earthly experience—of another dimension (v.25).
5. The resurrection is a living relationship that cannot be broken (v.26-27).

1 (12:18) **Sadducees**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8 for discussion.

2 (12:19-23) **Resurrection—Sadducees**: the resurrection is denied and scoffed at. Down through the centuries many liberal-minded people have laughed at the resurrection (cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58; 2 Pt.3:3-18). Note the argument of the Sadducees.

1. They used Moses' law, the Levrite law, as the basis of their argument (Dt.25:5-6). When a husband died without a son, the Levrite law said that his brother was to marry his wife and bear a son. By law, the son was considered the first-born son of the deceased brother. This assured two things: (a) that the family name continued, and (2) that the property holdings were kept in the family. This was a law that had been given to help preserve and to enlarge the nation of Israel (cp. Ruth 4:5).
2. The Sadducees then suggested a logical situation that could have or actually had arisen. Note that there were seven brothers. The first brother married and died before bearing children. Each of the other brothers obeyed the law, but each died before bearing a child. Finally, the woman died also.
3. The logical question was now asked, the question which in the Sadducees' mind showed the absurdity of the resurrection. They asked, "Whose wife shall she be in eternity?" Note three things by reading through verses 23-28 several times.

a. The spirit of the questioning was mocking. The situation was logical; but the spirit was cold and coarse, egotistical and unbelieving, regrettable and revolting. The unbeliever's spirit is often self-incriminating and self-condemning.
b. The argument was thought to be irrefutable by the Sadducees. They believed it pointed out just how foolish the idea of another world, of a spiritual world, was to the thinking person.
c. The Sadducees were thinking that the spiritual world would be just like the physical world, that it would be nothing more than a continuation of this world, both in *its nature and in its relationships*.

Thought 1. A picture of what the Scripture says about the natural man is clearly seen in this event.

> **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).**

Thought 2. The resurrection and return of the Lord are often questioned.

> **"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor.15:12. Cp. v.13-34 for a full discussion.)**
>
> **"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" (1 Cor.15:35. Cp. v.36-58 for a full discussion.)**
>
> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt.3:3-4. Cp. v.5-15 for a full discussion.)**

3 (12:24) **Resurrection—Scriptures—God, Power of—Spiritual World**: the resurrection is based on the Scriptures and the power of God. Jesus said very pointedly to the Sadducees and to all who follow their liberal position: "You are in error. The resurrection is denied for two erroneous reasons."

1. "You do not know the Scriptures." The Scriptures are plain and clear. They leave no doubt that there is a spiritual world and that a resurrection into the spiritual world and dimension of being will take place.

> **"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).**
>
> **"Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Is.26:19).**
>
> **"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan.12:2).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:25).**
>
> **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).**
>
> **"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).**
>
> **"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).**
>
> **"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).**
>
> **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor.15:22).**
>
> **"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).**

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Th.4:16).

"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (Ps.49:15; cp. Ps.71:20; Hos.13:14).

Thought 1. There are three reasons why a person may not know the Scriptures.
1) He has not *really studied* the Scriptures.
2) He does not believe the Scriptures. He rejects the Scripture as God's Word.
3) He does not take the Scriptures literally for what they say. He spiritualizes and allegorizes them.

2. "You do not know the power of God."

Thought 1. There are three reasons why a person does not know the power of God.
1) He is ignorant of God. He knows nothing about God and seldom, if ever, gives any thought to God and His power.
2) He does not believe in God nor in His power. He prefers to acknowledge God's eternal power and Godhead seen in creation and to go about *creating* (mentally and physically) gods of his own (Ro.1:20-32). He just refuses to acknowledge the facts of nature:

> **"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor.15:36-38).**

3) He believes, but his belief in God and His power is weak. He cannot picture much happening beyond the physical world and the power of natural laws.

Thought 2. The idea of a spiritual world is perplexing to the natural man. Just imagine! While we are sitting here surrounded by all that we see...
- there is another world, an unseen spiritual dimension of being, that actually exists.
- there is a spirit, the real life within our bodies, that is destined to exist forever.
- there is to be a resurrection of all the dead bodies that have been lying and decaying in the graves for ages and ages. And the bodies of believers shall be perfected and glorified to live and work again—forever and ever in the new heavens and earth.

Thought 3. When really thinking about the facts of the resurrection, two confessions have to be made by every man, believer and unbeliever.
1) The natural man, that is, man within himself and his world, *can never know* about a spiritual world. He is bound by the physical and material world of which he is a part. He can only think and guess and hypothesize that a spiritual world exists and speculate on details such as a resurrection. Man cannot, while living in this world, penetrate the spiritual world with his body to scientifically prove the existence of the spiritual world.
2) God alone could reveal the reality of the spiritual dimension and the fact of a resurrection yet to take place. Such could be known and experienced only by the power of God. No man has the power to bring it about. If a resurrection is to take place, God's power will have to do it.

Thought 4. Two things will keep a person from error.
1) Knowing the Scriptures.
2) Trusting the power of God.

4 (12:25) **Resurrection—Spiritual Dimension**: the resurrection is different from any earthly experience. It is of another dimension of being. Jesus said that the resurrection exceeds earthly relationships. The Sadducees did not know the Scriptures nor the power of God. Therefore, when they thought of the resurrection into another world, they saw life simply as continuing on as it does now. They pictured heaven as being a continuation of this world. Very simply, they could not conceive that God would change the qualities of life and give man a totally new environment in which to live.

Jesus said two things.

1. Future life and relationships will exceed earthly relationships, even the bond of marital relationships. The strong union and bond of marriage will not be less, it will be greater and stronger.

2. Future life and relationships will be equal to that experienced by the angels and God. This means at least two things. (Note: Jesus had just admitted the existence of angels, refuting the disbelief of the liberal-minded Sadducees.)

a. Heavenly life and relationships will be perfected. Our relationships as they are known on earth will cease to be in heaven. They will be changed in that they will be perfected; selfishness and sin will not affect our love and lives. Our love will be perfected; therefore, we will love everyone perfectly. A wife on this earth will not be loved as she was on this earth, imperfectly. She will be loved more, loved perfectly. Everyone will love everyone else perfectly. God will change all relationships into perfection, even as the relationships between angels and God are perfected.

b. Heavenly life and relationships will be eternal. There will be no ending of relationships. A man and wife will always have the other to love. One will not cease to be (die) before the other (as is the case now). Everyone will always have everyone else to love. God will change the brief time that we now have with each

other into an eternal relationship. We will enjoy the presence of each other eternally, even as the relationship between angels and God is enjoyed eternally.

Thought 1. Two warnings must always be issued when thinking of heaven and eternal life.

1) A person can *materialize heaven* and *humanize eternal life*. That is, we can conceive heaven to be nothing more than a glorified world, and we can conceive eternal life to be nothing more than physical life, plus a little more. This was the mistake of the Sadducees, and it is often the concept pictured by liberal thinkers when they hear about the resurrection.
2) A person can *idealize heaven* and *allegorize eternal life*. We can think of heaven as little more than an ideal land for which we should seek and toward which we should direct our lives. And we can think of eternal life as little more than a utopian dream of an indefinite quality, or we can think of it as floating around and being free of trouble and trials, or we can think of it as simply a place to which we go after our departure from this world.

The teaching of Scripture, of God's revelation, must always be kept in mind when thinking of heaven and eternal life. Scripture teaches that the very nature of things will be changed.

1. Heaven is said to be a spiritual dimension, a real world of being. And Scripture declares that the heavens and earth that now are will one day be transformed into that spiritual dimension of being (2 Pt.3:3-13; Rev.21:1, 5).
2. Eternal life is said to be life that will exist forever in the spiritual world and dimension of being. The Scripture says:

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44. Cp. 1 Th.5:13-18.)

"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15:49-54).

(See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:28; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4 for discussion.)

5 (12:26-27) **Resurrection, Proofs**: the resurrection is a living relationship that cannot be broken. Two major points show this.

1. God is the God of past saints, believers who have passed on. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus means at least two things in this point.
   a. God's relationships are active relationships, not inactive. God says, "I am the God of...." not, "I was the God of...." His relationships with His subjects are continuous. They are maintained. God is eternal; therefore, He creates and maintains eternal, active relationships. God's subjects do enter into the spiritual realm of His presence and actively relate to Him. The resurrection is a fact.
   b. God's relationships are good and rewarding. The patriarchs of old were promised rewards, personal rewards (cp. Heb.11:13-16). There has to be a resurrection if our relationship with God is good and rewarding. To die and be left dead as a decayed corpse is not good or rewarding. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a good and rewarding relationship with God. They are alive, more alive than they were while on earth, for they are perfected and eternal. They are with God Himself. And so shall we be. The resurrection is a fact.
2. God is the God of the living, not of the dead. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not the God of dead decayed corpses. When Moses wrote these words, the three patriarchs had been dead for many years. If they were dead, God was not their God. Since He was their God, they were alive, living in God's presence in relationship to Him, perfect and eternal. There is to be a resurrection.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:7-9).

One simple fact clearly comes to the forefront in these points made by Christ: *since God is*, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8).

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

(See note—Mt.22:31-32 for more detailed discussion and for Scriptures dealing with the resurrection.)

	I. The Question About the Greatest Commandment, 12:28-34 (Mt.22:34-40; cp. Lk.10:25-37)	31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.	c. The Lord our God demands that we love our neighbors as ourselves[DS3,4]
1 A Scribe or lawyer approached Jesus[DS1] a. Observed Jesus' arguments b. Posed a test question: Which is the first commandment?	28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?	32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:	**3 The great vastness of the commandment** a. So great it causes honest & thinking men to agree
2 The greatest commandment a. The Lord our God is one Lord[DS2]	29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:	33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.	b. So great it exceeds all offerings & sacrifices
b. The Lord our God is to be loved	30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.	34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.	c. So great it almost assures salvation to those who understand it

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

I. The Question About the Greatest Commandment, 12:28-34

(12:28-34) **Introduction**: Jesus had met His third group of challengers, the Sadducees. He had silenced and routed them. The Pharisees, the strict religionists of that day, heard about Jesus' conquering His challengers again. In their minds, His threat to their security remained. All three attempts to discredit Him had failed. Somehow, they felt they must discredit Him before the people in order to break His hold on them. There was the very dangerous possibility that the people might follow through with their proclaiming Him to be the Messiah, that they might rise up against the Roman authorities. The responsibility for such action, of course, would lie at their feet as Jewish leaders; and they would be replaced as the ruling body of the Sanhedrin, losing their position, authority, esteem, and wealth.

They met together to plan and plot against Jesus again (cp. Mt.22:34). This time they took a different approach. Earlier they had challenged Him as a body of questioners. Now they chose only one member from among their body to attack Jesus. He was a lawyer or a Scribe who was most brilliant and versed in the law.

Jesus used the occasion to teach man the greatest *provision* and *duty* of human life: love. Love will provide for every need man has; therefore, love is the greatest duty of man.

1. A Scribe or lawyer approached Jesus (v.28).
2. The greatest commandment (v.29-31).
3. The great vastness of this law (v.32-34).

1 (12:28) **Commandments, Supreme**: this man was a lawyer (Mt.22:35). Apparently his heart had been touched by Jesus. There were two indications of this. First, Mark tells us that the man was present when Jesus was "reasoning together" with the Sadducees (Mt.12:28), and he perceived "that [Christ] had answered them well." Second, at the conclusion of his own discussion with Jesus, Jesus said to the man, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk.12:34).

Something about Jesus struck a chord within this man. His heart had been touched and stirred rather deeply. True, he was being put forward by the official body to challenge Jesus. But personally there was something about Jesus when Jesus was answering the Sadducees—the spirit, the wisdom, the self-confidence, the authority—that had stirred the lawyer's heart to wonder and to want to learn more about Jesus.

Note the question: "Which is the first commandment of all?" Through the years, Jewish teachers had set up six hundred commandments. There were so many commandments that in day-to-day life no person could keep them all. So the question was often discussed: Which commandments must be absolutely obeyed? Which ones are important and which ones are not? Can the failure to obey some be condoned or not? Which commandments are heavy and which are light? If a person keeps the greatest of the precepts, can he be excused for his failure to keep the others (cp. Mt.19:16f)? Note two quick points.

1. This is the sin which James attacks.

> **"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (Jas.2:10).**

2. Christ teaches that some laws are all inclusive and broader than others.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the *weightier matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Mt.23:23).

What the Pharisees were trying to do was this. Various groups believed the greatest commandment to be different things such as circumcision, sacrifices, and the Sabbath. They hoped that by stating His opinion, Jesus would disturb the people who held a position different from His. He would thereby lose their following. There was the strong possibility that a man giving his judgment would seem to be lessening the weight of other very important commandments.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:28) **Lawyer** (nomikos): a profession of laymen who studied, taught, interpreted, and dealt with the practical questions of Jewish law. They were a specialization within the profession commonly called Scribes (cp. Mt.22:35). They functioned both in the court and synagogues (cp. Lk.7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3; Tit.3:13). They were apparently a specialization dealing more with the study and interpretation of the law.

2 (12:29-31) **Commandments—God, Nature—Man, Responsibility—Brotherhood**: What was the greatest commandment in the law? Note that Jesus answered without hesitation or equivocation. He answered with all the authority of God Himself, and what He said was an eye-opener to people steeped in man-made religions.

1. Know that "the Lord our God is one Lord." (See note, *God, Nature*—Ro.3:29-30 for more discussion.)
   a. He is *the Lord*, Jehovah, Yaweh. There is no other. Monotheism (one God) is the true belief. Polytheism (many gods) is a false belief.
   b. He is *our God*. This is a personal relationship between a worshipper and his God. It is a daily experience. We are related to Him; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Therefore, we should love, adore, and worship Him.
   c. He is *one Lord*. He is the focus and concentration of our life, attention, worship, love, and praise. He is the only Subject of our devotion. There is no reason, no excuse for distraction by any other subject. He is *the One Lord, the only Subject*.

"There is none other God but one" (1 Cor.8:4).
"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph.4:6).
"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).
"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 Jn.5:7).
"Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears" (2 Sam.7:22).
"For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone" (Ps.86:10).
"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no savior" (Is.43:10-11).
"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Is.44:6).
"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD and there is none else" (Is.45:18).

2. The Lord our God is to be loved. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." Love God as *your* very own God. This is a personal relationship, not a distant relationship. God is not impersonal, far out in space someplace, distant and removed. God is personal, ever so close, and we are to be personally involved with God on a face-to-face basis. The command is to "*love the Lord thy God.*" Loving God is alive and active, not dead and inactive. We are, therefore, to maintain a personal relationship with God that is alive and active.

Note that Jesus says to love God with all your being. Jesus breaks our being down into three parts: the heart, the soul, and the mind (see DEEPER STUDY # 4,5,6—Mt.22:37 for discussion).

Note also that Jesus adds "with all thy strength." Love is man's chief duty. Man is responsible to maintain a loving relationship with God. Very practically, loving God involves the very same factors that loving a person involves (see outlines and notes—Eph.5:22-33).

   a. A loving relationship involves *commitment and loyalty*. True love does not allow lustful behavior with others. True love does not covet and does not care for a carnal definition that allows fleshly acts and sensual relationships with others.

      True love is commitment and loyalty to one person. It is very significant that the very first commandment God gives deals with commitment and loyalty. God strikes out at the very core of man's carnal behavior and tendency to define love in terms that allow him to satisfy his lust. "Thou shalt have no other gods" (Ex.20:3).

b. A loving relationship involves *trust and respect* for the person loved. It is loving the person for who he is. We love God because of Himself, because He is who He is.
   ⇒ He is the Creator and Sustainer of life; therefore we love Him.
   ⇒ He is the Savior and Redeemer; therefore we love Him.
   ⇒ He is the Lord and Owner of life; therefore we love Him.
c. A loving relationship involves the *giving and surrendering* of oneself. The drive is to give oneself, to surrender oneself to the other, not to get.
d. A loving relationship involves *knowing and sharing*. The desire is to know and to share, to be learning, growing, working, and serving ever so closely together.

Thought 1. Man is to love God supremely.

> **"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).**
>
> **"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Th.3:5).**
>
> **"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).**
>
> **"Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always" (Dt.11:1).**
>
> **"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Josh.22:5).**
>
> **"O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).**

3. The Lord our God demands that we love our neighbors as ourselves. Because of the length of this discussion, it is handled in a separate footnote (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mk.12:31).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:29) **God—Monotheism**: cp. Dt.6:4. (See note—Ro.3:29-30.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(12:31) **Love—Brotherhood**: the Lord our God demands that we love our neighbors as ourselves. This is actually a second commandment. Jesus said so. The lawyer had not asked for it, but the first commandment is abstract; it cannot be seen or understood standing by itself. There has to be a *demonstration*, *an act*, *something done* for love to be seen and understood. A profession of love without demonstration is empty. It is only profession. Love is not known without showing it.

Several important things need to be said about love at this point.

1. Love is an active experience, not inactive and dormant. That is what Christ was pointing out. Love for God *acts*. Love acts by showing and demonstrating itself. It is inaccurate and foolish for a man to say, "I love God"; and then be inactive, dormant, doing nothing for God. If he truly loves God, he will *do things* for God. Any person who loves does things for the one loved.
2. The primary thing God wants from us is to love our neighbor, *not the doing of religious things*. Doing religious things is good; but it only deals with things such as rituals, observances, ordinances, laws. Such things are lifeless, unfeeling, unresponsive. They are immaterial. They are not helped by our doing them. Only we are helped. They make us feel good and religious, which is beneficial to our growth, but religious things are not what demonstrate our love for God. Loving our neighbor is what proves our love for God. A man may say he loves God, but if he hates and acts unkindly toward his neighbor, everyone knows his religion is only profession.

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:20-21).**

3. The great commandment to love God flows downward into another great commandment: to love our neighbor as ourselves. The fact is inescapable.

> **"God commendeth [demonstrated] His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**

When a man really sees the love of God, he cannot help but love God and share the love of God with his neighbors. It is the love of Christ for us, His death and sacrifice, that compels us to go and love all men everywhere.

"We love him, because he first loved us...and this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:19, 21).

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

4. We are to love self.
   a. There is a corrupt love of self that feels the world should center around oneself. This self-love...
      - wants all attention centered around oneself.
      - pushes self forward.
      - insists on one's own way.
      - demands and revels in recognition.
      - shows conceit and ignores others.
   b. However, there is a godly love for self that is natural and pleasing to God. It is a love that stirs a strong self-image, confidence and assurance, and even helps in preventing some diseases and illnesses such as ulcers, tension, and high blood pressure. The right love of self or the godly love of self comes from knowing three things.
      ⇒ That one is actually the creation of God: the highest creation possible.
      ⇒ That one is actually the object of God's love: the most supreme love possible.
      ⇒ That one is actually the trustee of God's gifts: the greatest gifts possible.
   c. The godly love of self has three traits that are clearly seen.
      ⇒ It esteems others better than itself. It does esteem self ever so highly as God's glorious creation, but it esteems others more highly.

      "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Ph.2:3).

      ⇒ It looks on the things of others. It does look on one's own things as a trustee of God's gifts, but it also looks on the things of others.

      "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:4).

      ⇒ It walks humbly before others.

      "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:11-12).

      "...all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

5. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Note three very specific things about this second great commandment.
   a. To love our neighbor is a command, not an option. If the commandment is not obeyed, God is displeased, and we stand guilty of having broken the law of God.
   b. To love our neighbor arouses the question: Who is our neighbor? Jesus answered the question Himself in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. A good neighbor is "he that shows mercy on any who need mercy," even if the needy person is socially despised (Lk.10:25-37, esp. 36-37). Everyone in the world needs mercy; therefore, our neighbor is everyone in the world, no matter his status, condition, or circumstance. Every man is to be esteemed ever so highly and helped no matter who he is. No man is to be injured or wronged. Every man is always to be esteemed better than oneself (Ph.2:3).
   c. To love our neighbor is a very practical command. It involves some very practical acts that are spelled out in Scripture (cp. 1 Cor.13:4-7).
      ⇒ Love suffers long (endures long, is patient).
      ⇒ Love is kind.
      ⇒ Love envies not (is not jealous).
      ⇒ Love vaunts not itself (brags, boasts not).
      ⇒ Love is not puffed up (vainglorious, arrogant, prideful).
      ⇒ Love does not behave itself unseemly (unbecomingly, rudely, indecently, unmannerly).
      ⇒ Love seeks not her own (is not selfish, self-seeking, insisting on a person's own rights and way).
      ⇒ Love is not easily provoked (not touchy, angry, fretful, resentful).
      ⇒ Love thinks no evil (harbors no evil or immoral thoughts, takes no account of a wrong done it).
      ⇒ Love rejoices not in iniquity (not in wrong, sin, evil, injustice); but rejoices in the truth (what is right, just, righteous).
      ⇒ Love bears all things.
      ⇒ Love believes all things (exercises faith in everything; is ready to believe the best in everyone).
      ⇒ Love hopes all things (keeps up hope in everything, under all circumstances).
      ⇒ Love endures all things (keeps a person from weakening; gives the power to endure).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(12:31) **Love—Brotherhood**: cp. Lev.19:18.

3 (12:32-34) **Love, Law of—Almost Persuaded**: the great vastness of this law is threefold.

1. The law of love is so great it causes thinking and honest men to agree. This lawyer was a thinking man, and he was open and honest. Imagine the bitter hatred of this man's peers against Jesus, yet he was open and honest enough to listen to Jesus and face the truth of what Jesus said. (How many are as open and honest today?)
2. The law of love exceeds all offerings and sacrifices. The man had been wrapped up in offerings and sacrifices all his life. His life as a Scribe was literally dedicated to and possessed by a religion that was steeped in offerings and sacrifices.

He had come a long way in making this statement (v.32-33). He was beginning to see that life and religion were not ritual and ceremony and rules and regulations. Life is love—loving God with all of one's being and loving one's neighbor as oneself.

3. The law of love is so great it almost assures salvation to those who understand it. Jesus said so: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Thought 1. How many people really think and are at the same time open and honest? Some do think through the deeper issues of life, but there are fewer who are open and honest.

Thought 2. How many are not "far from the kingdom of God?" Some are not far away, but note: they are still away. They are not in the kingdom.

	J. The Entangled Idea of the Messiah, 12:35-37 (Mt.22:41-46; Lk.20: 39-44)	36 For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.	**3 The correct idea of the Messiah: He is the Lord of David—God Himself** *DSI*
1 Jesus questioned men	35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the	37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence	
2 The entangled idea of the Messiah: He is David's son—a mere man	temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?	is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.	**4 The crowds heard Jesus: Gladly**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

J. The Entangled Idea of the Messiah, 12:35-37

(12:35-37) **Introduction**: it was still Tuesday of the Lord's last week on earth. He had just been challenged four different times by four different opponents. He had met each group, each questioner head-on by turning the questions around to teach much needed truths (cp. Mt.21:23f; 22:15f; 22:23f; 22:34f). Jesus had silenced those who opposed His claim to be the Messiah.

Now it was His turn to question His opponents. But note: Jesus did not stand against them as an opponent. He questioned them as men who were in error and needed to see the truth. He was reaching out to them in the hope that some would receive the truth of His Messiahship and accept Him as the Son of God. The spirit of His questioning is seen in the brief discussion He had with them. The question He asked of them is the all important question which He asks of every man: "What think ye of Christ, the Messiah?"

1. Jesus questioned men (v.35).
2. The entangled idea of the Messiah: He is David's son—a mere man (v.35).
3. The correct idea of the Messiah: He is the Lord of David—God Himself (v.36-37).
4. The crowds heard Jesus: gladly (v.37).

1 (12:35) **Jesus Christ, Questions**: Jesus questions men—and there are reasons He questions them. These are clearly seen in His dealing with these men.

1. Jesus is long-suffering and tender. These men had challenged Jesus time and again trying to discredit and embarrass Him before the crowd. Yet He never reacted once. He answered their questions honestly, opening up new truths which they desperately needed to know. He questioned them because He was patient and long-suffering. He wanted to open up further truths to them. He longed for them to see and know and surrender to His Messiahship.
2. Jesus continues to question in order to reach out to man over and over. In the case of these men, Jesus was making a last-ditch effort, a last appeal to them. They had rejected and rejected until there was little hope. But Jesus was still hoping, still reaching out to them. He questioned in order to lead them to see that He was the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God Himself.

While considering the Lord's questioning, there is another fact to consider—a critical fact. There is an end to His questioning, a time when He knows there is no hope and no chance that a man will repent and believe. There is a time when He begins to pronounce judgment. This was Jesus' last question. Once it was answered, He began to pronounce judgment. Jesus discussed and questioned repeatedly, but after these men had rejected so many times, they became steeped in their unbelief. Therefore, Jesus ceased the discussion and pronounced judgment (cp. Mt.23:1-39).

2 (12:35) **Messiah**: the entangled idea of the Messiah was that He was David's son, *a mere man*. Jesus' question was one of the most important questions that can be asked of a man: "How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?" Matthew says that Jesus had first asked the Scribes, "What think ye of Christ [Messiah]? Whose Son is He?" (Mt.22:42). Note four points.

1. The Greek uses the definite article "*the* Messiah" (tou Christou). Jesus was trying to stir them to think about the Messiah. He did not ask these men what they thought of Him, but what they thought about *the Messiah*.
2. Jesus asked a specific question about the Messiah: "Whose Son is He?" Think about the Messiah. What is His origin? Who gave birth to Him? In practical day-to-day living, Jesus was asking three things.
   a. Where does your deliverance come from? The Messiah is to deliver man from all the evil and enslavements of the world. Where will such a Person come from?
   b. Where does your Lord come from—the Person you are to follow? The Messiah is to be the Lord who is to rule and reign and govern all lives, executing perfect justice and care.
   c. Where does your utopia come from—the Person who is to bring about the perfect world and all that is good and beneficial? Where does the Person come from who is to bring utopia and the Kingdom of God to earth?
3. The common title for the Messiah was "the Son of David." The Old Testament definitely said the Messiah was to come from the line of David. It was from such passages as these that the Messiah was known as "the Son of David." (See note, *Jesus Christ, Son of David*—Lk.3:24-31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45 for verses and fulfillment.)

"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (Ps.89:35-36).

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:6-7).

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Is.11:1-5).

The Messiah was to do four specific things. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—Lk.7:21-23. These notes are important for the full concept of the Messiah.)

a. He was to free Israel from all enslavement. Enslavement was to be abolished and all men were to be set free under God's domain.
b. He was to give victory over all enemies. Israel was to be established as the seat of His rule. This, of course, meant Israel was to be the leading nation of the world.
c. He was to bring peace to earth. All were to serve God under the government established by the Messiah.
d. He was to provide plenty for all. The Messiah was to see that all men had the benefits of God's rule and care.

4. The common idea of the Messiah's origin was that He was to be human, of a man. The idea that He might be of divine origin, of God Himself was just unacceptable to them.

3 (12:36-37) **Messiah**: the correct idea of the Messiah is that He is the Lord of David, God Himself. Jesus now pointed out the claim of Scripture: the Messiah is Lord, the Lord of David. Scripture does not only say that the Messiah is the Son of David, it also says that He is the *Lord* of David.

The Scripture is strong in its statement.

1. The fact is this: David called the Messiah "Lord" *in the Spirit*. That is, David's words were spoken under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. God was directing Him (cp. 2 Pt.1:21 and 1 Cor.12:3).

2. The fact is this: David said that "the Lord [Jehovah God] said to *my* Lord [the Messiah]." David unquestionably called the Messiah, "*My Lord.*"

3. The fact is this: David said that *my* Lord "sits on God's right hand." The Messiah is *Lord*, for He is *exalted* by God.

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:9).

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb.8:1).

4. The fact is this: David said that my Lord's "enemies are to be made His footstool." The Messiah is Lord, for all His enemies are to be subjected under Him.

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:10-11).

After quoting the Scripture, Jesus asked the key question: How can the Messiah be both David's Lord and Son? Jesus was doing at least two things.

1. Jesus was saying that to think of the Messiah only in human terms was inadequate—totally inadequate. It is not enough to think in terms of earthly power, of national, political, military, and institutional leaders. There is no way a *mere man* can bring perfect deliverance, leadership, and utopia to this earth. The Messiah is not only man; He is the Lord from heaven.

2. Jesus was claiming to be the Son of God Himself. Man's concept has to go beyond the mere human and physical. Man's idea has to stretch upward into God's very own heart. God loves this earth; therefore, God sent His Son to earth, sacrificing Him in order to save it.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16).

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:67-69).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (Acts 9:22).

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

Thought 1. Note a terrible tragedy: the religionists missed the truth of the Messiah because...

- they misread the Scripture, not letting the Scripture speak for itself.
- they did not pay close enough attention to the exact words of the Scripture. (Note how Christ takes a simple statement and shows how its exact words predicted the Messiah.)
- they studied their teachers and authorities more than the Scripture itself.
- they were dogmatic about their own ideas and notions about the future and how events would actually take place. Prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah were made a matter of fellowship.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:36) **Prophecy, of Messiah**: cp. Ps.110:1. The Pharisees recognized these Scriptures as being Messianic.

4 (12:37) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the crowds, that is, the common people, heard Jesus gladly. As seen before, they were amazed and stricken with awe at such profoundness of character and ability. Jesus was such an able teacher, and He was equally able in refuting those who were His avowed enemies.

Thought 1. The people heard Him gladly. Why? Because of the debating? Argument and dissension attract interest in a worldly and fleshly sense. Many enjoy seeing a heated argument and fight, especially when an underdog is getting the upper hand. Yet, there is no mention of the people's trusting Christ and becoming His followers. Some may have, but there is no mention of the fact.

	K. The Warning to the Crowds and Religionists: Some Things to Guard Against, 12:38-40 (Mt. 23:5-6, 14; Lk.20: 45-47)	long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, 39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: 40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.	**3 Showing self: To be seen in the marketplace** **4 Front seats & high places: To be seen, admired, & honored** **5 Devouring widows: To use widows for gain** **6 Long prayers: To show piety**
1 Dress: To draw attention **2 Greetings & titles: To exalt man**	38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

K. The Warning to the Crowds and Religionists: Some Things to Guard Against, 12:38-40

(12:38-40) **Introduction**: men need to be warned. There are some things that especially disturb and arouse anger in Jesus, some things that will result in terrible judgment. This passage discusses six of these sins. Note that all six have to do with pride or flaunting oneself, either by elevating oneself above others or by misusing others.

1. Dress: to draw attention (v.38).
2. Greetings and titles: to exalt man (v.38).
3. Showing self: to be seen in the marketplace (v.38).
4. Front seats and high places: to be seen, admired, and honored (v.39).
5. Devouring widows: to use widows for gain (v.40).
6. Long prayers: to show piety (v.40).

1 (12:38) **Dress—Clothing—Appearance**: beware of dressing to draw attention. There are three ways a person can dress to draw attention.

1. A person can desire and love to wear the clothing of the extravagant and wasteful. The long robe was the dress of the nobility, the rich, the well-known, the person of style. It was a long robe reaching to the ground. A man was unable to work in it; therefore, it was the sign of *higher society* or of a man of leisure. Jesus was not speaking against fine clothing. What He said was, "Beware of [those] who *love* to go in long clothing" (fine clothing). He condemned the person who was extravagant and wasteful, whose mind was on attracting attention, on self, on appearance. A person's mind is not to be on clothing, but on ...

> **"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).**

A man's life consists not in the things he has, but in the service he renders to others. The world is desperate, swamped with enormous needs. God's will is for all persons to be wrapped up in meeting the needs of the world and not in clothing. This is especially God's wish for the Christian. The Christian's concern is to be righteousness. He is to work for Christ and His kingdom, not for expensive, stylish, ostentatious clothing.

> **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**

2. A person can change his dress, his clothing, and his appearance *in order to attract attention*. A person often desires attention, so he seeks to attract by being different and making himself stand out. This was a sin of the religionists in Christ's day.
   a. They wore phylacteries. These were little leather type boxes which contained a piece of parchment with four passages of Scripture written on it. The Scriptures were Ex.13:1-10; 13:11-16; Dt.6:4-9; and 11:13-21.

      The use of the phylacteries apparently arose from a literal translation of Ex.13:9 and Prov.7:3. The true meaning of these two passages seems to be that we are to have the Word of God in our minds just as clearly as if we had them before our eyes. The great fault of the religionists was that they not only interpreted the passages literally and wore little leather boxes on their forehead, but they enlarged the little leather boxes to draw attention to themselves as being religious.
   b. They also enlarged the borders of their garments; that is, they wore outside tassels. God had instructed the Jews to make fringes or tassles on the borders of their outer robe. When a person noticed them, he was to be reminded to keep God's commandments. Again, the error was that the religionist changed his appearance from others; he enlarged the tassels, drawing attention to his being more religious than others.
3. A person can wear clothes that expose the body, that actually attract attention to certain parts of the body. A person can wear clothes that are too tight, too low cut, too high cut, too thin. A person can wear too little clothing, clothing that fails to cover enough of the body.

Jesus very simply said to beware of dressing to attract attention. The religionists did it to appear righteous. Others do it to appear worldly (appealing).

"Neither yield ye your members [bodily parts] as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim.2:9-10).

"[Women] whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:3-5).

2 (12:38) **Honor, Worldly—Titles**: beware of greetings and titles that exalt man. The religionists loved the *titles* that greeted and exalted them with honor. Note the title was "Rabbi" which meant teacher or master. It was only a simple title, yet some loved and revelled in the recognition above other men. It took a man who was supposed to be God's messenger and said, "Here I am; look at me." It honored the man and not the Lord.

Thought 1. Men exalt one another with titles: Reverend, Doctor, Director, Executive, Chairman—all to elevate one above the masses below.

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).

"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).

3 (12:38) **Marketplace**: beware of showing oneself in the marketplace. Displaying oneself in the marketplace was and still is a sin. The marketplace is wherever the people are. It is the center of traffic, the place where a person is seen and can attract attention. It is the streets, the office, the club, the school, the beach, etc. Neither dress nor title is to be used to attract attention and elevate oneself above others.

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

Thought 1. What Christ is after is love—love among all men and women, boys and girls. And the only way love will ever rule upon earth is for all to begin serving and *lifting up others* instead of self. Dressing and using titles to draw attention to oneself do not lend themselves to love. They tend to elevate self and to destroy the morals and stability of both families and the nation.

4 (12:39) **Self-Seeking—Honor, Worldly—Pride**: beware of front seats and high places, seats and places to be seen, admired, and to show one's prominence. In the synagogue the leaders and distinguished men sat on a bench in front of the ark (where the Scripture was kept), and they sat facing the congregation. No leader could be missed.

On social occasions the most honored sat at the right hand of the host, then the next honored at his left hand, and so on, alternating from the right to the left down the table. Position and recognition were set.

Some loved the positions of honor, special seats, and places of recognition. There are those who love the restricted neighborhoods and clubs, the preferred lists. They love the preeminence (3 Jn.9). Note what is condemned: not being in these positions and places, but the *love* of them. Someone has to hold the upper positions and fill the major places. It is the *love* of such, the love and the feeling of pride because of the place and position that is wrong.

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

5 (12:40) **Widows—Stealing—Motive, Evil**: beware of devouring widows, of using widows for gain. Many commit this sin, and Jesus is most severe in His warning against it. He says that the man who devours (takes advantage of) a widow "shall receive *greater damnation*." Note who these men were.

1. They were lawyers (Scribes). Of course others were guilty as well, but the ones who stood before Jesus were lawyers. They used their legal position to manage the wills and other legal business for the widows, and they cheated, devouring the widows by skimming too much out of their estates.
2. They were religionists, professing to believe in God. Some used the guise of religion to steal from widows.

There are some today—lawyers, religionists, preachers, and institutional, civic, and Christian leaders (all professing hypocrites)—who court the attention and favor of people, especially widows, for the purpose of securing money. They seek large donations, endowments, trusts, investments, and gifts *to promote themselves* and their institution. And the great tragedy is, such false and hypocritical hearts use the guise of religion to promote themselves and their false ideas. Their call to people is to institutional religion, not to the honor of God and the spirit of self-denial. Vain men, of course, are succeptible to such appeals, but widows in particular are exposed to those who seem to be so devoted to God.

Note that Jesus said the damnation of these shall be greater. There are some sins more horrible than others. Using religion for selfish ends is one of them. Such will receive a greater damnation. Something should be noted here. Widows hold a special place in God's heart. He has always instructed His people to care for them in a very special way.

> **"He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Dt.10:18).**
>
> **"Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow" (Dt.27:19).**
>
> **"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation" (Ps.68:5).**
>
> **"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is.1:17).**
>
> **"And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me" (Lk.18:3-7).**
>
> **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**

6 (12:40) **Prayers**: beware of long prayers to show piety. There are two prominent sins and dangers with long prayers.

1. There is the *danger of praying publicly for attention*. The problem in Jesus' day dealt with *long public prayers*; however, in our day short public prayers are just as big a problem. Men too often pray publicly...
   - to sound good.
   - to demonstrate their ability at language.
   - to show their devotion to God.
   - to simply impress people.

   Again, some use long prayers while others use short prayers to show their piety.
2. There is *the danger of sharing one's private prayer* life with others, in particular when one has spent a long time in prayer (all night or for hours) or is consistent in daily prayer. Sharing such a personal matter as prayer, even with one's closest friend, causes a *surge* of spiritual pride, of *super-spirituality*, of being a little bit better than a Christian brother.

   Again, the sin of pretence in praying, of sharing one's times with God, is a gross sin. It shall receive greater condemnation.

> **"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Mt.6:7).**

	L. The Widow's Mite: Real Giving, 12:41-44 (Lk.21:1-4)	in two mites, which make a farthing.	**2 Real giving is sacrificial giving**
		43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you,	**3 Real giving is measured by how much a person has left—not by how much a person gives**
1 Jesus observed some people giving		That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they	
a. Saw the wealthy give much	41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.	which have cast into the treasury:	
		44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.	**4 Real giving seeks to have a need met**
b. Saw a widow give little	42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw		**5 Real giving is giving all a person has**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF GOD'S LAST JERUSALEM MINISTRY: JESUS' WARNING AND CONFLICT WITH RELIGIONISTS, 11:1-12:44

L. The Widow's Mite: Real Giving, 12:41-44

(12:41-44) **Introduction**: this is a touching story with a powerful message often ignored. It is a story that...

- shows how God's heart reaches out to those in need—reaches out in tenderness and compassion and love.
- shows how much devotion and commitment and boldness mean to Him.
- shows how deeply God is moved by those who give all they are and have to Him (contrast the Rich Young Ruler, Mk.10:17-22).
- shows what real giving is.

1. Jesus observed some people giving (v.41-42).
2. Real giving is sacrificial giving (v.42).
3. Real giving is measured by how much a person has left—not by how much a person gives (v.43).
4. Real giving seeks to have a need met (v.44).
5. Real giving is giving all a person has (v.44).

1 (12:41-42) **Stewardship**: Jesus observed people giving. Following all the plotting and argument in the Court of the Gentiles (Mk.11:27-12:40), Jesus walked into the Court of the Women over by the treasury. The treasury was an area in which there were thirteen trumpet shaped collection boxes where the worshippers dropped their offerings. He sat down, apparently all alone, to get some relief and rest from the tension of the past hours. While resting, He "beheld how the people cast money into the treasury" The word "beheld" (etheorei) means He was deliberately observing, discerning the motives of the people as they made their offerings. He saw many walk by and drop in sizeable offerings. Some were apparently quite large contributions. He could see the handfuls of coins and hear them clang against the sides as they slid down the funnel shaped trumpets. But none attracted His admiration. Finally a poor widow came along and threw in two mites, which were the smallest of coins, coins of very little value. Christ took what he saw and taught what true giving really is.

2 (12:42) **Stewardship**: real giving is sacrificial giving. The word "poor" (ptoches) means pauper. She was not just poor, she was destitute, in deep poverty. Her poor dress and plain appearance showed her desperate plight. The coins were all she had, yet she gave them despite her own desperate need.

Now note the point: what she gave was a *sacrifice*. What the others gave was not a sacrifice. It did not cost them nor hurt them. They still had plenty left, for they gave only what they could spare. But not the widow. Her gift cost her. It hurt to give, for she gave what she could not spare. She gave what Christ called a *sacrificial gift*. She sacrificed; she went without a meal or gave up something else so that she could give.

> **Thought 1.** There is a great difference between giving what one can spare and giving sacrificially, actually giving up something in order to give. Sacrificial giving costs something. Sacrificial giving is giving when it hurts, when a person has nothing left, nothing to spare. The difference needs to be stressed, for God expects sacrificial giving. If the world and its desperate needs are ever to be reached for Christ, then every believer must give sacrificially.

> **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor.16:2).**
>
> **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver....For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but...they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men....Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor.9:7, 12-13, 15).**
>
> **"Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee" (Dt.16:17).**

3 (12:43) **Stewardship:** real giving is measured by how much a person has left, not by how much a person gives. Jesus called His disciples to him and used the great sacrifice that the widow made to teach a much needed lesson. Note several facts.

1. They all gave an offering to God: both "the people" (v.41) who had and the poor widow who did not have.
2. The ones who had plenty gave more money, much more than the widow. Their contributions were generous. Their incomes were dazzling, so their offerings were large.
3. But in God's eyes the widow gave more. Why? Because God measures what was *kept*, not what was given.
   ⇒ The widow had less remaining; the others still had much.
   ⇒ The widow had given more of what she had; the others had given less of what they had.
   ⇒ The widow had sacrificed more; the others had sacrificed less.

In proportion to what she had, the widow gave a larger percent. The others gave a much smaller percent. After they had given, they still had 85 percent or 90 percent or 95 percent to spend on themselves.

This is the lesson Jesus was teaching, a critical lesson. God counts what we have left, not what we give. He counts the amount of sacrifice, not the amount of money. The gift that matters is the gift that costs the giver to give. To the thoughtful recipient it is not the size of the gift that impresses, but the sacrifice the giver had to make in order to give the gift. The greater the sacrifice, the more appreciative the recipient. (See Related Subjects—Subject Index for more discussion.)

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

4 (12:44) **Stewardship**: real giving seeks to have a need met. Note the words, "She *of her want* [out of her need] did cast in all that she had." She had great need for food, clothing, and shelter. She had so little; she was the kind of person who would have had to wander about seeking odd jobs just to survive in a depressed economy. Looking at her, a person could tell she never knew where she would get her next meal. She had no one to care for her and no one to help her. The weight of the world seemed to lie upon her shoulders. There was no man who cared or expressed care. This was evident in her appearance, but she knew something. Men may not care, but God cares; so she came to God for help. And what she did is a crucial lesson for men to learn.

She took her need and gave it to God. Her need was financial, so she took what money she had and gave it all to God. She simply said, "God, I have need, the need for money. I do not even have enough money to buy food. If I am to eat, you have to provide somehow, some way. I have worked as hard as I can at the jobs I have been able to find. Here is all I have. Take it; use it in your kingdom. You now take care of me."

She knew the great principle that God will take care of those who give all they are and have to Him. She knew that if she were to be *assured* of God's care, she had to give *all* to God. If she gave *all*, God would not deny her anything. He would provide all the necessities of life (Mt.6:33). She took her need and all that was involved in it and gave it to God. She sought God to meet her need by giving *all that she had* to God.

Note something else. Two needs are present and being met.

1. God's temple (church) had need. The widow, though poor, gave to help carry on the ministry of God.
2. The poor widow had need. She gave, believing God would see to it that she had food, clothing, and shelter.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor.9:6).

"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Pr.11:25).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Pr.22:9).

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday" (Is.58:10).

5 (12:44) **Stewardship**: real giving is giving all a person has. "She...did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Just imagine! *She gave her living*—not just part—not just a sacrifice—but *all*! She could have easily said what so many often feel:

⇒ "My gift doesn't matter. It's so little."
⇒ "I have so little. God will understand. He doesn't expect me to give it when I can't even buy food."

Thought 1. The lesson is twofold.

1) We lack devotion and dedication in our commitment to God, whether commitment of life, time, gifts, or money.
2) We lack boldness in giving and using what we have for God.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:33).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

	CHAPTER 13	things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.	of war, international disturbances
	VIII. THE SON OF GOD'S OLIVET MINISTRY: JESUS' PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN & THE END TIME,[DS1,2,3] 13:1-37	8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.	4 Sign 3: Natural disasters (Note: these signs are the beginning of sorrows)[DS4]
	A. The Signs of the End Time, 13:1-13 (Mt.24:1-14; Lk.21:5-19)	9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.	5 Sign 4: Persecution by civil and religious authorities
1 Events that led to the great prophecies a. The disciples admired the buildings of the temple b. Jesus predicted the destruction of the buildings	And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! 2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.	10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.	6 Sign 5: World-wide evangelization
c. The disciples asked two questions 1) When is the destruction to come? 2) What is the sign of the destruction?	3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, 4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?	11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.	7 Sign 6: A supernatural witness
d. Jesus warned: Watch out for deceivers	5 And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you:	12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.	8 Sign 7: Divided families a. Betrayal b. Hatred & persecution
2 Sign 1: Spiritual deception & false messiahs	6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.	13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.	9 Sign 8: Some's enduring & being saved
3 Sign 2: Wars & rumors	7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such		

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF GOD'S OLIVET MINISTRY: JESUS' PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END TIME, 13:1-37

A. The Signs of the End Time, 13:1-13

(13:1-37) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: End Time:** noting the exact words of Jesus will help in understanding this chapter.

1. Jesus said "These are the beginnings of sorrows" (v.8). The words "the beginnings of sorrows" indicate that Jesus was dealing with the beginning of a terrible period of trial for the believer ("you," v.9). He was not *just* referring to the normal trials that occur upon earth or the regular persecutions that are launched against believers over the centuries (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:1-31). World trouble and persecutions against God's people have always existed, even from the beginning of time. The great sorrow He spoke about refers to some period of time which is to be terrible, so terrible that it can be said to be "*the beginnings of sorrows" or woes*. It is to be a period that is to be distinguished from all the other trouble the world and believers will suffer throughout history.

2. Jesus said, "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation...standing where it ought not...then let them that be in Judea flee" (v.14). Matthew words the warning this way: "Then...flee...for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (Mt.24:15-16, 21). There is no question about this sign. It launches the worst period of tribulation the world has ever seen. This sign definitely points to a specific period of human history. As to what the period should be called, it is probably best to title it as Matthew does: "great tribulation" (Mt.24:21).

3. Now, note what Jesus has said in the above verses.

> **"These are the beginnings of sorrows" (v.8).**
>
> **"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation...standing where it ought not...then let them...flee" (v.14); or as Matthew says, "then...flee...*for then* shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world" (Mt.24:15-16, 21).**

Jesus seemed to be giving a list of signs, one of which was the abomination of desolation. In verses 6-13 He gave eight signs, the eighth saying "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved" (v.13). But note in verse 14, how He seemed to pick up the signs again, giving what seems to be the most visible and terrible sign for which to watch. Note His words, reading verses 13 and 14 together, "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation...standing where it ought not...then let them...flee."

Jesus was saying there will be a difference between the signs that precede the abomination and the unparalleled trials that follow. When *the abomination of desolation* stands where it ought not (in the holy place), the trials that follow are much, much worse—unparalleled in human history.

The abomination of desolation will be the sign that launches the worst tribulations the world has ever known. Just when this abomination would appear Jesus did not say, but His appearance would be one of the nine signs Jesus gave; and His appearance would signal the worst devastation ever known by the world.

A chart diagramming Jesus' own words will perhaps help in understanding what He said.

1. His words were: "These [signs] are the beginnings of sorrows" (v.8).
2. "But when ye *shall see* the abomination of desolation...then let them...flee" (v.14); or as Matthew says, "*then shall be great tribulation*" (Mt.24:15, 21).
3. "But in those days, *after that tribulation*...shall they see the Son of Man coming" (v.24-27).

THE END OF THE WORLD

	Seeing the Sign of the Abomination of Desolation *In the Middle of the Time or Years* (v.14)	Seeing the Son of *Man Coming* (v.26)
3 1/2 years Signs which are "The beginnings of sorrow" (v.8).	3 1/2 years Unparalleled trials of "the great tribulation" (v.19; cp Mt.24:21)	"His angels... gather together His elect" (v.27)

(13:1-13) **Introduction—End Time**: in understanding what Jesus was saying, we have to be very careful not to add to or take away from what He said. Both mistakes were made by religionists concerning Jesus' first coming (Mt.2:4-6).

A major fact to keep in mind is this. The disciples did think that all three events (Jerusalem's destruction, the Lord's return, and the world's end) would happen at about the same time. They did think in terms of the Messianic Kingdom of God (Acts 1:6 compared with the Jewish concept of the Messiah show this). (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23.) When Jesus said that the temple would be destroyed, the disciples assumed it would happen at the same time that He returned and ended the world, thereby restoring the kingdom to Israel.

Jesus, however, gave no timetable. He did not say when the three events would occur. What He did was give signs that would occur before the events, signs that pointed toward His return and toward the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

It is important to keep in mind that most of the signs happen throughout history, but there is this difference: the signs increase and intensify right before the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world. There will be a period known as "*the beginnings of sorrows*" (v.8), and a period launched by the abomination of desolation known as *the great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (Mt.24:21).

1. Events that led to the great prophecies (v.1-5).
2. Sign 1: spiritual deception and false messiahs (v.6).
3. Sign 2: wars and rumors of war, international disturbances (v.7-8).
4. Sign 3: natural disasters (v.8).
5. Sign 4: persecution by civil and religious authorities (v.9).
6. Sign 5: worldwide evangelization (v.10).
7. Sign 6: a supernatural witness (v.11).
8. Sign 7: divided families (v.12-13).
9. Sign 8: some's enduring and being saved (v.13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:1-37) **End Time—Daniel**: Jesus made another statement that helps in understanding this chapter. He said that the abomination of desolation was "spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Mt.24:15). There are three passages in Daniel that refer to the abomination of desolation.

> **"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and**

for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Dan.9:25-27).

"And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan.11:31).

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (Dan.12:11).

Several things can be said about Daniel's prophecy.

1. The prophecy had a past fulfillment in Antiochus Epiphanes (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.13:14).

2. Jesus said the prophecy of Daniel also had a future fulfillment. Note the words, "When ye shall see." The future fulfillment refers both to the fall of Jerusalem (v.14-20) and to the end of the world, right before the Lord returns (v.14, 24-27).

3. The words of Daniel give a division of time even as Jesus divided the signs into two periods. Daniel says, "In the midst of the week he [the prince] shall cause...." Note two facts.

   a. The words "in the midst of the week" definitely point to a separation of the week into two periods of time.

   b. "The week" is the seventieth week, the last week of Daniel's vision of history. This indicates that the end of time is being dealt with.

In discussing the end of time, Jesus was saying that He was discussing what Daniel prophesied. Now note what begins the second half of Daniel's week. It is the abomination of desolation or the prince's causing abomination of desolation in the holy place. Mark 13:14 actually uses the masculine participle which indicates that the abomination of desolation is a person, the prince himself. Note something else. What Jesus called the "great [unparalleled] tribulation" begins with the abomination of desolation (Mt.24:15-16, 21).

The indication again is that the beginning of sorrows and the great tribulation are one period of time, but the period includes two parts. (See Division Overview—Mk.13:1-37 for chart of the two periods.)

4. The length of the last part or half is actually given by Scripture (see notes—Rev.11:2; 12:6; 13:4-8).

"Times, times, and half a time" (Dan.7:25; 12:7).
"1260 days" (Rev.12:6).
"42 months" (Rev.11:2; 13:5-6).

Based upon this timetable, the tribulation of which Jesus spoke can be said to be seven years, divided into two parts:

"The beginning of sorrows," or the first half of the tribulation.

"The great tribulation," or the second half of the tribulation.

Again, seeing these two periods of time as discussed by Jesus (and referred to by Daniel) helps in understanding Jesus' answer to the disciples' two questions.

5. Jesus said that it would be after Daniel's prince that He would return: "after that tribulation...shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect..." (Mk.13:24-27). In these words, our Lord answered the two questions: "When shall the temple be destroyed? And what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" (Mt.24:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(13:1-37) **End Time**: several other facts need to be kept in mind as a person studies this section of Mark.

1. Jesus was preparing His disciples for His death and departure from this world and preparing them to carry on after He was gone. His immediate disciples were to face some terrible times, ranging all the way from personal trials brought on by their witness for Jesus, to national trials involving the utter destruction of their nation. It would be generations stretching into centuries before He returned to earth. No one knew this at that time, but He did; so He needed to prepare His future disciples as well. They, too, were going to face all kinds of trials. There was always the danger that His disciples might tire waiting for His return. They were to see and experience so much trouble in the world that their faith might falter.

What Jesus did was use this occasion to reveal some of the events that were to take place upon the earth during "these last days," the days of the church (Acts 2:16-17; 1 Jn.2:18). By knowing some of the events, His disciples would be better prepared to endure and to keep their hope for His return alive.

2. Jesus was dealing with two questions throughout this passage. He was answering the questions: When will the temple be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of His return and of the end of the world?

Note something: Jesus was dealing with the end of the temple and with the end of the world, the destruction of the temple and the destruction of the world. He was covering the signs, the events that were to cause the judgment and to occur during the judgment of both the temple and the world. What is the point? Simply this. The Scripture teaches that the same signs and events cause the judgment of anything. That is, the events (sins) that cause judgment upon one thing are the same events that will bring judgment upon everything else. Therefore, the signs that surrounded the destruction of Jerusalem are much the same as the signs that shall surround the end of the world. Therefore, what Jesus was saying had a double meaning and application (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.24:1-14; 24:15-28. Both notes will help to see the double application.)

The Lord's words applied both to the disciples of His day and to all disciples who were to follow in succeeding generations. As long as the earth stands, the disciples of *the last days* (or ages) will face many of the same signs faced by those who experienced the destruction of Jerusalem. But there is to be one difference: at the end of the world, the signs will increase and intensify. The day is coming, so terrible, that it can be called *the beginnings of sorrows* (v.8), and *the great tribulation* (v.21). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-31; note—24:15-28.)

3. A quick outline of the passage helps one understand what Jesus was doing.
   a. The eight signs of the last days (that is, the last days before both Jerusalem's destruction and the world's end) (Mk.13:1-13).
   b. The ninth and most terrible sign: the abomination of desolation and the great tribulation (Mk.13:14-23; cp. Mt.24:15, 21).
   c. The coming of the Son of Man (Mk.14:24-27).

The rest of what Jesus covered dealt with the actual time of the Lord's return (Mt.24:32-41) and the believer's duty to watch and be prepared (Mt.24:42-25:46 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(13:1-37) **End Time**: the great similarities between what Jesus said about the end time and sections of Revelation need to be noted (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-31 for discussion).

1 (13:1-5) **End Time**: a quick glance at the first four verses will show the events that led Jesus to deal with great prophecies covered by these chapters.

1. The disciples admired the temple's magnificence and drew Jesus' attention to its beauty. The temple was magnificent. It sat upon the towering summit of Mount Sion, and it was built of white marble plated with gold. The temple had several porches that were supported by huge, towering pillars, each one so large that it took three to four men reaching arm to arm to reach around it. The disciples apparently stood someplace where the temple in all its magnificent beauty struck them with awe, and they wanted Jesus to see the beautiful sight.
2. Jesus used the occasion to arouse the disciples' interest in coming events. He predicted the temple's utter destruction.
3. The disciples were aroused to ask two questions of the Lord: When will the temple be destroyed and what will be the sign of destruction? By these questions, Mark clearly shows that the disciples were thinking about the signs of Jesus' return and of the end of the world (Mt.24:3. See note—Lk.21:5-8.)
4. Jesus warned His disciples: they must guard against being deceived. This can mean one or two things. A person can be easily deceived when dealing with end-time prophecies, or a person can be easily deceived when facing the end-time events. He can be deceived into thinking that certain cataclysmic events are infallible signs that the end is at hand (v.7). Such too often results...
   - in wild guesses about the end time
   - in universal predictions
   - in the deceiving of others
   - in discouragement of a person's faith when the end does not come

2 (13:6) **Messiah, False—Deception**: the first sign of the end time is spiritual deception by false messiahs. Note three facts stated.

1. Many false messiahs shall come. There will not be just a few, but many.
2. They shall claim to be the Christ, the Messiah; that is, each one will claim to *the one* who can lead men into the utopian state. They will claim that they can solve man's problems and see to it that man has plenty of everything. He will claim that he is *the one* who can fulfill the dreams of people, delivering them from conflict and war into a state of peace and freedom, plenty and comfort, equality or supremacy. The false messiahs are sometimes politicians and sometimes religionists, but in either case, they wield power and proclaim themselves to be the hope of mankind.

> **Thought 1.** Think of the promises so often made by some politicians and religionists, promises that point toward them as the *personal answer* to man's hopes, dreams, and problems.

3. They "deceive many." They are *deceivers, imposters, seducers, pretenders*. They are not able to fulfill the dreams and hopes of men nor to solve the problems of men. They are not able to bring about the utopian state for men, for they do not have such power. They are mere men. They are not the true Messiah, not the Messiah of God. But despite this, many will follow them, believing their false promises and entrusting their lives and welfare into their keeping. Many will follow them as though they are the true deliverer of mankind.

> **"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Ro.16:18).**
>
> **"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (2 Cor.11:13).**
>
> **"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).**
>
> **"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).**
>
> **"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).**

3 (13:7-8) **War—World, Violence**: the second sign of the end time is national and international disturbances, wars and rumors of war.

1. Believers will hear of upheavals, nationally and internationally. Some, as citizens of a warring nation, will even be caught up in the conflict. The news will be bad and bleak, always filled with *wars and rumors of war—always plural, always referring to many*.

2. The believer is not to be troubled. The word "troubled" (throeo) means to be terrified, frightened, disturbed, alarmed, crying out within one's inner being. Three things can happen to the believer in looking at worldwide trouble.

a. The believer can become overly affected by the news of world affairs and turmoil. Such news can become so interesting and captivating that it can dominate the believer's life. He begins to live and thrive on the news.

b. The believer can become overly apprehensive about the personal safety of himself and his family. He can begin to fear so much that he forgets that his security is in God, not in this world. Fear over world affairs tends to emphasize the importance of the earth over the importance of God; it tends to emphasize the worldly over the spiritual. The world, of course, is important; but what needs to be stressed is the spiritual. And it is the believer's responsibility to stress the spiritual, the security and peace of heart that is found in Christ.

c. The believer can become so troubled over world affairs that he neglects his spiritual duties. The believer is naturally concerned over the world, as all men should be. But he is not to allow world affairs to interfere with his witnessing for Christ. He is to be at peace and to be secure with God, and he is to demonstrate the peace and security of God, going about his daily duties as much as possible within a turbulent world. The point is, the believer is to be witnessing for Christ no matter the turbulence of the world.

3. Jesus said that world disturbance and upheavals "must needs be." They exist because of *selfishness* and *greed*, the sinful and depraved nature of man. The dark side of man is and always will be revealed and exposed by...

- assaults
- attacks
- fighting
- arguments
- killing
- maiming
- cheating
- lying
- stealing
- abuse
- neglect
- hoarding
- storing up
- lusting
- unbelief (Ph. 4:6-7)
- negative thinking (Ph.4:8)
- asking not (Jas 4:2-3)

4. World disturbance does not mean the end is at hand. Note that Christ was specific about this fact: "The end is not yet." He had just said, "Take heed lest any man deceive you" (v.5).

> **"And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (2 Chron.15:6-7).**
>
> **"My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD. And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land; a rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler" (Jer.51:45-46).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).**
>
> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**

4 (13:8) **Earthquake—Famine**: the fourth sign of the end time is natural disasters. Two disasters of nature are mentioned in particular.

1. Earthquakes in *many places*. Unbelievable destruction and death are sometimes caused by earthquakes. Josephus records the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. He even hints that the natural disasters which happened were a sign of coming destruction.

> "...there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, and continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth, that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders forshowed some grand calamities that were coming" (Flavius Josephus. *Wars*. 4. 4:5. Josephus Complete Works, translated by William Whiston. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1960).

Earthquakes will occur in many places during the last days of the earth (Rev.6:12; 11:12-13, 19; 16:17-19).

2. Famines. Scripture speaks of a "great famine" throughout all the world "which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (Acts 11:28-30). Josephus describes the famine as being so terrible that when flour "was brought into the temple...not one of the priests was so hardy as to eat one crumb of it...while so great a distress was upon the land" (Josephus, *Ant*. 3. 15:3). He says in another place, "A famine did oppress them [Jerusalem]...and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food" (Josephus, *Ant*. 20. 2:5).

In the very last days before Jerusalem's fall, Josephus speaks of another terrible famine:

> "It was now a miserable case, and a sight that would justly bring tears into our eyes, how men stood to their food, while the more powerful had more than enough, and the weaker were lamenting (for want of it)" (Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 10:3).
>
> "Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine; and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the marketplaces like shadows, all swelled with famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them" (Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 12:3).

There is evidently to be terrible famine in the last days. The black horse of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse indicates terrible famine (see note—Rev.6:5-6). The unbearable pain and terrible evil that hunger can cause is graphically described by Scripture.

> **"They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have**

sodden [boiled] their own children: they were their meat [food] in the destruction of the daughter of my people" (Lam.4:9-10).

Matthew adds a third disaster of nature: pestilence. Earthquakes and famines, of course, cause disease and pestilence (see note—Mt.24:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(13:8) **Sorrows** (odinon): birth-pains; labor-pains; travailings; intolerable anguish; quick, sharp, violent travailing pain.

5 (13:9) **Persecution**: the fourth sign of the end time is persecution by civil and religious authorities. Jesus said several significant things about this sign.

1. "Take heed to yourselves." The believer is to take heed, to guard himself. The emphasis is upon the pronoun "yourselves," in order to stress the need to guard oneself. The believer must guard *himself*; he himself must take heed. He will face not only the deceptions and normal conflicts of a selfish world, not only the terrible disasters of nature, but he will face persecution by his fellow men.
2. "They [civil and religious men] shall deliver you up." Believers shall be abused, neglected, ignored, arrested, and tried before the courts of the world and of religion. Why? "For my sake, for a testimony [to] them." (In the Greek the word is "to," not "against." It is a simple dative case in the Greek.) Believers will stand before all *for the purpose of demonstrating loyalty to Christ*. Standing fast through the persecution is *a way of witnessing*. A believer shows that Christ and eternity are real when he suffers for Christ.

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt.10:17).

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake" (Mt.24:9; cp. Lk.21:12-13).

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:1-3).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me" (Ps.7:1).

"My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me" (Ps.31:15).

"All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me" (Ps.119:86).

"For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead" (Ps.143:3).

6 (13:10) **Evangelism**: the fifth sign of the end time is world evangelization. Note the exact words of Christ: "The gospel *must first* be published among all nations" before the end can come. Note three things.

1. The word "must" assures the fact. The fact is set in God's plan for the world. It cannot be changed. The gospel will be preached among all nations before the end of the world.
2. The promise was fulfilled in the first century. The gospel was carried to all the known world at that time (Ro.10:18; Col.1:23. See note—Mt.24:14 for detailed discussion.)
3. The promise of world evangelization is to be fulfilled in the end time. All nations of the world will hear the gospel before the end comes. Christ's promise was unrestricted. He said "among all nations." There is to be a proclamation of the gospel to the whole world before time ceases.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto *all nations*; and then shall the end come" (Mt.24:14).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into the all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Lk.24:47).

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Ps.2:8).

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Ps.22:27).

"Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people" (Ps.96:3).

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it" (Is.2:2).

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Is.11:9).

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law" (Is.42:4).

"For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.1:11).

7 (13:11) **Persecution—Holy Spirit—Witnessing**: the sixth sign of the end time is a supernatural witness (see note—Mt.10:19-20). There is going to be a strong surge of Spirit-led witnessing in the end time. Multitudes of believers are going to be called upon to give an answer for the hope that is within them. Note two things.

1. The words "take no thought" mean to worry not, be not anxious. The believer is not to be *overly* concerned about what he is to say, either in defense of himself or as a testimony to his persecutors.
2. The Holy Spirit will speak through the believer. The believer will not be left alone in defending himself in persecution. God will speak through the believer, standing right with him (cp. Acts 4:8f; 2 Tim.4:16-18).

"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:16-18).

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb.13:6).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up" (Is.50:9).

8 (13:12-13) **Persecution—Family**: the seventh sign of the end time is divided families (see note—Mt.10:21). Two characteristics will be especially evident.

1. There will be betrayal—betrayal that leads to death (v.12). The practice will seep into the family and be widely practiced, so much so that Christ says it will be a common trait of the end time.
2. There will be intense hatred among all (the emphasis is, even among the family). Note why: it is because the believer stands for the name of Christ. His own family, as well as the world, will hate, persecute, and betray him because of his testimony for the Lord.

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death" (Mt.10:21).

9 (13:13) **Endurance—Salvation**: the eighth sign of the end time is the scene of some's enduring and being saved despite the terrible persecution. Note two points.

1. The word "endure" (upomeinas) means to bear up under suffering, to be courageous in suffering, to persevere and endure patiently—but actively, not passively. It is enduring, actively bearing intense suffering. The believer is now called upon and will be called upon to stand firm through all forms of persecution and abuse, even if it leads to inhuman torture and death.
2. Jesus was talking to His disciples. Therefore, His promise of *being saved* was bound to mean the *soul's salvation in the last days*. It could not mean the safety of human life. He had just said some (many) would be killed (v.12; cp. Mt.24:9). Thus, the believer who stands firm is the one who proves that he is a genuine believer.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile" (Ro.2:7-9).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [trial]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas.5:11).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into this marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

	B. The Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation, 13:14-23 (Mt.24:15-28; Lk.21: 20-24)	18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.	d. To pray for good conditions in fleeing
		19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.	**3 So terrible, it causes horrifying, unparalleled affliction (the great tribulation,** cp. Mt.24:21)
1 So terrible, it is named the abomination of desolation[DS1]	14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation,	20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no	**4 So terrible, God has to intervene & shorten the days of affliction**
a. The reason: It stands where it should not	spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that	flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath short-	
b. Prophesied by Daniel	readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:	ened the days.	
2 So terrible, it is to be fled from immediately			
a. To forget all comfort of home[DS2]	15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter	21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; be-	**5 So terrible, it causes a frantic search for false messiahs (deliverers)**
	therein, to take any thing out of his house:	lieve him not:	
b. To forget all personal possessions	16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.	22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible,	
c. To grieve for those who cannot flee rapidly	17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!	even the elect. 23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.	**6 So terrible, it requires being foretold**

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF GOD'S OLIVET MINISTRY: JESUS' PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END TIME, 13:1-37

B. The Most Terrible Sign: The Abomination of Desolation, 13:14-23

(13:14-23) **Abomination of Desolation**: this is a reference to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, it is also a reference to the antichrist (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Antichrist*—Mk.13:14; note—2 Th.2:4-9; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.11:7; notes—13:1-10; 13:11-18; 17:7-14; cp. Dan.9:20-27, esp. 27; 12:11). The antichrist himself will be a sign that the end time has come. Jesus pointed this out in answer to the double question of the disciples (see note—Mt.24:15-28). Note v.23 where Jesus said He had foretold all things. This statement and the wording of v.24, "But in those days, after that tribulation," clearly show that Jesus was continuing His discussion of the signs that pointed to the end time. (See note—Mt.24:15-28. This is an important note for the background to this passage.)

1. So terrible, it is named the abomination of desolation (v.14).
2. So terrible, it is to be fled from immediately (v.14-18).
3. So terrible, it causes horrifying, unparalleled affliction (the great tribulation) (v.19).
4. So terrible, God has to intervene and shorten the days of affliction (v.20).
5. So terrible, it causes a frantic search for false messiahs (deliverers) (v.21-22).
6. So terrible, it requires being foretold (v.23).

1 (13:14) **Antichrist—Abomination of Desolation**: this sign is so terrible it is called the abomination of desolation (see note—Mt.24:15). The reason is because it stands "where it ought not," that is, in the temple of God. In fact, it stands in the holy place where the very presence of God is symbolized as filling the very atmosphere. The words "where it ought not" mean that it *stands as God, as a replacement for God*. It assumes the position of God within the temple of God. The picture is exactly what Paul described in speaking of this sign in the end time:

> **"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Th.2:3-4).**

There is no greater crime than usurping the place of God in a human life. Every man who rejects God usurps God. He replaces God with someone or something else in his life. But the picture here includes much more than personal unbelief, even more than the corporate unbelief of false messiahs and their limited followings. It is a universal, worldwide attempt to replace God Himself in His own temple, so that *all believers* will actually see the event (v.14).

Some hold that the sign will be repeated in the end time and literally fulfilled within the temple. It has been literally fulfilled twice in the past when Antiochus Epiphanes and Titus stood within the temple. Others believe the words "the temple" refer to all religion. They believe the abomination will be the desolating of all religion, in particular genuine Christianity.

Note: the act of corrupting the temple of God is so terrible that God has given it the name of abomination—*the abomination of desolation*. How repulsive unbelief and rejection are to Him!

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:14) **Abomination of Desolation—Antichrist** (To Bdelugma Tes eremoseos): the abomination that makes desolate. Note Jesus' words, "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by *Daniel the prophet*" (Mt.24:15) There are three passages in Daniel that speak of the abomination of desolation.

> **"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city....Know therefore and understand...." (Dan.9:24-27).**
>
> **"And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (Dan.11:31).**
>
> **"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (Dan.12:11).**

In Daniel 9:27, the term is *Bdelugma ton eremoseon*. The Hebrew says, "upon the wing [or pinnacle] of abominations [shall come] the desolater" or "upon wings as a desolater [shall come] abomination."

In Daniel 11:31, the Hebrew says, "they shall put [place] the abomination that desolates."

In Daniel 12:11, the Hebrew says, "and from the time the daily [sacrifice] shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, [shall be]...."

Several matters need to be discussed about the abomination of desolation spoken of by Jesus and Daniel.

1. The first matter that needs to be considered is *when Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled.*
   a. There was a past fulfillment; that is, there was a fulfillment before the time of Jesus about 178 B.C. This is clear. Antiochus Epiphanes, the King of Syria, conquered Jerusalem and tried to force Grecian culture upon the Jews. He wanted the Jews to become full-fledged Greeks both in custom and religion. He knew that to be successful he had to destroy the Jewish religion. Therefore, He did three of the most horrible things that could ever be done in the minds of the Jewish people. He desecrated the temple by (1) building an altar in the courtyard to the Grecian god Zeus, (2) by sacrificing swines' flesh upon it, and (3) by setting up a trade of prostitution in the temple chambers (cp. 1 Maccabees 1:20-62; cp. also Josephus, *Ant.* 12. 5: 3-4; *Wars*. 1. 1:2).
   b. Jesus said there is to be a future fulfillment: "When ye therefore *shall see* the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet...." There are four primary views of the future fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. (1) One view says there is no future fulfillment, that all the signs were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by Titus. (2) Others see Jesus referring to the church age and the trials the church has to go through before Christ returns. (3) Still others view the prophecy as referring exclusively to the end time, having nothing to do with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by Titus. (4) Others believe Jesus was answering the very questions the disciples asked; the prophecy refers to both the destruction of Jerusalem and to the end of the world.

In looking at what Jesus was saying, it is best to let Him speak for Himself without *adding to or taking away* from what He says. An attempt at this has been made in former notes (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.13:1-37; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mt.24:1-31). The conclusion of the notes is that the prophecy is *fulfilled* in both Jerusalem's destruction and the end of the world. The Lord is answering the disciples' question.

Jesus was saying that the same thing that happened under Antiochus Epiphanes would happen again to the holy place; in fact, the temple would be so destroyed that not one stone would be left upon another. And it did happen. What Jesus said took place in a most literal sense under Titus in A.D. 70. (See outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.24:1-14, especially the notes that quote Josephus, the Jewish historian. Reading Josephus' record of Jerusalem's desolation reveals just how terribly the temple, the city, and the people were devastated.)

However, as discussed in the former notes, Jesus was not only answering the disciples' question about when the destruction of Jerusalem would take place; He was *also answering* their question about His return and the end of the world. Daniel's prophecy, and the Lord's elaboration on Daniel's prophecy, are to have a double fulfillment. The signs that point toward one who had sinned so terribly (Jerusalem) are much the same as the signs that point toward another who is guilty of terrible sin (the world in the end time). There is one critical difference, however. The sin of Jerusalem was the most heinous sin that could be committed: the killing of God's own Son. However, the sin of the world at the end of time will be just as terrible by following the abomination of desolation. Therefore, the world will witness an increase and intensification of the signs at the end of time. As a result there will be great trial such as the world has never seen (v.19). (Again, see the outline and notes—Mt.24:1f for detailed discussion.)

2. A second matter that needs to be discussed about the abomination of desolation is *the division of time* that both Jesus and Daniel seem to give. Jesus did say that the abomination of desolation would launch the worst tribulation the world has ever known (Mk.13:14, 19; Mt:24:15, 21). In His own words, the signs that will occur up until the abomination of desolation are called "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt.24:8); and the trials that will occur after the abomination of desolation takes place are called "great tribulations." The tribulations will be unparalleled in history (Mt.24:21). Daniel also gave a division of time just as Jesus did.

> **"And he [the prince] shall confirm the covenant with many for *one week: and in the midst of the week* he shall cause...the overspreading of abominations" (Dan.9:27).**

"In the midst of the week" (Daniel's seventieth week) definitely points to a period of time (one week) that is divided into two parts. Now note these factors.

a. Daniel is dealing with the "seventieth week," the end of his prophecy. The fact that Jesus was dealing with the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world and the fact that Jesus said He was elaborating on Daniel's prophecy tells us that Daniel is dealing with the end time just as Jesus was.

b. Daniel says that what begins the second half of his seventieth week is "the abomination of desolation" or the prince who causes "abominable idols" (H.C. Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1969, p.434).

The words of Jesus should be carefully noted: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet...." (Mk.13:14; Mt.24:15). Jesus is about to explain in more detail what Daniel prophesied. Jesus explained that the first half of Daniel's week would consist of signs which are "*the beginnings of sorrows*" (Mk.13:8; cp. 13:5-13; Mt.24:8; 24:5-14), and the last half of Daniel's week would consist of unparalleled trials of "*great tribulations*." The second half of the week would be launched by "the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place" (Mk.13:14, 19; Mt:24:15, 21).

3. A third matter that needs to be looked at is *the time frame of the end time* (the seventieth week) as predicted by Jesus and Daniel. Scripture refers to the length in these words (see notes—Rev.11:2; 12:6).

"Time, times, and half a time" (Dan.7:25; 12:7).
"1260 days" (Rev.12:6).
"42 months" (Rev.11:2; 13:5-6).

Based upon the days and months given in The Book of Revelation, if Daniel's time equals one year, then his words, "Time (1 year), times (2 years), and half a time (1/2 year)" are equal to 3 ½ years. Daniel stated that the abomination of desolation shall be executed "in the midst of the week," that is, after three and one half years. It is assumed that Christ's words "the beginning of sorrows" (that is, the first half of the week) are also three and one half years. Therefore, in combining the two periods of time (3 ½ years each) the length of the last days or end time is said to be a literal seven years. Based upon the words of Revelation, the prophecy of Christ can be charted as follows.

THE END OF THE WORLD

Seeing the Sign of the Abomination of Desolation In the Middle of the Time or Years (v.14)		*Seeing the Son of Man Coming* (v.26)
3 ½ years	3 ½ years	
Signs which are "The beginnings of sorrow" (v.8)	Unparalleled trials of "The great tribulation" (v.19)	"His angels...gather together His elect" (v.27)

However, it should be noted that many Biblical scholars say that the words "times" in Daniel and "days" and "months" in Revelation (in fact, throughout all Scripture) are often used to refer to blocks of time, that is, longer periods or indefinite periods of time.

4. A fourth matter that needs to be looked at is this: *What or who is meant by "the abomination of desolation"*? As has already been discussed, many excellent commentators hold that the prophecy refers to the destruction of Jerusalem under both Antiochus Epiphenes (B.C. 170) and under Titus (A.D. 70). There is strong historical evidence, as well as the fact that Jesus was answering a specific question of the disciples (Mk.13:4; Mt.24:3), to support a past fulfillment of the prophecy. But what about the future fulfillment? What or who is meant by "the abomination of desolation" at the end of the world? (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.11:7; cp. notes—2 Th.2:3-4; Rev.13:1; 13:3; 13:5-6. See General Subject Index.)

a. Some indication is perhaps given by the phrase itself. In the Old Testament the word *abomination* is connected with idolatry or sacrilege. *Of desolation* means the same as *causes desolation*. In this case it is *the abomination* that causes *desolations*. That is, the abomination acts upon the holy place and personally causes the desolation. This, of course points toward a person's fulfilling the prophecy in the future just as there were two literal persons who fulfilled it in the past, Antiochus and Titus.

b. Mark 13:14 actually uses the *masculine* participle which indicates strongly that the abomination of desolation is a person.

c. Daniel 9:25-27 speaks of a prince who causes the desolation. Leupold, the great Lutheran theologian, translates the prince as "the destroyer." (Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*, p.433. Because of extraordinary scholarship and simplicity of writing, Leupold should be referred to in studying Daniel.)

d. Second Thessalonians and Revelation identify an *antichrist* who is to arise in the last days and cause unparalleled havoc upon the world and upon God's people.

> "That man of sin [shall] be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2 Th.2:3-5). (See notes—Mk.13:14; 2 Th. 2:4-9; Rev.6:2-7; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:7; notes—13:1-10; 13:11-18; 17:7-14. Cp. Dan.9:20-27; 11:31; 12:11.)

2 (13:14-18) **Antichrist—Abomination of Desolation**: this sign is so terrible it is to be fled from immediately. The idea Jesus conveyed is that the abomination (he who makes desolate) will swoop upon the earth suddenly, unexpectedly. His rise and the war He launches against God's temple will be so quick that he takes people by surprise. He poses an immediate danger for believers. Jesus warned, "When *ye* [believers] see...flee" (v.14). The imminent danger and urgency was stressed by Christ in four statements.

1. A person is to forget all comfort of home: pictured by his arising from his roof and immediately fleeing (see note—Mt.24:17).
2. A person is to forget all personal possessions: pictured by his not returning from work to get his clothes (or possessions).
3. A person is to grieve for those who cannot flee rapidly: pictured by pregnant women and small children.
4. A person is to pray for good conditions in fleeing: pictured by both winter and the Sabbath day. Travel would be more difficult in winter. The Sabbath day represents certain religious rules that would forbid fleeing (travel) for the religiously strong.

> **"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:7-8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:15) **House—Rooftop**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.24:17.

3 (13:19) **Great Tribulation, The—Antichrist**: this sign is so terrible it causes horrifying, unparalleled affliction (the great tribulation). Matthew actually uses the words "great tribulation." He says:

> **"For then shall be *great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Mt.24:21).**

It is from this that the term "the great tribulation" has come. It should be noted that it is the term Christ Himself used to describe the unbelievable afflictions of the end time. No better term could be chosen. "The great tribulation" (or period of unparalleled affliction) is an accurate term, a term chosen by our Lord to strike the truth home to the human heart.

The great tribulation is to be a period of affliction unparalleled in history.

1. In A.D. 66-70, Jerusalem experienced one of the most terrible sieges in all of history. In A.D. 66 the Jews revolted and the Roman army was swift to attack. But the city was difficult to take, primarily for two reasons: it sat upon a hill, well protected by the terrain, and the leaders of the revolt were religious fanatics. Well over a million people had fled into the city behind its protective walls.

As the siege wore on, the predictions of Jesus were literally fulfilled. Outside the walls was the Roman army and all the maiming and killing of war. Inside the walls neighbor after neighbor faced famine, pestilence, false deliverers (messiahs), betrayal, murder, revolt, rebellion, hatred. And all took their toll. Josephus says over 1,000,000 people died and 97,000 were taken captive. The horrors of the siege were well described by him (see notes—Mt.24:7; 24:10; 24:11. See Josephus, *Wars*. 5. 12:3; 6. 3:4; 6. 8:5.)

> "It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were" (Josephus, *Wars*. Preface 4).

2. In the end time, the world will experience great tribulations—unparalleled in history. Note that Jesus did not describe the great trials beyond what He had already said in v.5-12. A quick glance at the great tribulation period covered in Revelation will give some idea of the trials (see outlines and notes—all of the following. Cp. Dan.12:1-2.)

⇒ Thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake (Rev.8:5; cp. 8:1-5).
⇒ Natural catastrophes (Rev.8:6-12).
⇒ Demonic-like locust or plagues (Rev.8:13-9:11).
⇒ Demonic-like army (Rev.9:12-21).
⇒ Nations angry, destroying the earth (Rev.11:18; cp. 11:14-19).
⇒ An evil political ruler (Rev.13:1-10).
⇒ A false religious ruler (Rev.13:11-18).
⇒ Terrible destruction and suffering both upon nature and men (Rev.16:1-21).
⇒ An evil, deceptive world power (Rev.17:1-18:24).

4 (13:20) **Great Tribulation, The**: this sign is so terrible God has to intervene and shorten the days of tribulation. This was a promise to the believers of Jesus' day, and it is a promise to the believers of the end time. Note: Jesus said two things.

1. The days of the great tribulation shall be shortened. What is meant by shortened?
   ⇒ Shorter than what God would usually allow for such great sinfulness.
   ⇒ Shorter than what the enemy expected.
   ⇒ Shorter than what others would expect of a ruling government against such revolting fanatics.

God in His providence used His power to shorten the days for Israel's sake. In the midst of judgment, He was merciful. Israel was not totally annihilated. The siege was shorter than expected. Many have listed *the natural causes* that led to the shorter siege.

⇒ Division and factions. The Jewish leaders were divided from the first. They never could form a cohesive policy.
⇒ A disastrous fire. The fire destroyed many weapons and provisions.
⇒ Rampaging gangs. These were set on self-preservation, stealing, assaulting, and killing. They are well documented by Josephus.
⇒ Treason and betrayal. Some surrendered even their fortifications without a fight.
⇒ The quick attack by Rome. Rome sent the armed force under Titus much quicker than expected.
⇒ Weak fortifications. Herod Agrippa had intended to strengthen the walls, but he never did.

The believer, of course, sees God's hand in these natural causes. God *worked all things out for good in order to shorten the days and to fulfill His Word*. Despite the terrible tribulation, some lives were saved—saved because God was compassionate (2 Pt.3:9). The tribulations of the end time will also be shortened.

"Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath...[but note]...because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev.12:12).
"When he [antichrist] cometh, he *must* continue [but note] a short time" (Rev.17:10).
"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Th.2:8).

God shall shorten the days for the elect's sake. Apparently the Christians remembered the Lord's warning and fled Jerusalem before the attack, sometime around A.D. 66. They fled to a smaller town called Pella in the district of Decapolis. These believers prayed for their neighbors and their beloved city, and God heard their intercessions. He shortened the days of terrible trial—shortened them because of the prayers of the elect.

God's mercy toward the lost, even toward civilizations and cities, and His willingness to save these in answer to the believers' intercessory prayer is clearly illustrated in Scripture. Abraham's prayer for Sodom and Gomorrah is an example. If just ten righteous men could have been found, the cities would have been spared, despite terrible sin (Gen.18:23f). Lot's prayer for Zoar is another example (Gen.19:20-22).

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas.5:16).
"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it" (Jer.5:1).
"For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and who I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee....And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls....But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land" (Acts 27:23-24, 37, 43-44).

5 (13:21-22) **False Messiahs**: this sign is so terrible it causes a frantic search for false messiahs (deliverers). Jesus said three things.

1. False messiahs and prophets will arise. When men are oppressed and oppressed, witnessing scene after scene of death by hunger, pestilence, murder and war, they cry for deliverance. They are ever so open to a deliverer arising on the scene. And some are always ready to assume the power and leadership for which men cry. Such men (deliverers who promised deliverance from both the Romans and the natural disasters) arose in the siege of Jerusalem. Apparently there was the constant belief and rumors that the Messiah had come, that He was either out in the desert or in some secret room within the city. He was just awaiting the hour to strike. The scene in Jerusalem was somewhat like Jeremiah's day.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart" (Jer.14:13-14).

The same kind of scene will repeat itself in the last days. The great false deliverer of the earth, the antichrist and his false prophet, shall arise to deceive the whole earth (see outlines and notes—Rev.13:1-18 and related passages). Note that Jesus very simply said, "Believe it not"—believe neither the rumors nor the false deliverer.

2. False deliverers will show great signs and wonders. Deliverers, local and national, always feel and lay claim to being destined. They point to signs and wonders. The end time will witness an increase and an intensification of signs and wonders that will stretch across the whole world.

"Then shall that Wicked [one] be revealed...even him...and with all deceivableness" (2 Th.2:8-10).
"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live" (Rev.13:13-14).

3. False deliverers will be so convincing they will threaten even the elect. The elect, of course, are genuine believers. They endure for Jesus regardless of the circumstance or trial. An excellent passage that describes much of the same picture is seen in 2 Th.2:1-17. The way the elect are able to stand is clearly stated.

> **"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (2 Th.2:15-17).**

6 (13:23) **End Time—Great Tribulation**: this sign is so terrible it requires being foretold. The great tribulation is to be shattering to one's spirit—so crushing and threatening that man must be foretold. He must take heed and prepare in case the event occurs in his lifetime.

Note: Jesus said, "I have foretold you all things." He has not left us unprepared and in the dark. He wants us to know that God is still on the throne; God will not be taken by surprise when the abomination of desolation arises. We can have confidence and be assured of eternal deliverance, no matter the terrible affliction coming upon the earth.

> **Thought 1.** Imagine the horror and suffering that would be caused by atomic warfare. The picture of such terrible affliction gives some idea of what Christ said about the great tribulation.

	C. The Coming of the Son of Man, 13:24-27 (Mt.24:29-31; Lk.21: 25-28)	are in heaven shall be shaken. 26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.	**3 Event 2: There will be the return of the Son of Man in the clouds**
1 He returns after the tribulation **2 Event 1: There will be astronomical happenings**	24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, 25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that	27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.	**4 Event 3: There will be the gathering of the elect**

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF GOD'S OLIVET MINISTRY: JESUS' PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END TIME, 13:1-37

C. The Coming of the Son of Man, 13:24-27

(13:24-27) **Introduction**: the greatest event yet to happen in the history of the world will be the return of Jesus Christ. The disciples wanted to know, "When shall these things be?" (Mk.13:4), and "What shall be the sign of thy coming?" (Mt.24:4). Jesus began to answer the second question about His return in this passage.

1. He returns after the tribulation (v.24).
2. Event 1: there will be astronomical happenings (v.24-25).
3. Event 2: there will be the return of the Son of Man in the clouds (v.26).
4. Event 3: there will be the gathering of the elect (v.27).

1 (13:24) **Jesus Christ, Return**: When will Jesus return? Right "after that tribulation" (see note—Mt.24:29-31). The disciples had asked two questions (Mk.13:4; cp. Mt.24:4).

1. When would the temple be destroyed?
2. What are the signs of the Lord's coming and of the end of the world?

Jesus was now dealing with His coming again (v.26); He was answering the disciples' questions. He revealed exactly when He was going to return. He will return "in those days, after that tribulation." The idea is immediately after the great tribulation. In fact, Matthew uses the word *immediately* (Mt.24:29). Jesus even said that the days of the great tribulation have to be shortened in order to save mankind (Mk.13:20). Apparently, it will be shortened by Jesus' return. Note a significant point.

Jesus did not return "after that tribulation" of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (See note—Mt.24:29-31 for detailed discussion.) This is clearly evident as we stand here centuries later. Therefore, what Jesus says in this passage is bound to refer to His coming again. This also indicates that the tribulation just discussed will be the great tribulation lying out in the future. Jesus will return...

- "in those days, after that tribulation" (Mk.13:24).
- "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Mt.24:29).

Both the great tribulation and the Lord's return will be tied together. The Lord's return will follow immediately upon the heels of the great tribulation. It is "in those days, after that tribulation," that He will return.

It must be remembered that the terrible afflictions predicted by our Lord referred both to Jerusalem's fall in A.D. 70 and to the great tribulation "such as was not from the beginning of the creation" (Mk.13:19; cp. Mt.24:21). The fact that Jesus said He would return "in those days, after that tribulation" tells us there are some terrible days of suffering and trouble coming upon the earth. But His return also tells us some glorious news.

1. He is definitely God. He is omniscient. He knows the future of the earth (evidenced by Jerusalem's destruction about forty years after His death, and the great trial yet to come upon the earth).
2. He is in control. He will return to shorten the day of trial and redeem mankind and the world. There will be an end to all trials (Mk.13:20).

2 (13:24-25) **End Times—Jesus Christ, Return—Heavenly Bodies—Outer Space**: the first event when Jesus returns will be astronomical happenings. The language is very descriptive.

⇒ "The sun shall be darkened."
⇒ "The moon shall not give her light."
⇒ "The stars of heaven shall fall."
⇒ "The powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."

Very practically, such astronomical happenings occur now. The earth is sometimes darkened by dust from earthly catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, wind storms, and smoke from huge fires. Of course, whatever darkens the sun hides the light of the moon from earth. The stars, that is, meteorites of varying sizes, fall throughout space often. "The powers of the heavens" being shaken could be the heavenly bodies outside our solar system that are called by the Bible "the host of heaven" (Dt.4:19).

Something should be mentioned here about the power of the atom. Of course, an atom bomb exploding on earth is powerful enough to darken the sun and moon from earth's view. Worldwide atomic warfare would cause so much dust and pollution it would be difficult for any man to see anything in outer space. But as the atom is known today, it could not affect the axis or rotation (the falling or shaking) of the sun and moon and stars unless there is to be an intergalactical war of

some sort way out in the future. Of course, there is always the possibility that there is a power much greater than what we know today. This is not to say that atomic warfare will never happen. There will be wars and rumors of war as long as the earth stands. But what the Bible teaches is that God is going to end all things, not man. When the world ends, it will be God's ending it by His own will and act and power.

An extreme literalism needs to be avoided when interpreting these verses, for there is just so much we do not know about the laws (powers) of nature and the forces God has put in motion throughout the universe. However, there is no reason for not understanding the Lord's words as actual or literal events.

What the present passage seems to mean is that the whole universe is going to be affected by Jesus' coming to earth. The sun and moon and the stars and powers (laws) of heaven will be affected in the sense that they will *open up and receive Him*. They will serve notice that this is the Creator, the Son of Man, God's very own Son, who is now coming to earth in great power and glory. Imagine a spectacular fireworks display, and perhaps it will give us a little glimpse of what Christ is saying. A simple question is: Why would not everything, including the heavenly bodies, put on a display (that would be terrifying to man) when its Creator, the Son of God, returns?

Note in the verses below that the astronomical bodies are affected because of *the evil of men and the wrath of God* that is being shown. That is, the scene of falling stars (meteorites) is not for the purpose of man's witnessing a spectacular event; it is to point to the Son of God, to His judgment's falling upon the earth. Every man is going to know beyond any doubt that Jesus is coming in all the power and the glory of God Himself. As Jesus said, "with power and great glory" He is coming. He is coming that "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:10-11).

The words "great power and glory" indicate that He is coming to subject all men to His rule and reign and to execute judgment upon the earth. Scripture definitely reveals that astronomical happenings will precede and accompany the coming of the Lord.

"For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger" (Is.13:10-13).

"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison...." (Is.24:17-22).

"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30-31).

"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:15-16).

"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken" (Mk.13:24-25).

"But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk.17:29-30).

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Lk.21:25-26).

"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:19-20).

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:12-17). (See outline and notes—Rev.6:12-17.)

Note the exact words of the verses of Revelation above since they are referring to the same event as Jesus (v.30; cp. Rev.6:17). The coming of Christ will trigger a great earthquake on earth and astronomical happenings in the heavens above (v.12-14). Men, great and small, will be terrified and hide themselves (v.15) and cry for immediate death instead of having to face Jesus (v.16). Why? Because they will know something: "The great day of God's wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (v.17).

The disciples had asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus is answering them: terrifying astronomical happenings will be a sign.

3 (13:26) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the second event is the actual return of Jesus, the Son of Man Himself. Note three significant points.

1. It is the Son of Man who comes. Jesus claimed that He is the Son of Man, the Son of God incarnate in human flesh as the Perfect Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). In that day, there will be no doubt about who He is (cp. Mk.14:61-62). Right now, He is recognized only by believers, but then it will be unmistakable: He is the Son of Man.
2. All men and every eye shall see Him return. This is what is meant by "they." Matthew actually says, "All the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming" (Mt.24:30). His return will be visible to every man on earth, and every man shall then acknowledge Him to be Lord, God's very own Son (Ph.2:9-11; cp. Rev.1:7).
3. He is coming "in the clouds with great power and glory." Picture the scene: the backdrop of heaven is pitch dark, without any major light from the sun and moon. And then, suddenly, as quickly as the flash of lightning, the most brilliant focus of light ever known to man appears. The Shekinah glory of God shines in the person of Jesus Christ as He appears to the world. The Son of Man is there, in the clouds, having returned in great power and glory just as He said He would.

> **"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Th.1:7-10).**
>
> **"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Th.2:8).**
>
> **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev.1:7).**
>
> **"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev.19:11-16).**

4 (13:27) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the third event when Jesus returns is the gathering of the elect. There are two significant points made in this verse.

1. The angels of God "gather together His elect." Who are the elect?
   - ⇒ They are the people who cry (pray, converse, share) day and night unto God (Lk.18:7).
   - ⇒ They are the people who are justified by God (Ro.8:33).
   - ⇒ They are the people who are "holy and beloved," who "put on...bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col.3:12).
2. The elect are gathered from all over the earth. They shall be gathered from the most remote spot on earth and carried to "*the uttermost part of heaven.*"

> **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:31-32).**

	D. The End Time and Its Warning to Believers, 13:28-37 (Mt.24:32-51; Lk.21: 29-36)	hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.	**the day & hour**
		33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when	**5 The need is to take heed—watch & pray**
1 The signs point to the end—are discernable a. Even as a fig tree b. Even as a cause has its effect c. Even to the point of being immediate—right at hand, cp. v.32	28 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:	the time is.	a. Because time is unknown b. Because believers are assigned specific responsibilities & work
	29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.	34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.	
		35 Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the	c. Because Christ is returning unexpectedly—suddenly
2 The events occur rapidly—in one generation	30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.	master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:	
3 The events are a surety—irrevocable	31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.	36 Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.	d. Because a believer can be caught sleeping
4 The exact time is unknown—	32 But of that day and that	37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.	**6 The warning is to all—watch**[DSI]

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF GOD'S OLIVET MINISTRY: JESUS' PROPHECY OF HIS RETURN AND THE END TIME, 13:1-37

D. The End Time and Its Warning to Believers, 13:28-37

(13:28-37) **Introduction**: Christ had just covered the signs of the end time and of His return. The truth is glorious, for it stirs hope and gives a picture of the future glory that can be man's. But one thing is needful: man must turn his life over to God or else he will be banished from the presence and glory of Christ forever. Christ gives six critical warnings to man.

1. The signs point to the end—are discernable (v.28-29).
2. The events occur rapidly—in one generation (v.30).
3. The events are a surety—irrevocable (v.31).
4. The exact time is unknown—the day and hour (v.32).
5. The need is to take heed—watch and pray (v.33-36).
6. The warning is to all—watch (v.37).

1 (13:28-29) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ warned—the signs point to the end. The end and the return of Christ will be discernable. The fig tree illustrates what Christ meant. When the fig tree begins to put forth leaves, we know that summer is near. So when we see "these things," the signs He had been sharing, "know that it [His return] is nigh, even at the doors." Note two significant points.

1. Christ said, "*Know* that [His return] is near." We are to know; He does not leave us an option. It is a command: we are to stay alert, looking for the signs of the time so that we *can know* when His return is near. This is the whole point of this passage. We are to be looking for His return *lest* it catch us unexpectedly.
2. Christ was speaking of cause and effect: every cause has its effect. The signs covered by Christ are second causes (v.6-27). Christ was saying when the signs are seen, expect the result (effect): the coming again of the Son of Man. When believers see...
   - an unusual number of wars and natural disasters, they can know "the beginning of sorrows" has begun.
   - "many" false messiahs and prophets arise, they can know an enormous number of the lost and carnal will be tragically deceived.
   - bitter persecution, they can know that God will tolerate only so much against His people.
   - iniquity's abounding and love's waxing cold, they can know that God will judge and stop such apostasy.
   - the earth about to be destroyed, they can know that God will not wait much longer.
3. Christ says when the signs appear His return is immediate—near—at the door. The signs point to the *immediacy* of His return.

2 (13:30) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ warned—the events occur rapidly. They happen in one generation. Just what is meant by "generation" is often disputed. However, it must always be kept in mind that the disciples had asked two questions, one about Jerusalem's destruction and the other about the end of the world. In answering their questions, Christ did not draw a definite line between the two questions. The signs and events that precede one shall precede the other. Therefore, just as the signs and destruction of Jerusalem took place within a generation, the signs and destruction of the world will also occur within a generation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, pt.2—Mk.13:1-37 for more discussion.)

3 (13:31) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ warned—the events are a surety. They are irrevocable. Christ is definite about what He has said. "Heaven and earth *shall* pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Note two things.

1. Heaven and earth shall pass away. Christ is saying they are actually going to be done away with and cease to exist in their present condition (2 Pt.3:10-11).

2. All that Christ has said—all about the great tribulation and His return—*will* happen. The great tribulation and His return are more sure than heaven and earth.

In the eyes of some men, it has been a long, long time since Christ spoke these words; and an innumerable list of events have happened. Therefore, they assume the whole idea of the second coming is a fable, the figment of hopeful imagination. God knew this would happen.

> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-13).**

Three things are certain in human history: "the beginning of sorrows" (v.8); the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (v.24; Mt.24:21); and "the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (v.26; Mt.24:21). Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not the words Christ has spoken, not what He said would happen. What He said would happen will happen. The three events are certain.

4 (13:32) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return—Humiliation**: Christ warned—the exact time is unknown. The day and hour are not known to anyone. God alone knows when Christ is to return. The general time will be seen by expectant believers, but the exact day and hour are known only by God.

1. The second coming is an actual event that is yet to happen. There is "that [fixed] day and hour" when Christ shall return.

2. The second coming is secret. "No man knoweth...but the Father." Throughout history some have thought they knew when Christ was to return. (Cp. 2 Th.2:1-2.) But Christ is explicit: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man...."

3. Some things are to be left entirely in God's hands. The exact day and hour of the Lord's return is one of those things. The *watchful* believer will be sensitive to the season (fig tree, v.28-29) and know the generation (v.30), but the exact hour and day are hid from men, even from the wisest and most spiritual men. *Only* God Himself knows the day. If a man claims to know the hour and day, he is a man from whom we should flee. That man's word is not of the Lord.

4. What did Christ mean when He said that even He did not know when He was to return to earth? If He is the Son of God, possessing the divine (omniscient) nature of God, how could He not know? When Christ came to earth, He "emptied Himself" (Ph.2:7, NASB). This means at least the following.

   a. He took on the nature of man; He became flesh and blood (Ph.2:7; Heb.2:14).

   b. He voluntarily surrendered and limited Himself to the nature of man *in some respects*. For example, men do not know the future. Christ limited Himself in knowing the future except when and where a demonstration of His divine omniscience was needed.

   c. While man, Christ willed not to know some things and not to be able to do some things (for example, to be present everywhere, His omnipresence, cp. Jn.16:7). This enabled Him more effectively to identify with man in his limitations and needs.

   d. While man, Christ subjected Himself completely to the Father. This means, of course, that He had to *live in* the Father and *be taught* by the Father (just as we are to live in and be taught by God, except Christ did so perfectly). This is a phenomenal truth. It means that God took His Son and pioneered the Ideal, Perfect life, teaching Him exactly how to live and what to say. Christ had "emptied Himself" in order to cast Himself *perfectly* upon God, trusting God to teach Him how to live and what to say day by day. He was Man, but there was one difference. He was living a perfect life, trusting and depending upon God completely. Therefore, God was able to fill Him completely and teach Him perfectly. Very simply stated, God was able to take Christ day-by-day and teach Him how to live and what to say and to do it *perfectly*. This is what Scripture proclaims and what Christ emphasized time and again.

> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).**
>
> **"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him....Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:26, 28-29).**
>
> **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn.12:49-50).**

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

Christ was God-Man, perfectly God, perfectly Man in one Person. There is no question about the teaching of Scripture on the Lord's two natures. How did the two natures interwork? There is no way to know. We can never understand the two natures of Christ *beyond what Scripture says*. And this is the point: we are to live by faith, live by the revelation of Scripture. We either accept the record (message, testimony, news) about Christ's becoming Man, or we reject it. That is exactly what God is after: belief in Him and in His Word—that He "so loved the world that He *gave* His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

5 (13:33-36) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return:** Christ warned—the need is to take heed—to watch and pray. (See outline and notes—Mt.24:42-51; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2*—25:1-13; 25:14-30.) There are four reasons the believer must watch.

1. The believer must watch because the time of the Lord's return is unknown (see note—Mk.13:32).
2. The believer must watch because he has been given a specific task to do, and the job must be completed when Christ returns. The greatest of tragedies would be for a believer not to have finished the job Christ gave him to do. (See outline and notes—Mt.24:42-51; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,*2*—25:1-13.)
3. The believer must watch because Christ is returning unexpectedly, suddenly. It may be any day, any hour.
4. The believer must watch because he can be caught napping and sleeping.

Thought 1. Four tragic things can happen to a believer while he is waiting for the Lord to return.

1) A believer may fail to wait *long enough*. As the days, weeks, and years wear on and on, he may grow more and more drowsy, nodding more and more. Note the parable Jesus told. The owner simply failed...
   - to stay awake *long enough*.
   - to keep his mind alert *long enough*.
   - to look and listen to the noises (signs) *long enough*.
   - to stand guard *long enough*.
2) A believer may delay or postpone or slack up in his work for the Lord. He may figure he has time to do it later; therefore, he feels that he can set it aside for a while. He feels that a little sidetrack here and there will not hurt that much.
3) A believer may think he can go ahead and do what he wishes and cover it with the Lord later. He may think he will have time to correct the matter before the Lord returns.
4) A believer may begin *to think* like the world. However, God knows how the world thinks, and He has described it clearly for the sake of His dear followers (cp. 2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-15).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).

"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas.4:13-14).

"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Is.56:12).

6 (13:37) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: Christ warned—the warning is to *all*—watch. No one is exempt: no believer, no unbeliever. Every man...

- is "to take heed, watch and pray" (v.33).
- is "commanded...to watch" (v.34).
- is to "watch ye therefore" (v.35).
- is not to be caught "sleeping" (v.36).
- is to hear the warning: "what I say unto you I say unto *all, Watch*" (v.37).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:37) **Watch** (gregoreo): to keep awake, to stay alert, to be watchful and sleepless, to be vigilant. It also includes the idea of being motivated, that is, of desiring, of holding and keeping one's attention (mind) upon a thing. Watching also has the idea of being alert at the right time. It is at night that one really needs to stay awake and watch for the thief (cp. 1 Th.5:4-9). The Lord said, "Watch." What does it mean for a believer to "watch" (cp.Mt.26:41; Mk.13:33, 34, 36; 14:38)?

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor.16:13).

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:6).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim.4:5).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Pt.4:7).

	CHAPTER 14 IX. THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED & CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47 A. Jesus' Death Plotted: A Picture of the Passover & Jesus' Death, 14:1-2 (Mt.26:1-5; Lk.22:1-2)
1 **Picture 1: The Passover** 2 **Picture 2: The religionists' plotted Jesus' death**[DSI] a. Plotted by all the leaders b. Plotted by deception: To arrest Jesus on false charges after the pilgrims had left the feast	After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. 2 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

A. Jesus' Death is Plotted: A Picture of the Passover and Jesus' Death, 14:1-2

(14:1-2) **Introduction**: this passage begins the final stage of Jesus' life before He was killed. In dramatic fashion Mark sets the stage for what is coming. In two short verses he mentions the Passover, and then he mentions the religionists' plotting Jesus' death—two scenes as opposite from one another as can be imagined. The Passover was a feast, a joyous and festive occasion. It was a celebration of God's glorious deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. Yet during the very days of this joyous celebration, Jesus' murder was being plotted. And tragically, it was being plotted by religionists, the very people who should have been taking the lead in the Passover. On the one hand, there was the celebration of deliverance, the saving of life; on the other hand, there was the plotting of death, the taking of life. This passage deliberately sets the stage for what is to come.

1. Picture 1: the Passover (v.1).
2. Picture 2: the religionists plotted Jesus' death (v.1-2).

1 (14:1) **Passover**: the first picture is that of the Passover. For months Jesus had been drilling into His disciples that He was to die. Mark points to two brief facts.

1. The Passover was to be celebrated in just two days.
2. While preparations were being made for the Passover, preparations were also being made to kill Jesus.

In these two simple statements, Mark ties the death of Jesus to the Passover (see outline and notes—Mt.26:17-19). Throughout history, the Passover had pictured Jesus' death. Jesus was fulfilling the Passover with the shedding of His own blood upon the cross.

1. Historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex.11:1f). God had pronounced judgment (the taking of the firstborn) upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As He prepared to execute the final judgment, those who believed God were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house.
2. Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The *lamb without blemish* pictured His sinless life, and the *blood sprinkled on the door posts* pictured His blood shed for the believer (Ex.12:5; cp. Jn.1:29). It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn (believers). The *eating of the lamb* pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The *unleavened bread* (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one's life and household (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Feast of Unleavened Bread*—Mt.26:17).

2 (14:1-2) **Religionists—Jesus Christ, Death**: the scene was dramatic, yet tragic. While the people were in the streets openly preparing to praise God for His delivering power and the saving of life, the religionists were behind closed doors preparing to arrest and murder Jesus. Just imagine! The religionists themselves were plotting to take the life of God's very own Son. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Religionists*—Mk.14:1-2.)

1. Jesus' death was *plotted by all the leaders*: the chief priests and the Scribes. Matthew adds that the elders or lay leaders were also in on the plot. Matthew also shows the secretiveness of the plot by stating that the leaders met in the home (palace) of the High Priest instead of meeting in the official court (see note—Mt.26:3-5).

2. Jesus' death was to be *wrought by deception and lies.*
   a. He was to be arrested on false charges and killed (see outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.22:2. Cp. Mt.26:60-66.)
   b. He was to be arrested quietly, after all the pilgrims had left the feast to return home. The *feast day* refers to all eight days of the feast. The danger of an uprising would not have passed until all the pilgrims had left the city. Of course the threat of an uprising was removed by Judas' willingness to betray Jesus. In the crowded mass of about two million people within the city, Judas was able to show them where Jesus was and to quietly identify Him. Judas was able to show them how Jesus could be secretly taken in the dark of the night (cp. Mt.26:47-50).

Thought 1. When men are set on doing something wrong (stealing, sexual acts, etc.), they plot and manuever to do it. And, too often, they are willing to pay any price to sneak around to do it. This was the case with the religionists plotting Jesus' death. They were willing to pay any price to get rid of Him, even the price of becoming murderers.

Thought 2. Just think! These men were religionists, men who professed to know God. Think how deceived they were—how much they had to deceive themselves in order to carry out their evil plan.

> **"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Ro.3:13).**
>
> **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived" (1 Cor.6:9).**
>
> **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal.6:7).**
>
> **"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:6).**
>
> **"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:7-8).**
>
> **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas.1:22).**
>
> **"For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful" (Ps.36:2).**
>
> **"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits" (Pr.16:2).**
>
> **"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).**
>
> **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:1-2) **Religionists, Plot to Kill Jesus**: the religionists' conflict with Jesus is often misunderstood. This is because so much of the conflict had to do with *rules and regulations* that seem petty and meaningless to *modern* minds (cp. Mk.2:23-28; 3:1-6; 3:22-30. See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.) Four facts will help in understanding why the conflicts happened and were life-threatening, ending in the murder of Jesus Christ.

1. The Jewish nation had been held together by their religious beliefs. Through the centuries the Jewish people had been conquered by army after army, and by the millions they had been deported and scattered all over the world. Even in the day of Jesus, they were enslaved by Rome. Their religion was the *binding force* that kept Jews together—in particular their religious rules governing the Sabbath and the temple, and their relgious belief that God had called them to be a distinctive people. It was they who worshipped the only true and living God. These rules and this belief protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other nations through intermarriage. Their religion was what maintained their distinctiveness as a people and as a nation.

Jewish leaders knew this. They knew that their religion was the *binding force* that held their nation together. Therefore, they opposed anyone or anything that threatened to break the laws of their religion.

2. The religionists were men of deep conviction. They were strong in their beliefs; therefore, they became steeped in religious belief and practice, law and custom, tradition and ritual, ceremony and liturgy, rules and regulations. To break any law or rule governing any practice was a serious offense, for it taught *loose behavior*. And *loose behavior*, once it had spread enough, would weaken their religion, the binding force that held their people together. Therefore, Jesus was committing a great offense by breaking their law. He was weakening the binding force of their nation, their religion.

3. The religionists were men who had profession, position, recognition, esteem, livelihood, and security. Anyone who went contrary to what they believed and taught was a threat to all they had. Some religionists undoubtedly felt that Jesus was a threat to them. Everytime Jesus broke their law, He was undermining their very position and security.

4. The religionists were exposed by Jesus. In order for people to know the truth, Jesus had to point out where they were wrong and what they needed to do to get right with God. Both the sin of men and the truth of God had to be proclaimed. The religionists just could not take it. They refused to accept the fact that they were unacceptable to God. They were, after all, the religionists of the day, the very ones who professed God. In their minds, they had no sin, at least not enough sin to bar them from God. Anyone who accused them of being so wrong and so depraved could not conceivably be of God. He must be of Beelzebub (see outline and note—Mk.3:22-30).

There were at least four responses to Jesus by the religionists.

1. Some were sincere men of deep conviction. They actually thought Jesus was an imposter, a deceiver, a false messiah. Saul of Tarsus, who was later to become Paul the apostle, would be an example of this position.

2. Some were open-minded enough to seek the truth about Jesus. They observed and reasoned, being honest enough to consider what He was saying, and they sought Him out to discover the truth. Nicodemus would be an example of this response.

3. Some did believe and trust Jesus (cp. Lk.13:31; Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17).

4. Some were *professional* priests and ministers who looked upon Christ as a threat. They held their positions because of the prestige, comfort, livelihood, and security they received from them. Therefore, they opposed Christ rather vehemently. Caiaphas and Annas would be examples of this response.

The error of the religionists was fourfold.

1. They misinterpreted and corrupted God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 6—Ro.9:4).

2. They committed serious sin after serious sin in God's eyes (see notes—1 Th.2:15-16; cp. note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.2:17-29).

3. They rejected God's way of righteousness—God's Messiah, which is Jesus Christ (see notes—Ro.10:4; 1 Cor.1:30; Ph.3:9.)

4. They allowed religion in its tradition and ritual, ceremony and rules to become more important than meeting the basic needs of human life: religion was more important than a man's need for God and for spiritual, mental, and physical health. Jesus, being the true Messiah, was bound to expose such error. Therefore the battle lines were drawn.

The Messiah had to liberate people from this enslaving behavior. He had to liberate them so they could be saved and worship God in freedom of spirit.

The religionists had to oppose anyone who broke their law. They had to oppose Jesus because He was a threat to their nation and to their own personal position and security.

	B. Jesus' Anointing at Bethany: A Study of Love,[DS1] **14:3-9** (Mt.26:6-13; Jn.12:1-8)	dred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.	
		6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.	**3 The woman's love was a good & lovely thing**
1 The woman's love was selfless & costly[DS2,3]	3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.	7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.	**4 The woman's love grasped the opportune time**
		8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.	**5 The woman's love did all it could**
2 The woman's love was questioned & murmured against	4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?	9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.	**6 The woman's love was rewarded**
	5 For it might have been sold for more than three hun-		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

B. Jesus' Anointing at Bethany: A Study of Love, 14:3-9

(14:3-9) **Introduction—Sacrifice—Sacrificial Love**: John tells us that the woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who anointed Jesus (Jn.12:1f). The title of this passage could easily be, *A Study of Sacrifice*. The result is a strong lesson on sacrifice or sacrificial giving.

1. The woman's love was selfless and costly (v.3).
2. The woman's love was questioned and murmured against (v.4-5).
3. The woman's love was a good and lovely thing (v.6).
4. The woman's love grasped the opportune time (v.7).
5. The woman's love did all it could (v.8).
6. The woman's love was rewarded (v.9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:3-9) **Mary, Sister of Martha and Lazarus**: multitudes were flowing into the city and the excitement of the Passover was filling the air. There was a sense that something significant was about to happen. Of course, Mary had no idea of the events that were to take place in the last week of Jesus' life, events which were to begin the very next morning with the triumphal entry. But Mary, along with everyone else, sensed that the time for the kingdom to be established was at hand. Mary, who was always sitting at Jesus' feet, sat there again gazing into His eyes. As she gazed she sensed two things. She sensed the need to repent of her recent criticism of Jesus (cp. Jn.12:3; see note—Jn.12:3), and she sensed a foreboding of trouble surrounding Him. She saw within His eyes a weight so heavy that she was *drawn* to express the most profound faith and appreciation in Him possible. She took the most precious thing she had, a valuable bottle of perfume, and anointed Him as the Messiah, the anointed One of her life.

Mary's act was one of the most loving and precious acts ever shown to Jesus. It was an act of supreme love and adoration. What He had to say about it shows this (v.6-9). Just how loving an act it was can be seen by picturing all that was going on throughout the city at this time and all that was yet to happen: the plotting, the intrigue, the hostility, the attacks, the planned murder, the crowds' streaming into the city by the teeming thousands—crowds who created a worldly, carnival atmosphere. Even Simon's own household had an enormous crowd in it with all the disciples present. Just imagine the noise from the conversation alone. Yet, there sat Mary at Jesus' feet, once again soaking up all He said, loving and adoring Him. He had done so much for her family. Simon the leper was apparently her brother-in-law (husband to Martha). He had probably been healed by her Lord. Her brother, Lazarus, had been raised from the dead. They had all been saved by Him. How she loved Him! How she wished to express her love and faith in Him! He seemed so tired, so weary; there was something in His eyes that was foreboding as she gazed into them. She wanted to help Him, to encourage Him, to show Him that she cared for Him and loved Him. So she arose and went to get the most precious thing she had to give Him. And she gave it in the most precious way she knew: she anointed her Lord, even as David and all the kings of Israel had been anointed in the past. She anointed Him not from any official position, but from her heart. It is for this reason that her memory lives on in Scripture. In behalf of all, she anointed the Lord to be the One to experience death for all. In behalf of everyone, she anointed Him as the Lord and Savior, the true Messiah of all hearts and lives who worship and serve Him as the anointed One of God.

1 (14:3) **Love—Sacrifice—Stewardship—Giving**: Mary's love was selfless and costly. Because of the hot and dry climate, it was the custom of the day to anoint the head with oil, especially the heads of guests. But this was not Mary's purpose.

1. Mary anointed Jesus *herself*. A servant would ordinarily do the anointing; and Simon, owning a home large enough to entertain so many guests, would certainly have had servants. Mary was not a servant; she was one of the heads of the household. Mary was not just anointing to fulfill a custom of the day. Her purpose was much greater than that.
2. Mary took the most precious thing she had and *gave* it to Jesus in the most significant way, in an act of anointing. The oil used for anointing the head cost only a mite, the smallest coin in circulation (amounting to only a penny). But not the oil Mary used. She took a priceless oil which cost about 300 denarii per flask or bottle. It was the oil used by kings, and they used it only drop by drop. A denarii was the average pay for a day's work. Therefore, the bottle was worth about a whole year's wage.

Note how Mary gave the gift to Jesus. She did not just hand it to Him; she broke the neck of the flask and poured the whole bottle on His head and feet (cp. Jn.12:3). Why? What was Mary doing?

Mary's anointing of Jesus was a selfless act, a costly act, an act of love and faith in the Lord Jesus. Very simply put, Mary anointed Jesus to show Him how deeply she loved Him and believed Him to be the true Messiah, *the anointed One of God* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.14:3-9; cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). He was her Savior, Lord, and King. He had done so much for her and her family. She wanted Him to know how much she appreciated, loved, and believed Him.

Something else needs to be noted as well. Mary sensed something within Jesus: a foreboding, a preoccupation of mind, a heaviness of heart, a weight of tremendous pressure. Her heart reached out to Him and wanted to encourage and help Him. Being a young woman in the presence of so many men, she was not allowed to vocally express herself that much. Such privilege was not allowed women of that day, so she did all that she could: she acted. She arose and went for the most precious gift she could think of—a most costly bottle of perfume. And she gave it to Him in such a way that He would know that at least one person truly loved Him and believed Him to be the Messiah. Her hope was that such worship and such faith and love would boost His spirits.

Thought 1. True love is selfless and costly. True love forgets self and pays whatever price is necessary to demonstrate one's love. True love gives its most precious possession. True love is...

- being all that one should be, changing (repenting) to become that person.
- giving one's most prized possession, surrendering all that one is and has.
- going wherever one can best share his love.
- serving wherever one's love will be most effective.

> **"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).**
>
> **"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).**
>
> **"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).**
>
> **"O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful" (Ps.31:23).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(14:3) **Anoint**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 10:38.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(14:3) **Simon the Leper**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:6.

2 (14:4-5) **Love—Sacrifice—Giving**: Mary's love was questioned and murmured against. The word "indignation" (aganaktountes) means to ache within, to be vexed and disturbed. The word "murmured" (eneboimonto) means to growl, rebuke, scold. It indicates strong emotions. But note: only some of the disciples felt this way; all did not.

What disturbed the disciples was *not* the fact that Mary anointed Jesus. Anointing Him was easy enough to understand since it was a common custom of the day. What disturbed them was the gift she gave. The gift...

- seemed too valuable and priceless
- seemed too costly and sacrificial
- seemed unnecessary and thoughtless
- seemed to be a foolish and senseless act
- seemed misplaced and wasted

Very simply, the disciples questioned the act, and even murmured against it. They became rather emotional about the matter. They felt a cheaper oil should have been used for the anointing, and the more expensive oil should have been sold and the money given to the poor.

Thought 1. There are always those who question the believer's love and sacrifices for the Lord. Some even murmur against believers who make significant sacrifices. They do not understand the believer's love and commitment (sacrifice) for his Lord. They question the sacrifice of...

- money, possessions, comfort
- position, recognition, prestige
- pleasure, partying, popularity
- profession, promotion, security

Thought 2. There are always those who feel the believer's love and sacrifice go too far. They feel...

- commitment of life is not necessary, not to the extent of total sacrifice (cp. Lk.9:23).
- commitment of money is not necessary, not to the extent of tithing (cp. 1 Cor.16:2; Mal.3:10).
- commitment of behavior is not necessary, not to the extent of *separation from the world* (cp. 2 Cor.6:17-18).
- commitment of tongue is not necessary, not to the extent of cleaning up one's speech completely and witnessing courageously (cp. Ex.20:7; Mt.12:36-37).

3 (14:6) **Love—Sacrifice—Giving**: Mary's love was a good and lovely thing. Jesus knew the disciples were questioning and murmuring against Mary. He reacted strongly: "Let her alone...she hath wrought a good work on me." The word Christ used for good is not *agathos* which speaks of moral goodness. He chose to use the word *kalos* which means both good and lovely. It means something so good that it is striking, appealing, attractive, and pleasant.

Mary was driven to express her faith and love for Him in the most meaningful way she could. She did this by anointing Him as her Lord with the most expensive perfume she possessed.

The most significant person in Mary's life was the Lord. He was the Messiah, the Savior and Lord of her life and family. She wished to show Him that He was deserving of all she was and had. Therefore, Mary's love and sacrifice was *a good work*, a *lovely work*, and it struck the attention of the Lord. There was no way such love and sacrifice could ever escape His sight.

Thought 1. The love and sacrifice that leads a person to do *good works* and *lovely works* for Christ attract His attention. His eyes do not miss the good and lovely works of those devoted to Him. He is *struck* by their sacrifice of life, money, time, and whatever else they commit to Him.

"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works" (Rev.2:19; cp. Mt.25:34-40 for a descriptive picture of Jesus' knowledge about us).

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Tit.2:7).

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works" (Heb.10:24).

4 (14:7) **Love—Sacrifice—Initiative—Timing**: Mary's love grasped the opportune time. Jesus made a significant point that is often missed by men. Opportunities come and go—and once they are gone, they are gone for good. Mary demonstrated the difference. The poor would always be present for believers to help, but the privilege of ministering to Jesus would not always be available. If the disciples were to minister to Him, they had to grasp the opportunity while Jesus was with them.

Thought 1. What a lesson for mankind! The presence of Jesus, that is, a sense of His presence and of His Word, is not always pounding away at the mind and heart of man. Man must grasp the opportunity to show his love and sacrifice for Christ when it presents itself. The opportunity will pass. In fact, the opportunity and privilege of life itself will soon pass. The servant of the Lord must love and act while it is still day. The night cometh when no man can work.

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

5 (14:8) **Love—Sacrifice—Jesus Christ, Death**: Mary's love did all it could. Note two very special things.

1. Jesus said, "She hath done what she could." She took all she had, symbolized in her most precious and priceless possession, and sacrificed it for Jesus. She could do no more. Her heart reached out toward Jesus, and she acted sacrificially with the deepest devotion.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:35-36).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

2. The anointing of Jesus pointed toward His burial, His death. This is exactly what Jesus said: "She did it for my burial." Some commentators think Mary knew what she was doing, having grasped what Jesus had been saying—that He was soon to die. They feel Mary grasped the fact when others did not. But this is unlikely. The atmosphere surrounding everyone was that the kingdom was about to be set up. However, whether she knew what she was doing or not, Jesus took her act and applied it to His death. He said that her love and faith, the anointing of His body, pointed toward His death. In

simple terms, Mary's love and faith, gift and anointing *were a witness of anticipation*. She was witnessing to the Lord's death by looking ahead to it.

Today, the believer's love and faith, gift and anointing *are a witness of fact*. The believer is to witness to the Lord's death by looking back to it. It is a fact: He did die for the sins of the world.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**

6 (14:9) **Love—Sacrifice**: Mary's love was rewarded. Jesus honored Mary because she had so greatly honored Him. Several things about Mary stand as an ideal for all: her deep love and faith in Jesus, her sacrificial gift, her courage in proclaiming her strong love and faith by anointing Jesus before a room full of men. Such devotion and love could not be allowed to fade from history. Jesus memorialized it, and He will memorialize the faith and love of any believer who sacrifices for Him.

> **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).**

	C. Jesus' Betrayal: Why a Disciple Failed, 14:10-11 (Mt.26:14-16; Lk.22:3-6)
1 Judas was personally irresponsible a. Was full of jealousy b. Was full of ambition c. Was full of greed d. Was devil-possessed	10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.
2 Judas sought sin, to deceive & betray	11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

C. Jesus' Betrayal: Why a Disciple Failed, 14:10-11

(14:10-11) **Introduction**: Judas Iscariot denied and betrayed Jesus—two terrible sins that doomed him eternally. This is most tragic, for Judas had known Jesus personally. He had walked with Jesus during the Lord's earthly ministry, professing to be one of the close followers of the Lord. The fact that he could know Jesus so well and still end up failing and being doomed is a warning to all of us. All of us must heed why Judas failed so miserably.

1. Judas was personally irresponsible (v.10-11).
2. Judas sought sin, to deceive and betray (v.11).

1 (14:10-11) **Judas**: Judas was personally irresponsible. He forsook Jesus, denied and betrayed Him, and Judas is to be blamed. No one made him do it; he personally took the initiative. But why would Judas deny and betray Jesus? Several things are suggested in this passage.

1. Jealousy. Judas seems to have been jealous of the other apostles. The exact words, "Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve" are significant. The Greek actually reads, "Judas Iscariot, *the one* of the twelve." The word "the" is inserted. There seems to be some kind of priority and importance suggested. At first, Jesus had noticed some great potential, some unusual qualities about Judas. Judas was not only called by Jesus, he was elevated and given a position of authority among the apostles. He had been appointed the treasurer of the group, an extremely important function. He was in charge of the Lord's funds and the purchasing of whatever was needed (Jn.12:6; 13:29; cp. Lk.8:2-3). Such a high position and responsibility indicated the high esteem with which he was held by Jesus and the others. But something happened. Judas was never seen as one of the inner circle of three (Peter, James, and John).

He apparently began to turn sour at some point (see pt.3 of this note—Mk.14:11). Jesus, of course, knew what was happening to his heart and character; therefore, Judas saw himself excluded more and more from intimacy with Jesus. He saw himself, who had been one of the first, becoming one of the last.

Apparently, jealousy and envy began to fill his heart, and he refused to deal with it. The result was inevitable: he became even more unreachable to Jesus, less and less important. Judas could not take it. He began to be consumed with jealousy and envy and the urge to retaliate. He who *had been one* of the twelve denied Jesus and reacted against Him.

> **"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal.5:26).**
> **"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" (Pr.14:30).**

2. Ambition. Judas was definitely ambitious. He approached the chief priests thinking they were the *winning* side. Right along with the other disciples, Judas was seen seeking after the higher positions in the government Jesus was to set up. (See outline and notes—Mk.9:33-37; Mt.18:1-4; Lk.9:46-48.)

There was one difference, however, between Judas and the others. They never lost faith in Jesus' *Person*, that He was the true Messiah, but Judas did. They all thought that wealth, power, and position would be theirs when Jesus set up His kingdom. They simply misunderstood the Messiah's *method* for saving the world, not His *Person*, but Judas mistook both Jesus' method and Person. As the days passed, the fact that Jesus was not going to set up His kingdom became more and more apparent. The authorities were mobilizing against Jesus to kill Him, and it seemed as though they were going to be successful. Jesus had even been teaching that they were to be successful; He had predicted that He was to be killed by their hands.

Judas became convinced that he had been mistaken about Jesus. Jesus was not the real Messiah. He was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah. He was doomed and there was no way out. Judas experienced his dreams of wealth and power and position with Jesus being shattered. In going to the chief priests, he was trying to get what he could out of the situation. He wanted to be in good standing with the winning side and to get what he could.

> **"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:26-28).**

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

3. Greed. Judas was a thief, consumed with greed and the love of money. In fact, this is the sin of Judas that is stressed above all the others by Scripture. "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?" (Mt.26:15).

Thought 1. Note four significant facts about greed.

1) Greed is a growing sin. It has to be fed to grow. We lust for more and more. Desiring is normal and natural. It is when we feed our desires that they become sin and grow and grow (see notes—Jas.4:1-3; 4:2. These notes will stir additional thoughts for application in dealing with desires and lust.)
2) Greed or covetousness, the desire for more and more, will eat at us just like a cancer. Judas had what he needed: food, clothing, and housing. He did not go without. What was he after? The sin of lusting for more and more ate away at him, causing him to put his hand into the till.
3) Greed is sin. But note: it is not money that is sinful; it is the love of money (1 Tim.6:10). Money is a *thing*; it is *inanimate*, *lifeless*. It has no feelings, no desires, no will to act. Man is the culprit. Man is the one who lusts for more and more; therefore, man is the one who sins, not the piece of paper or metal.
4) Greed is very, very dangerous. It is one of the most dangerous sins. (See *Ambition*, pt.2 above.)

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live" (Pr.15:27).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day and much more abundant" (Is.56:11-12).

Thought 2. Judas allowed his strength to become his weakness. This is often true with us.

⇒ Gifts of administration can lead to being overbearing.
⇒ Gifts of loveliness can lead to being sensual.
⇒ Gifts of humility can lead to no service.
⇒ Gifts of leadership can lead to being self-seeking.
⇒ Gifts of speaking can lead to being prideful or super-spiritual.

4. Devil-possessed. Judas actively denied Jesus and sought how to betray Him. Only a man possessed by the devil denies and betrays Jesus. The devil did enter into Judas (Jn.13:27). Apparently, Judas had filled his heart with the lust for more and more instead of filling it with Jesus. He went too long without repenting and letting Jesus into his life, and the devil was able to fill his being. The devil blinded and took control of his rationale. Hence, Judas was able to justify his betrayal in his own mind. He was, after all, helping the religious body and saving himself from being arrested as one of the followers of Jesus. Therefore, he betrayed Jesus of Nazareth, who apparently in Judas' mind was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah who was doomed to be arrested and condemned as an insurrectionist.

In looking at the bargain Judas agreed to in betraying Jesus, thirty pieces of silver seems a small price for betraying someone of the Lord's stature. It amounted to only about four or five months' wages. However, two things need to be kept in mind.

1. Judas probably expected to get much more, but he did not dictate the terms—the chief priests did. They were going to arrest Jesus in just a few days anyway, just as soon as the pilgrims left the city (Mt.26:5). All Judas did was move their schedule up a few days.
2. Judas felt that Jesus was doomed, without any hope of escape. He had become convinced that Jesus was not the true Messiah, but just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah. There is a possibility that Judas betrayed Jesus because he was angry for having been deceived as well as for having been disillusioned. He was willing to get what he could, no matter how small the amount.
3. Once Judas had approached the leaders, he was forced to betray Jesus no matter how much or how little they were willing to pay him. If he attempted to back out of the deal, he felt they would arrest him right along with Jesus and His disciples.

[2] (14:11) **Judas**: Judas sought sin, to deceive and betray Jesus. Note the words, "He sought *how* he might conveniently [find a chance, an opportunity to] betray Him." The picture is that of being on the prowl, searching and seeking, looking here and there for the right moment. Judas' heart was set, full of intrigue, plotting evil and planning its strategy. He did *not* believe in Jesus, but even more, He *willed* to do evil against Jesus, to hurt Him, to destroy Him; and he sought opportunity to do so. Just how deceitful Judas was is clearly seen: immediately after bargaining with the authorities, he sat down to eat with Jesus. He sat at the very table where the Lord's Supper was being instituted.

Thought 1. Note that Judas not only rejected Jesus, but he also sought to destroy Him. Many reject Jesus, but they do not seek to harm and destroy Him.

⇒ Some curse Him, consciously or unconsciously dishonoring His name.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His divine nature, against the fact that He is the Son of God.
⇒ Some talk and teach against the written revelation of Himself and the truth, that is, the Word, the Holy Bible.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His active presence in the life of the genuine believer.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:1-5).

	D. Jesus' Last Chance to Judas: The Appeal to a Sinner, 14:12-21 (Mt.26:17-25; Lk.22: 21-23; Jn.13:21-31)	and prepared: there make ready for us. 16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.	
1 The Passover was approaching a. The disciples asked where they were to observe the Passover b. It was Jesus' habit to worship	12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?	17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.	c. He kept His plans despite the betrayal
2 Jesus knew about Judas' denial and betrayal a. He kept His plans & movement secret b. He shared only with His trusted disciples 1) He had pre-planned the arrangements 2) He sent trusted disciples to carry out the arrangements	13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. 14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? 15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished	18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. 19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I? 20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. 21 The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.	**3 Jesus gave Judas every chance to repent** a. The 1st chance: He tried to stir conviction 1) Stirred sorrow in the faithful 2) Stirred self-examination in the faithful b. The 2nd chance: Revealed monstrous deception **4 Jesus gave Judas a last warning**

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

D. Jesus' Last Chance to Judas: The Appeal to a Sinner, 14:12-21

(14:12-21) **Introduction**: Jesus was forced to make secret arrangements for keeping the Passover. This is clear from the present passage. Judas had just plotted with the authorities to betray Jesus (Mk.14:10-11). They wanted to arrest Him in a quiet spot where the people would not be present and rise to His defense. Judas was just waiting for the right place and time. The Upper Room would be an ideal place and time. Jesus knew this, so He made secret arrangements.

The point of the present passage is to show that Jesus knew about Judas' betrayal and to show how Jesus went about giving Judas a last chance to repent.

1. The Passover was approaching (v.12).
2. Jesus knew about Judas' denial and betrayal (v.13-17).
3. Jesus gave Judas every chance to repent (v.18-20).
4. Jesus gave Judas a last warning (v.21).

1 (14:12) **Passover**: the Passover was approaching. Jerusalem was astir with excitement. Josephus, the notable Jewish historian of that day, estimated that between two and three million people flooded into the city to observe the Passover. Pilgrims by the teeming thousands came from all over the world. The mass of people and the necessary housing, food, and commercial arrangements that had to be made—along with the commercial carnival atmosphere—can hardly be imagined.

Note that the disciples had to ask Jesus where they were to celebrate the Passover. He had not told them, not even given them a hint. The day of unleavened bread was at hand, and so far as they knew, no arrangement had been made to secure a place for them to observe the Passover. Considering the housing shortage with the mass of pilgrims, such apparent oversight was most unusual. The disciples must have wondered and questioned why He had not shared His plans earlier.

> **Thought 1.** Jesus worshipped and kept the feasts of the Jews. He did not neglect the assembling together with others. The disciples knew this.
>
> **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).**

2 (14:13-17) **Judas—Denial—Betrayal**: Jesus knew about the denial and the betayal of Judas. This seems to be the very point of what happened in these verses. Judas had just plotted with the chief priests against Jesus (Mk.14:10-11). Judas was denying and betraying Jesus. Jesus knew this, so He had to keep His plans and movements quiet and secret. He could not let Judas know, lest Judas lead the authorities to arrest Him in the Upper Room before He had completed His mission with the disciples. Note the point of the passage.

1. Jesus had kept His plans and movements secret. The disciples did not know where He wished to celebrate the Passover. He could not reveal the plans to a sinful, fallen disciple who was denying and betraying Him. That disciple (Judas) would only interrupt what Jesus was trying to do with the faithful disciples in the Upper Room. He would only create havoc, cause disturbance, hindering and hampering the work of Jesus.

2. Jesus could only share with His faithful and trusted disciples. Note that Jesus did have a plan, and He followed that plan even to the most minute detail. He had apparently pre-planned the arrangements. He sent two trusted disciples to carry out the arrangements. They followed His instructions exactly. But note how secretive the instructions were. Secret arrangements were necessary because Judas and the authorities were seeking to catch Jesus in a quiet place away from the people. The Upper Room would have been an ideal place to arrest Him.

a. There was a pre-planned sign: a man carrying a pitcher of water on his head. This was a most unusual sight. Women were usually the ones who carried pitchers on their heads. It was apparently a sign for the disciples to quietly follow.

b. Jesus did not name the homeowner or tell where the house was. He simply said to follow the man with the pitcher on his head and to tell the homeowner that "The Master" requests the room.

3. Jesus kept His plans despite the betrayer and those who would stop Him. Note the courage and power of Jesus to control the circumstances and events.

Thought 1. Note several striking and convicting points.

1) Jesus knows about the denial and betrayal of any man, just as He knew about Judas.
2) Jesus does not reveal His plans or movements to the man who is denying and betraying Him. The man who denies Jesus knows this. He has no sense, no consciousness, no awareness of Jesus' presence. The Lord's plans are not known to him and the movements of God's Spirit are not felt or experienced.
3) Jesus shares His plans and movement only with faithful and trusted disciples.
4) Jesus' plans are sure; they are fixed. Just as they could not be stopped by Judas, so they cannot be stopped now, no matter the denial and betrayal. Jesus keeps His plans, working out whatever is necessary to fulfill them.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).

"He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).

3 (14:18-20) **Judas—Denial—Betrayal**: Jesus gave Judas every chance to repent.

1. The first chance was an attempt to stir conviction within Judas. Jesus said, "One of you which eateth with me shall betray me." Judas was seated there. He heard the words of Jesus. What were his thoughts? He had tried to hide his sin and he had done a good job. In his mind no one knew about his sin (plot), not even the disciples who were his closest associates. But he was wondering, "Does Jesus know; or is Jesus stabbing in the dark, guessing, suspicious, aware that something is brewing, but not quite sure what?" Scripture is silent about the betrayer's thoughts, but one thing is known: Judas was not convicted of his sin, not enough to repent. But note what happened to the faithful and trusted disciples.

a. They were stirred with deep sorrow (grieved) in their hearts. The word "sorrow" (lupeisthai) means to grieve, to sorrow with heaviness of heart. Their hearts were gripped with a real burden, a heavy weight of grieving.

b. They were stirred to examine their own hearts. They asked, "Is it I?" Note how they had matured. They knew the weakness of the flesh, that it could so easily fail. Each one feared lest a great fall lay ahead of them. Note also how they did not look for the fault or weakness in others, but they looked at themselves. What a lesson for us all!

Thought 1. The man who should have been...

- convicted, was not
- grieving, was not
- examining his own heart, was not
- sorrowing, was not
- repenting, was not

Thought 2. Two things are critical, even for the most faithful and trusted.

1) To know the weakness of the human flesh, the great danger of falling.
2) To always be examining oneself and not others.

2. The second chance given to Judas left him without excuse if he refused to heed it. Jesus revealed that He knew about the *monstrous deception* (v.20). "It is one of the twelve," one "that dippeth with me in the dish." What deception! The sinner sat with Jesus, partaking of His Last Supper and being guilty of the most terrible sin.

Note that Judas was told that his sin was known. Yet, even after he was told, he still felt he could get away with it. He refused to repent. He lived on in his deception, rejecting chance after chance.

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3, 5).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

4 (14:21) **Judas—Denial—Betrayal**: Jesus gave Judas a last warning. He warned Judas of the terrible judgment that was to come. Jesus knew the destiny of the sinner, the terrible fate that awaited him. It would be better never to have been born than to deny and betray Christ.

Thought 1. Note the grace of God in warning the sinner of judgment.

1) The sinner is told in *advance*, before judgment ever comes or is ever pronounced. Judas was told. The sinner can still repent when he *first* hears about judgment. He can still be saved as long as he is living. It is God's grace that warns him of the consequences of his sin, of coming judgment.
2) The sinner is never compelled to repent of his denial or betrayal of Christ. Judas was not forced to turn from his evil; neither is any other sinner. It is God's grace that respects our will and desires. God loves and cares, warns and speaks frankly, but He never forces obedience.

"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Mt.18:7-9).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezk.18:20).

	E. Jesus' Institution of the Lord's Supper, 14:22-26 (Mt.26:26-30; Lk.22: 7-20; cp. Jn.13:1-30)	drank of it. 24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.	b. He gave it & they drank it c. He identified the cup as His blood which was to be shed
1 The 1st act: Jesus took the Bread a. He took & blessed it b. He broke & gave it, identifying the bread as His body	22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.	25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.	**3 The 3rd act: Jesus revealed a glorious Kingdom**
2 The 2nd act: Jesus took the Cup a. He took & blessed it	23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all	26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.	**4 The 4th act: They sang a hymn**

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

E. Jesus' Institution of the Lord's Supper, 14:22-26

(14:22-26) **Introduction**: so much happened in the Upper Room. John is the only gospel writer to cover the Upper Room in great detail. He devotes five whole chapters to the event. In contrast, Mark covers only two events of the Upper Room, and both of these are given in only brief detail. Mark concentrates upon Judas' betrayal and the Lord's Supper. In five fully packed verses, he shares what Jesus did to institute the Lord's Supper.

1. The 1st act: Jesus took the Bread (v.22).
2. The 2nd act: Jesus took the Cup (v.23-24).
3. The 3rd act: Jesus revealed a glorious kingdom (v.25).
4. The 4th act: they sang a hymn (v.26).

1 (14:22) **Lord's Supper—Bread**: the first act of the Lord's Supper involves bread. Note that Jesus did four things with the bread.

1. Jesus took the bread into His hands. This symbolized that His death was a voluntary act. His destiny was in His hands. He did not have to die, but He willingly died.

> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep....Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:15, 17-18).**

2. Jesus gave thanks. He thanked God for *deliverance and the provision and assurance of life*.
3. Jesus broke the bread. This symbolized that His body was to be broken, that is, sacrificed as a victim for man's deliverance (Is.53:5). This act was so significant that the early church sometimes called the Lord's Supper simply *the breaking of bread* (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor.10:16). Under the Old Testament the broken bread pictured the sufferings of the Israelites. Now, under the New Testament, the bread was to picture the broken body of Christ (1 Cor.11:24).

> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**

4. Jesus gave the bread to the disciples to eat. The words "Take, eat: this is my body," mean that a man is to take and receive Christ into his life. The moment a man takes and receives Christ is the moment of redemption. It is that moment of redemption that is to be remembered in this ordinance (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:26; note—Jn.6:52-58).

> **"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).**

2 (14:23-24) **Lord's Supper—Cup, The**: the second act of the Lord's Supper involves the cup. Jesus did four things with the cup.

1. He took the cup into His hands. Again, Jesus was teaching that His death was voluntary. He held His own life in His hands. His life was not being taken from Him; He was laying it down (cp. Jn.10:11, 17-18).
2. He gave thanks. He thanked God for deliverance through sacrifice.
3. He gave the cup and they all drank of it. Jesus was again saying that He must become a part of man's very being if man wishes deliverance. Note the word "gave" (edoken) is in the Greek aorist tense. This means Christ gave the cup *once-for-all*. He died once and only once (Ro.6:10), and man partakes of His death once and only once (Ro.6:6).

> **"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).**
>
> **"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God" (Ro.6:10).**

4. He identified the cup as His blood of the new testament. He simply meant that His blood established a new covenant with God. His blood allowed a new relationship between God and man. Note the Lord's exact words.

a. "This is my blood." His blood, which was shed from His body, was to become the sign, the symbol of the new covenant. His blood was to take the place of the sacrifice of animals.

b. "The new testament." His blood, the sacrifice of His life, established a new testament, a new covenant between God and man (cp. Heb.9:11-15). Faith in His blood, His sacrifice is the way man is now to approach God. Before, under the Old Testament, a man who wanted a right relationship with God approached God through the sacrifice of the animal's blood. The Old Testament believer believed that God accepted him because of the sacrifice of the animal. Now, under the New Testament, the believer believes that God accepts him because of the sacrifice of Christ. This is what Jesus said: "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many" (Mk.14:24. See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28; note—Heb.9:18-22.) A man's sins are forgiven and he becomes acceptable to God by believing that Christ's blood was shed for him.

> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**

The point is this: a man must receive what Christ has done for him. He must drink, partake, absorb, assimilate Christ's blood into his life. That is, a man must believe and trust the death of Christ to forgive his sins. He must allow Christ's death to become the very nourishment, the innermost part and energy, the very flow of his life (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.26:27-28).

> **"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:54-58).**

3 (14:25) **Promises—Great Marriage Feast of Christ**: the third act was the giving of two great promises.

⇒ There was the promise of a glorious kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

⇒ There was the promise of a glorious celebration (see outline and notes—Mt.22:1-14 for discussion).

Both promises were due to the body and blood of Christ, and both promises were given to the person who partakes of the body and blood of Christ.

Jesus promised a day when all genuine believers would sit down with Him in the Kingdom of God. They would sit down at the great marriage feast of the Lamb. This is the promise of perfection, of living forever in the new heavens and earth, of sitting with Christ in the glorious Kingdom of God which is to be established in the future.

> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**
>
> **"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).**
>
> **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).**
>
> **"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).**

4 (14:26) **Lord's Supper—Singing**: the fourth act of the Lord's Supper involved the singing of a hymn. Despite the sorrow, perplexity, and uncertainty of what lay ahead, they sang a hymn. They sang the hymn in celebration of the great *hope* which God gives of *deliverance and salvation*.

> **"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).**
>
> **"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Ph.4:4).**
>
> **"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor.6:10).**

	F. Jesus' Prediction of Peter's Denial: How Jesus Treats Failure, 14:27-31 (Mt.26:31-35; Lk.22: 31-34; Jn.13:36-38)	will go before you into Galilee. 29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. 30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.	**ing to Him after failure** **3 Jesus tried to get men to face their failures** a. Peter's verbal loyalty b. Jesus' appeal for conviction
1 Jesus showed tenderness in the face of weakness & failure[DSI]	27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.	31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.	**4 Jesus provoked men to exaggerate their failure: Peter's flaming self-confidence**
2 Jesus encouraged return-	28 But after that I am risen, I		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

F. Jesus' Prediction of Peter's Denial: How Jesus Treats Failure, 14:27-31

(14:27-31) **Introduction—Man, Weakness of—Flesh**: men are weak and they fail. There is one basic reason for failure conveyed by Scripture: men are not perfect. By nature, that is, by thought, act and being, men come short.

⇒ Their thoughts come short: their thoughts are imperfect, incomplete, never absolute nor all-embracing.

⇒ Their acts come short: their acts are imperfect, incomplete, never all that they can be, not in an absolute sense.

⇒ Their beings come short: their beings are imperfect, incomplete, corruptible and dying.

Men are weak; they do fail. They are short of perfection by nature. Scripture expresses the same thought another way. Men are flesh, beings with a nature that is basically driven by self-interest and raw urges. Men desire to please and pamper their flesh and will, body and mind. They seek to please and pamper...

- their flesh through comfort and ease, pleasure and excitement, stimulation and feelings, recognition and fame.
- their will through power and conquest, achievement and position, knowledge and development.

Note, it is not the urges and the goals that are wrong. It is man who is wrong. The urges within men are good and healthy when they are put in their proper place, that is, when they are used to the glory of God and for the benefit of man as Scripture dictates. When a man acts for the glory of God and the welfare of others, there is nothing wrong...

- with comfort and ease
- with pleasure and excitement
- with stimulation and feelings
- with recognition and fame

For example, God expects His people to possess power and to conquer (spiritually, mentally, and physically). He expects us to achieve and secure better positions, to gain more knowledge and more development, ever increasing and growing. The problem arises in that man is not able to control his flesh and will, body and mind. Too often he centers upon self, misusing and depriving other people to fulfill his own urges. His misusing and depriving other people can range all the way from minor deception to destroying life.

All this is what lies behind the present passage. Man has a weak and fallen nature that causes him to be imperfect and incomplete, corruptible and dying. Man's flesh is weak and failing; therefore, man must receive a new nature from God, a supernatural nature. He cannot trust in the arm of the flesh; he must trust in the arm of God. Man must receive a *God-given resurrected power* (nature) if he is to live a conquering and fulfilled life, a life that pleases God and makes him acceptable to God.

Peter and the disciples needed to learn this. They trusted their own flesh and their own strength. Therefore, they were destined to fail despite a determination that was as strong as it could be. Jesus needed to prepare them. They were to fail and fall away at His death because of the weakness of their flesh. But He was to arise. They would need to know they were not rejected because they had fallen away. And they would need to receive the power of the resurrection through the presence of the Holy Spirit so that they could conquer and not fail in the future.

1. Jesus showed tenderness in the face of weakness and failure (v.27).
2. Jesus encouraged returning to Him after failure (v.28).
3. Jesus tried to get men to face their failures (v.29-30).
4. Jesus provoked men to exaggerate their failure: Peter's flaming self-confidence (v.31).

1 (14:27) **Failure—Jesus Christ, Care; Tenderness—Weakness**: Jesus showed tenderness in the face of weakness and failure. Jesus knew what was coming. "All ye shall be offended [stumble, fall] because of me this night." He was referring to His death. Note three things.

1. The word "offend" (skandalizo) means to stumble, to fall. Jesus saw their *scattering* as a sin, a stumbling, a falling away from Him.

2. Jesus clearly stated that God was behind His death. The Scripture says, "I [God] will smite the shepherd" (Zech.13:7). There was a Godly purpose for Jesus' dying, an eternal purpose.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).**

3. Jesus said that the disciples would tragically forsake Him. Not a single one would stand up for Him. The threat of the world and the weakness of their flesh would be too much to overcome. They would fail.

Note that Jesus *predicted* their failure. In so doing, He helped them in several ways.

1. He taught them the weakness and failure of human flesh.
2. He laid the groundwork of the resurrection, the basis for receiving the new power (nature) of God, the presence of the Holy Spirit.
3. Their remembering His words would stir them to remember His tenderness and care, and it would draw them back to Him more quickly and easily.
4. Their remembering His words would stir faith in Him as the Son of God who is omniscient, knowing all things.
5. Their faith would be strengthened by understanding how the Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus and them: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:27) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Zech.13:7.

2 (14:28) **Forgiveness—Repentance—Jesus Christ, Care**: Jesus encouraged returning to Him after failure. Jesus had been blunt: they would fall. But now He was just as clear. He would go before them into Galilee. Their failure, even in so crucial an hour, would not cause Him to reject them. Despite their failure, they could return to Him, and there would be a glorious reunion.

Note: Jesus again predicted His resurrection. It was His resurrection that made both *repentance* and the glorious *reunion* possible.

> **Thought 1.** No matter how terrible the failure, we can repent and return to Christ and rest assured of being a part of the glorious reunion in the great day of His return.
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).**

3 (14:29-30) **Self-Confidence—Flesh, Weakness of**: Jesus tried to get men to face their weaknesses and failures. Only when man faces his weaknesses and failures will he work to correct them. This is the point of these two verses (and also the next three verses). Peter strongly declared his loyalty. So Jesus spelled out in detail that Peter would not only fall one time, but he would fall three times—and all three times would be in the same night. Note several points.

1. Peter was sincere and full of fervor for the Lord. He was thoroughly convinced he would not fall and fail his Lord.
2. Peter did not know the weakness of the flesh, not in great trial.
3. Peter looked at the weaknesses and failures of others, not at his own: "Although *all* shall be offended, yet will not I." He could see how others could perhaps fall, but not himself. He loved and cared for the Lord too much.
4. Peter boasted confidence in self, in his own natural strength. *As with all men*, his natural strength failed. The need for the Lord's strength, for the presence of the Holy Spirit, to conquer self was the great lesson Peter had to learn. Very simply, he and the others had to learn to trust the strength of Jesus and not their own flesh, not if they wished to please God and be acceptable to Him.

> **Thought 1.** The cock's crowing was probably mentioned to trigger the warning about the weakness of the flesh in the mind of Peter and the others. For any who have the privilege of hearing the rooster crow, it is a good trigger to remind them of the weakness of their own flesh and the great need to walk with the Spirit of God.
>
> **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).**

4 (14:31) **Self-Confidence—Flesh, Weakness of**: Jesus provoked men to exaggerate their failure. The message about the weakness of human flesh provoked Peter. Jesus had to get the point across, so He stressed the fact (v.30). But note Peter's refusal to accept the truth. In flaming self-confidence, he declared that he would not deny Jesus, even if he had to die for Him. Peter's over-confidence was caused by three things.

1. Peter's over-confidence was caused by being blind to the cross (Mt.26:34). Peter just did not see the cross. It was the image of Jesus' hanging upon the cross that was going to cause Peter to deny Him. Jesus had told Peter all about the

cross, but he had refused to believe it (see notes—Mt.17:22; 18:1-2). The fact that human flesh was so sinful, so depraved that God would have to crucify the flesh was just too much to grasp (see outline, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; notes—Ro.6:6-13; Gal.2:20; 5:24; 6:14. Cp. Ro.6:2; Col.3:3.)

2. Peter's over-confidence was caused by not knowing himself, his own personal weaknesses, the weaknesses of his human flesh. Peter's self-image was strong. He saw himself above *serious* sin and failure. He asserted with all the confidence in the world that he would die for Jesus before denying Him.

Thought 1. Note several things.

1) Peter was a strong believer, one of the strongest.
2) Peter really failed to understand himself, his flesh. The one sin that a believer should not commit is to deny Jesus. To die for Jesus rather than to deny Him is the one thing a genuine believer would be expected to do.
3) Peter believed strongly that he, his flesh, was above serious sin (cp. Ro.3:9f; 7:8, 14-18; Gal.5:19f).
4) Peter failed not once, but three times, and all three times were in the same night with Christ right off to his side (Lk.22:61).

3. Peter's over-confidence was caused by contradicting Jesus instead of listening to Him—caused by not listening to the Word of Jesus, to what Jesus was saying. Jesus was warning the disciples about the deceitfulness and weakness of the human heart. Peter and the rest just refused to accept the fact. They denied personal weaknesses; they rejected the Word of Jesus.

Thought 1. Note that all the disciples declared their loyalty, boasting confidence in their flesh. Peter was only the spokesman for the group.

> **"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).**
>
> **"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Ro.3:20).**
>
> **"In me [that is, in my flesh] dwelleth no good thing" (Ro.7:18).**
>
> **"They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Ro.8:8).**
>
> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).**

Thought 2. We must listen and keep the Word of Jesus, do just what He said. It is when we fail to listen to the Words of Jesus, to the Holy Scriptures, that we fall.

⇒ Keeping the Words of Jesus assures eternal life.

> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**

⇒ Keeping the Words of Jesus assures the presence of the Holy Spirit.

> **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (Jn.14:15-16).**

⇒ Keeping the Words of Jesus assures fellowship with God and Christ.

> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).**

⇒ Keeping the Words of Jesus assures our security, that we know Him.

> **"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).**

⇒ Failing to keep the Words of Jesus dooms us to judgment.

> **"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).**

	G. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: Bearing the Weight of Great Trial, 14:32-42 (Mt.26:36-46; Lk.22: 39-46; Jn.18:1; cp. Heb.5:7-8; 12:3-4)	from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.	away[DS2] 2) For God's will to be done
1 Picture 1: His great need for prayer & for friends to be at His side[DS1]	32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.	37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?	**4 Picture 4: His disappointment in His friends**
2 Picture 2: His heavy agony & pressure	33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;	38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.	**5 Picture 5: His continuing ministry—even under trial**
3 Picture 3: His desperate search for relief a. He got all alone: Prostrated Himself b. He prayed for the hour, the cross to pass from Him 1) The cup to be taken	34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. 35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup	39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. 40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. 41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.	**6 Picture 6: His perseverance in prayer—despite no answer from God** **7 Picture 7: His continued disappointment in friends** **8 Picture 8: His relief of soul & spiritual strength**

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

G. Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: Bearing the Weight of Great Trial, 14:32-42

(14:32-42) **Introduction**: no man could ever understand the depth of sorrow and agony experienced by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. His experience is the picture of a terrifying struggle—a struggle against sin and the awful judgment which is to fall upon sin. It is a picture which should cause every man to bow in humble adoration and worship of the Lord Jesus, for Jesus bore the sorrow and agony of sin for every man. He bore the punishment of sin for all.

1. Picture 1: His great need for prayer and for friends to be at His side (v.32).
2. Picture 2: His heavy agony and pressure (v.33-34).
3. Picture 3: His desperate search for relief (v.35-36).
4. Picture 4: His disappointment in His friends (v.37).
5. Picture 5: His continuing ministry—even under trial (v.38).
6. Picture 6: His perseverance in prayer—despite no answer from God (v.39).
7. Picture 7: His continued disappointment in friends (v.40).
8. Picture 8: His relief of soul and spiritual strength (v.41-42).

1 (14:32) **Jesus Christ, Prayer Life—Prayer, Need for**: the first picture was the Lord's great need for prayer and for friends to be at His side. Gethsemane was apparently a beautiful garden just outside the city of Jerusalem. Gardens were not allowed behind the walls within the city because of the lack of space. Therefore, the wealthy secured beautiful spots right outside the walls and built their gardens. It was Jesus' habit to pray in Gethsemane. Judas knew exactly where to go (v.43). However, this time Jesus' need was much greater than before. He was facing the cross, unbelievable human suffering, and final separation from God (see notes—Mt.20:19). He needed not only prayer, He needed the very presence and strengthening of God, and He needed the presence and prayer of His closest companions. Note what He did.

1. He said to His disciples, "Sit ye here, while I shall pray." His words suggested that they too should begin to pray, for great trials were coming, and the billows of temptation would roll in upon them ever so heavily.
2. Taking Peter, James, and John, He walked farther into the garden to be more alone with these three. They were the closest to Him. And in His darkest hour, He especially needed their presence and prayer support. But note: His need was not to talk the problem over with them. He just needed their presence and prayer support *while* He talked and shared with God. He knew who had the true answer to His need. (Cp. v.34, 37-38, 40-41.)

> **Thought 1.** Every believer should have his place for prayer, and it should be his habit to visit it, daily approaching the throne of God.

Thought 2. What a lesson! Too many talk their problems over with friends instead of with God. God is the One who holds the true answer to our problems. The proper order between friends and God is to seek God for the answer and friends for their prayer support.

> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).**
>
> **"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:32) **Gethsemane**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:36.

2 (14:33-34) **Jesus Christ, Death—Gethsemane**: the second picture was the Lord's heavy agony and pressure. He "began" to experience extreme agony and pressure beyond imagination.

The words "sore amazed" (ekthambeisthai) are very strong words in the Greek. The words mean utter and extreme fright, horror, terror, bewilderment, amazement. Jesus was staggering under the "horror of great darkness," something like what fell upon Abraham, except Jesus' horror was much, much worse (Gen.15:12).

The words "very heavy" (ademonein) are expressive, perhaps as expressive as words can be. The words mean to be heavy, troubled, distressed—extremely so. However, when looking at the root of the word (ademos), it means much more. It means *being not at home*, *homeless*, *out of one's usual surroundings*. The meaning is probably twofold.

1. Jesus suffered beyond all imagination. Imagine this: whatever suffering and whatever pain were involved in the *Perfect and Ideal Man's* bearing all the sins of the world and the judgment for those sins—all of it fell upon Jesus. No one could bear any of the suffering with Jesus. He had to bear it all alone. Upon the cross He had to "*become* sin for us" (2 Cor.5:21). In Gethsemane He was facing the loneliness of bearing all for us. He was alone, and He experienced all the terrible emotions and distress of the solitary, the lonely, the *homeless*.

2. Jesus had to be separated from God for the first time in His eternal existence. His *home*, His place, His very being was with God throughout all eternity. In Gethsemane Jesus was facing the separation from God which He was shortly to experience upon the cross. He was to be *cut off from God*, left all alone to bear the sins and judgment of men. He again felt the terrible emotions and distress of being left all alone, cut off from God, of being left *homeless*.

The terror (amazement) and heaviness were so painful they almost killed Him. And He shared this fact with the disciples: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto *death*." The sorrow and weight were life-threatening. The pressure was swelling up in Him to such a degree it was about to explode. He began to sweat great drops of blood (Lk.22:44). God had to send an angel to save His life and to strengthen Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus Christ, Suffering*—Mt.26:37-38.)

Note that Jesus told the three disciples to "watch," that is, to be praying. They knew a critical hour was at hand. They felt the pressure in the very atmosphere, and He had just shared His own great need. He needed and wanted their presence and prayer support.

> **"Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none" (Ps.69:20).**
>
> **"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lk.22:44).**
>
> **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).**

3 (14:35-36) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the third picture was the Lord's desperate search for relief. In confronting the cross (death), Jesus did all He could: He turned to God. Five things are said in these two verses.

1. Jesus got all alone and prostrated Himself before God. Luke says He withdrew "about a stone's cast" from the three apostles. Two significant points. (a) He needed to be alone with God. He was desperate. (b) He fell on His face. The pressure and weight were unbearable.

2. Jesus prayed that the hour of the cross "might pass from Him." The term "the hour" or "My hour" is a constant symbol of His death (see note—Jn.12:23-24. Cp. Mt.26:18, 45; Jn.7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:27, 33; 13:1; 17:1.) He was definitely praying for God to choose another way to secure the redemption of the world.

3. Jesus prayed "Abba, Father." He addressed God as "Father." This was what a small child called his father from day to day. It was the address of a child's love and dependency. The child knew that His father would hear and turn to him when he called "Father." But note also the words, "*O my* Father." Jesus was broken, weighed down, fallen on His face, prostrated on the ground. In desperation He cried out "*O my* Father." Just like a child, He cried out to *His Father* in childlike brokenness and dependency, knowing that His Father would hear and turn to help Him.

4. Jesus said, "All things are possible unto thee [God]." Why then did God not choose another way? As simply stated as possible...

   - God does only what He has willed to do; and He wills only what His love and righteousness tell Him to will. God's love and righteousness led Him to demonstrate His love and righteousness by giving His Son to die for the sins of men. The cross demonstrated in the very best way possible that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" to bear the judgment of sin for every man. Therefore, God's will was subject to His love and righteousness.

In Gethsemane Jesus knew this, but He struggled in His flesh, in His humanity, for God to choose another way. The pressure of it all, of being cut off from His Father, was just too heavy. He cried out in desperation for God to deliver Him

from the terrible load. He knew that God would not, yet He cried for God to do it; He cried *expressing* His great dependence and love for God. He loved His Father so much, He did not want to be separated from Him. He wanted His Father to know that, so He pleaded for deliverance by another way, *expressing* His love and dependence, knowing that God had determined the path of the cross. He was willing to bear it, to subject Himself to God's eternal will and love and righteousness.

5. Jesus asked God to remove the cup from Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, Cup—Mt.26:39. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mk 14:36; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44; cp. Mt.20:19.) The human nature and will of Jesus are clearly seen in this request. He was as much man as any man is. Therefore, He begged God to choose another way other than the cup if possible. The experience of being separated from God upon the cross was too much to bear.

6. The divine nature and will of Jesus are also clearly seen in this request. Note the Lord's words: "Let this cup pass from me: nevertheless...." The first act, the first impulse and struggle and movement of His will had come from His flesh: to escape the cup of separation from God. But immediately, the second act, the second impulse and struggle and movement of His will came from His divine nature: to do not as He willed, but as God willed.

Thought 1. Christ's surrender to do God's perfect will in the Garden of Gethsemane was critical.

⇒ It was through His surrender that He was made perfect and stood before God as the Ideal, Perfect Man.

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that His righteousness was able to stand for every man.

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that He was able to bear the cup of God's wrath against sin *for every man.*

⇒ It was through His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that His sacrifice and sufferings were able to stand for every man.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(14:36) **Cup**: Jesus Christ was not fearing nor shrinking from death itself. This is clearly seen in Jn.10:17-18. Death for a cause is not such a great price to pay. Many men have so died—fearlessly and willingly, some perhaps more cruelly than Jesus Himself. Shrinking from betrayal, beatings, humiliation, and death, increased by foreknowledge is not what was happening to Jesus. As stated, some men have faced horrible deaths courageously, even inviting martyrdom for a cause. The Lord knew He was to die from the very beginning, and He had been preparing His disciples for His death (see outlines and notes—Mk.8:31-33; 9:30-32; Mt.16:21-28; 17:22; 20:17-19). It was not just human and physical suffering from which Jesus was shrinking. Such an explanation is totally inadequate in explaining Gethsemane. The great cup or trial Jesus was facing was separation from God (see note, pt.1 and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38). He was to be the sacrificial Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (Jn.1:29). He was to bear the judgment of God for the sins of the world (see note—Mt.27:46-49; cp. Is.53:19). Jesus Himself had already spoken of the "cup" when referring to His sacrificial death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.18:11).

Scripture speaks of the cup in several ways.

1. The cup is called "the cup of the Lord's fury" (Is.51:17).
2. The cup is associated with suffering and God's wrath (cp. Ps.11:6; Is.51:17; Lk.22:42).
3. The cup is also associated with salvation. Because Jesus drank the cup of suffering and wrath for us, we can "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps.116:13).

4 (14:37) **Flesh, Weakness of—Dedication, Lack of—Prayer, Weakness in**: the fourth picture was the Lord's disappointment in His friends. The Lord returned to the three disciples and found them asleep.

1. Jesus spoke to all three, but He addressed Peter in particular. Peter was the one who had spoken up just an hour or two earlier declaring that he would stand with Jesus through anything. Yet he was unwilling to stand with Jesus in prayer. Jesus was speaking to Him very bluntly.

2. Jesus did not address Peter by his new name, Peter, but by his old name, Simon. The flesh had gotten the best of Peter, and Jesus was letting Peter know it.

3. Jesus had not asked Peter and the disciples to watch and pray all night. He had asked only for one hour of prayer. This is significant in seeing their failure and weakness.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Ro.7:18).

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Ro.8:8).

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal.5:17).

5 (14:38) **Jesus Christ, Work—Ministry**: the fifth picture was the Lord's continuing ministry even under trial. He was pressured so heavily He was at the point of exploding. Yet He was concerned over the needs of the disciples. They were going to face great temptation, and He knew it. He wanted them to know it. They must watch and pray, be prepared. Despite His own need in this hour, He ministered all He could to them, helping them and trying to awaken them to watch and pray as never before.

Thought 1. The believer is to continue to minister even while He is in need or under fire. The believer's life is to be a life of ministry.

> **"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).**

6 (14:39) **Prayer, Perseverance in**: the sixth picture was the Lord's perseverance in prayer, despite no answer from God. Note that Jesus had not yet found relief from God, yet He was not discouraged. He did not turn away from God; He went back, got alone, and sought God again. "And [He even] spoke the same words." He zeroed in on the same request: that the cup might pass from Him. He sought, wrestled, and agonized with God. He persevered, giving every indication that He was not going to quit praying until God heard and met His need.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas.4:7-8).**

7 (14:40) **Flesh, Weakness of—Dedication, Lack of**: the seventh picture was the Lord's continued disappointment in His friends. Some commentators excuse the disciples, saying their bodies and eyes were so heavy with the pressure of the hour, they just could not stay awake. But their failure to watch and pray was just inexcusable and greatly disappointing to the Lord. Even after a rebuke (v.37), they would not struggle to stand with the Lord. They were guilty; they knew not "what to answer Him."

> **"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Lk.12:37).**
>
> **"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:5-6).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**
>
> **"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).**

8 (14:41-42) **Jesus Christ, Submission**: the eighth picture was the Lord's relief of soul and spiritual strength.

1. There were His words, the evidence of great release: "Sleep on now, and take your *rest*." Jesus' agony, His desperate need for friends to "watch" with Him was now gone (v.34, 38). God had given Him great relief of soul. The very tone of His words to His disciples revealed a calmness of spirit, a peace of mind, a relief of the physical and emotional strain that was about to kill Him. God had met His need in a most wonderful way.

> **"In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul" (Ps.138:3).**
>
> **"And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Lk.22:43).**
>
> **"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" (Heb.5:7; cp. Heb.5:7-9).**

2. There were His words, the evidence of great courage: "It is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." Note three things.

   a. There was no shrinking now, no agony, no desperation. Jesus was relieved and strengthened, ready to face the sufferings necessary to secure the salvation of man.

   b. Jesus said He was being "betrayed into the hands of sinners." All those taking part in His death were "sinners." His death was the most heinous crime of history; for He, the Son of Man, the Ideal and Perfect Man, was killed by men. But there is more here: He died for the sins of the world. It was every man's sins that caused Him to be crucified. Every sin is an act of rebellion, of simply saying *No* to God (Ro.3:23). Therefore every man is guilty of putting Christ to death. There is a sense in which every sin, every act of rebellion crucifies "the Son of God afresh, and put[s] Him to an open shame" (Heb.6:6).

   c. Jesus' relief of soul and infusion of strength did not come from resigning Himself to death. Rather, He relinquished His will in favor of the Father's will. He deliberately gave up His own will and actively pursued the Father's will. This was the victory He fought to gain in Gethsemane. It should also be said that His submission was voluntary—not forced. He had a choice even up until His death upon the cross. (See note—Mt.26:39.)

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps.40:8).

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:30).

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Then said, I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all....But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb.10:7-10, 12).

	H. Jesus' Arrest: A Study of Human Character, 14:43-52 (Mt.26:47-56; Lk.22: 47-53; Jn.18:3-11)	on him, and took him. 47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.	**their hands on Jesus** **3 The disciple who was courageous, but mistaken**
1 The fallen disciple who double-dealt a. His tragedy 1) He was one of the disciples 2) He led a crowd against Jesus b. His pre-arranged sign	43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. 44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.	48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? 49 I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled. 50 And they all forsook him, and fled.	**4 The Lord who showed a striking serenity in the midst of mass confusion** a. His piercing question b. His obedience to Scripture, to God's will **5 The disciples who allowed their faith to crack**
c. His hypocritical deception	45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.	51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: 52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.	**6 The young man who became terror-stricken when confronted**
2 The men who misused	46 And they laid their hands		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

H. Jesus' Arrest: A Study of Human Character, 14:43-52

(14:43-52) **Introduction**: Jesus was betrayed, arrested, and deserted within just a few minutes. The event is a dramatic study of human character.

1. The fallen disciple who double-dealt (v.43-45).
2. The men who misused their hands on Jesus (v.46).
3. The disciple who was courageous, but mistaken (v.47).
4. The Lord who showed a striking serenity in the midst of mass confusion (v.48-49).
5. The disciples who allowed their faith to crack (v.50).
6. The young man who became terror-striken when confronted (v.51-52).

1 (14:43-45) **Deception—Hypocrisy—Betrayal—Forsaking Christ**: the first study concerns the fallen disciple who double-dealt. Note the terrible tragedy. Judas was a professed follower of Jesus; he was actually a disciple, one of the twelve, yet he is seen taking the lead against Jesus. Remember, he had begun his downward fall by stealing just a little at a time; but as with all thieves, he became bolder and began to take more and more. Scripture calls him a thief and a robber (Jn.10:1). He fell so deeply that he was a betrayer, a leader against Jesus.

> **Thought 1.** How many disciples have forsaken Jesus? How many now stand against Him? How many began with *little sins* but are now involved in greater sins?

It was night and already dark, and some of the arresting party would not know Jesus, not well enough to arrest Him in the cover of darkness. So Judas arranged to identify Jesus with a kiss. It was the custom of the day for a disciple to greet his teacher with a slight kiss on the cheek. But note what Judas did: as he approached Jesus, he not only attempted to deceive Jesus, he poured it on. He said, "Master, Master," and kissed Him. The word kiss here is different from the word kiss in verse 44. In verse 44, the word is *philein* which is the respectful kiss of greeting. But in verse 45 when Judas kissed Jesus, the word is *kataphilein*, which is a kiss of intense feelings. Judas was not only portraying hypocritical deception, he was drenching Jesus with deception and soaking himself in hypocrisy. He was standing face to face with Jesus fervently declaring his discipleship, yet at that very moment, he was leading others in their sin against Jesus.

> **Thought 1.** How many approach Christ in church and pour it on? They profess discipleship, yet at the same time, they live in sin and shame. How many feel they are actually getting away with it, actually able to keep the truth from Christ? How foolishly we deceive ourselves and deceive others!
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**
>
> **"[These] shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you [the church]; having eyes full of adultery, and**

that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:13-14).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings. As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:9-11).

2 (14:46) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Man, Response to Christ**: the second study concerns the men who misused their hands on Jesus. This is a descriptive statement full of application. Note three simple things.

1. The hands laid upon Jesus were the hands of the rude, the abusive, the unconcerned, the neglectful, the violent. When they should have been concerned over Jesus and their own souls, they were rejecting and reacting against Him.
2. Jesus desired men to lay hold of Him in humility and belief, not in some sinful, negative reaction.
3. The hands of men can take hold of Jesus in reaction. They can arrest His messenger and message, and they can sense triumph, but only temporarily. God will always raise up His messengers to carry on the glorious news of salvation, even if the messengers have to be new ones. The triumph will always be the Lord's, and in that glorious day of redemption, He will triumph ultimately. It was this that Judas and his cohorts failed to grasp. It was their rejection of God's Son that led them to misuse their hands on Jesus.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (Jn.12:28).

3 (14:47) **Jesus Christ, Submission—Witnessing—Courage**: the third study concerns the disciple who was courageous but mistaken. This disciple was a true disciple, a true follower of the Lord. As soon as Jesus was opposed, the disciple jumped to the Lord's defense. He was ready and prepared to stand with his Lord. But note: the way he went about defending Jesus was wrong. His courage was commendable, but his method was mistaken. He tried to attack and to defeat (kill) the enemy of Jesus with physical force. Physical force was not the way of Jesus. Jesus would have His attackers know His faith and trust, His gentleness and love, His submission and willingness to do the will of God. This is always the way into the presence of God.

Thought 1. Courage is needed—but spiritual courage, not physical courage. The believer must be courageous and zealous in his spirit, standing with Christ proclaiming the way of faith and trust, gentleness and love, submission and a willingness to do God's will.

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.4:6).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).

Thought 2. Many are too often involved in attacking instead of proclaiming. The opponents of Christ are often treated as though they are unreachable and untouchable by Christ. The wise disciple must treat everyone *in the truth*: the sinner must be loved and shown the way of Christ. His sin is to be despised, but not the sinner himself.

4 (14:48-49) **Love—Obedience—Indulgence—Truth**: study four concerns the Lord who showed a striking serenity in the midst of mass confusion. Jesus was serene through the whole affair. His serenity is a dynamic example as we face the trials of this life. He was able to be serene through it all because He lived moment by moment in obedience to the Scripture, that is, to the will of God. Note two things.

1. There was the piercing question of Jesus: "Are ye come out, as against a thief?" The world treated Him as a thief. They acted as though He had stolen from them, for He had not preached a message that allowed them to live as they wished. He had not praised them, nor boosted their egos; He had not honored their service and gifts. Rather, He had proclaimed that they were short of God's glory and were dying and doomed if they did not repent and begin to live as God commanded (see note—Mt.26:55-56).

Note a critical point too often overlooked: Jesus had to tell the truth in order for men to be saved. God is love, but His love is not the indulgence of the grandfather who accepts wrongdoing. His love is the ache and acceptance of a true father who receives a repentant and obedient son. *Only through repentance and obedience can a man ever know the love of God* (cp. Jn.14:21, 23-24; 15:10, 14). God does not accept a man who does wrong and lives unrighteously. Therefore, Jesus had to tell men the truth. He could not deceive men. If men wanted to be acceptable to God and live in His love, then they had to turn away from sin and come to God, believing that God exists and diligently seeking Him (Heb.11:6).

2. Jesus said the Scriptures, that is, God's will, must be fulfilled. Note two facts.
   a. He had to die; Scripture said so. God's will was fixed and set in Scripture.
   b. Jesus was dying willingly. He willingly laid down His life just as Scripture said.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was opposed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Is.53:5-7).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Again, it was Jesus' obedience to God's will that brought the serenity and peace to His heart in the midst of mass confusion.

Thought 1. We secure peace and serenity through living for God and obeying Him.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

5 (14:50) **Faith**: the fifth study concerns the disciples who allowed their faith to crack. The disciples were not cowards (cp. v.47). Their problem was not lack of courage but weak faith and lack of spiritual understanding (carnality). When Jesus was arrested, their courage rose to the occasion. They were willing to stand up and fight although they were far outnumbered and had inferior weapons. What happened was this. When they saw Jesus' standing there not freeing Himself (Mt.26:52), they could not understand. They were disillusioned, wondering: "Why does Jesus not blast His enemies away? The Messiah could. He is supposed to have such power, and Jesus is the Messiah. Isn't He?" Their faith was bound to falter. Two things caused their weak faith.

1. First, they were close-minded. They had closed their minds to *part of the truth*, to His full mission and purpose. They had *refused* to accept His word about dying and rising again literally. They had failed to grasp the spiritual and eternal nature of His kingdom. They symbolized what He was saying. Now that it was happening, they were not prepared for it; their faith was too weak.
2. Second, they were worldly and materialistic minded. They had hung on to their earthly concept of the Messiah, that is, a Messiah who was coming to bring utopia to this material and physical world. They were, therefore, not prepared to deal with their earthly Messiah's being bound and taken prisoner by men of this earth. Their faith lacked the strength to bear such a trial.

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever" (2 Pt.3:17-18).

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

6 (14:51-52) **Fear**: the sixth study concerns a young man who became terror striken when confronted and attacked. Most commentators seem to think this young man was Mark, the author of this gospel. If so, he does not name himself out of modesty. Several facts lead to this conclusion.

1. Why is the event recorded if it were not Mark? There seems to be little, if any, point to the event's being mentioned if the young man were not Mark. Apparently Mark is saying, "I was there; I was an eyewitness to the happenings." (Not mentioning oneself by name is the practice of the Gospel writers. For example, John refers to many instances where he was an eyewitness, but he never gives his name.)
2. Mary, Mark's mother, lived in Jerusalem (Acts 12:12).
3. The detail of the account points to Mark's having been an eyewitness (cp. Judas' approach, "Master, Master," and the two different words for "kiss").
4. The trait of fleeing Jesus when the going got rough is the same picture of Mark in the book of Acts (Acts 13:13; 15:37-38).

Mark's mother, Mary, had a house large enough to hold a fairly large prayer meeting. Some commentators think the Upper Room was even in her home. If so, when Judas returned to the Upper Room with the arresting party, Mark was probably lying in his bed and heard the commotion. He quickly threw the sheet around him and struck out to warn Jesus. When Jesus was grabbed, one of the officers reached for the young man, but the young man was able to break loose and escape.

The point again is weak faith (if it were Mark) or lack of faith (if it were an unbelieving spectator). The young man failed to stand with Jesus. He had little if any faith in the Lord. His whole being surged with fear and terror. He sought to save himself at the expense of standing with the Messiah and witnessing for Him.

Thought 1. Many seek to escape embarrassment, ridicule, threats, and persecution instead of standing with Christ and being a testimony for Him. Why? Weak faith. Our faith is not strong enough to cast out fear.

> **"And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions" (Mk.10:22).**
>
> **"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:1).**
>
> **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel" (2 Tim.1:8).**
>
> **"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.1:13).**
>
> **"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).**

	I. Jesus' Trial Before the High Priest: A Look at Weak & Strong Character, 14:53-65 (Mt.26:57-68; Lk.22:54, 63-71; cp. Jn.18:12-14, 19-24)	59 But neither so did their witnesses agree together.	d. The final witnesses did not even agree
		60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?	**4 The calm Lord: He stood silent before men, but assured before God**
1 Jesus was led before the High Priest & the Sanhedrin	53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.	61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?	
2 The confused, yet courageous Peter: He alone followed Jesus	54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.	62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.	**5 The strong Lord: He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed**
3 The disturbed religionists: They sought testimony against Jesus	55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.	63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?	**6 The frenzied mob of religionists: They got their satisfaction—the death of their disturber**
a. The witnesses were false	56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.	64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.	a. The true character of the High Priest
b. The witnesses did not agree	57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,	65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.	b. The true character of men[DSI]
c. The final charge was formulated	58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

I. Jesus' Trial Before the High Priest: A Look at Weak and Strong Character, 14:53-65

(14:53-65) **Introduction**: there is a picture of both weak and strong character in this passage. The traits that one should avoid and follow are both seen.

1. Jesus was led before the High Priest of the Sanhedrin (v.53).
2. The confused, yet courageous Peter: he alone followed Jesus (v.54).
3. The disturbed religionists: they sought testimony against Jesus (v.55-59).
4. The calm Lord: He stood silent before men, but assured before God (v.60-61).
5. The strong Lord: He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed (v.62).
6. The frenzied mob of religionists: they got their satisfaction—the death of their disturber (v.63-65).

1 (14:53) **Jesus Christ, Trials—Sanhedrin**: Jesus was led before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin. He stood before them on trial for His life. The Sanhedrin was the official ruling body, the high court of the Jews. Note the word "assembled" (sunerchomai), which means to gather, to come together, to flock together, to resort. There is also the idea of accompanying in the word. The picture is that of the Jewish leaders' flocking or herding together around Jesus, of being called to accompany one another to their respective seats, ready to pounce on Jesus. There was no question about the evil of their hearts. They were ready to pounce on and eliminate Him. Several facts reveal the evil of their hearts.

1. They had hastily assembled the court *at night*, which was illegal. All criminals had to be tried in the day.
2. They were meeting in Caiaphas' palace (home), not in the official court. This, too, was illegal. All cases had to be tried in court.
3. Jesus was being tried during the Passover week, when no cases were to be tried.
4. They had not met to try Jesus but to secretly devise charges and to condemn Him to death.

Thought 1. Men *flock together* too often to do evil. Men also *flock together* to oppose Christ, even in the church. It is easier to do evil or to oppose Christ in a group than when alone.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**

Thought 2. A heart that wishes to do evil will twist the rules. If a man looks and lusts, he will usually figure out a way, rationalizing and justifying the matter in his mind.

> **"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (3 Jn.11).**
>
> **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).**

2 (14:54) **Jesus Christ, Love for**: there was the confused, yet courageous Peter. He had attempted to defend Jesus, but Jesus stopped him and even forbade him to come to His aid (Mk.14:47; Jn.18:10). In addition, Jesus was giving in to the injustices and indecencies of the mob instead of blasting them away and setting up His kingdom. Peter could not understand. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus stopped him from fighting the arresting party, Peter had to flee for his life. But Peter loved His Lord too much to flee too far away. His love for Jesus stopped him, turned him around, and led him back to Jesus. He followed the mob from a safe distance. The trail ended up in the courtyard of Caiaphas' palace. It took enormous courage for Peter to enter the courtyard, for Peter was risking his life by being there. But He had to see what happened to his Lord. He hoped against hope that Jesus was just waiting to act and take over. He had to see.

Thought 1. How much we need a deep love for Christ, a love so great that we would risk our lives to follow Him. Too often, our love is so weak we will not even risk ridicule or embarrassment to witness for Him, much less risk our lives.

> **"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn.4:18).**

Thought 2. Peter's love caused him to be courageous. Courage always needs to be rooted in love, and love must always rule over courage.

> **"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:6-7).**

3 (14:55-59) **Jesus Christ, Trial**: there were the disturbed religionists—they sought testimony against Jesus. Imagine! It was the religionists who were actually seeking testimony against Jesus. They were so disturbed with Jesus, the kind of evidence they gathered was meaningless. Their minds were closed—they rejected Him and opposed Him. He was a threat to their way of life, their security and position, and their nation. Therefore, they were set on rejecting and opposing Him. The truth did not matter. He was to be denied and done away with. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12 for a discussion of the reasons for their opposition.)

Note how far they went to formulate a charge against Jesus.

1. The witnesses were false witnesses (v.56). Many came charging Jesus, but they were all false and their testimonies would not stand up in court under the scrutiny of honest and objective minds. Therefore, the leaders faced a problem, for they had to formulate a charge that would convince Pilate and the Roman authorities that Jesus should die.
2. The witnesses could not agree. By law two witnesses had to agree for a formal charge to be made and a conviction secured. But note, two witnesses who agreed could not be found, despite "many" who came forward.
3. Finally, two witnesses did come forward with a charge that seemed to be strong enough to stand up and convince the Roman authorites. However, note three simple facts (see note—Mt.26:60-61 for detailed discussion).
   a. The charge against Jesus was still said to be false. It came from "false witness against him."
   b. The two witnesses distorted Jesus' words. Jesus had said, "Destroy *ye* this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19). Jesus had actually said the Jews were to be the destroyers; but the false witnesses said, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple." They distorted His words, making Him the destroyer.

      The false witnesses also misunderstood Jesus' words. Jesus was referring to His body—to the temple of His body and to the resurrection of His body. The Jews apparently thought He meant He would destroy and rebuild the Jerusalem temple in three days. It was this charge—the charge of being a revolutionary—that the religionists believed they could use to convince the Romans to execute Jesus.
   c. Mark reemphasizes that this charge was false.

Thought 1. Many today have closed minds; they reject Christ. Some even oppose Him and actively struggle to gather evidence against Him. Why? Primarily for the same reason the religionists of Christ's day rejected Him. They desire...

- to live as they wish.
- to build their image and live as they desire.
- to gain personal recognition, position, security, and wealth as they want.

> **"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).**
>
> **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jn.7:7).**
>
> **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you....But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (Jn.15:18, 25).**

Thought 2. The religionists did not understand, so they twisted and distorted the word of Christ. We abuse God's Word to our condemnation.

> **"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pt.3:15-16).**

4 (14:60-61) **Jesus Christ, Trial**: there was the calm Lord who stood silent before men, but assured before God. Note three facts.

1. The two witnesses who charged Jesus with being a revolutionary could not agree (Mk.14:59).
2. Jesus "held His peace." He was silent; He said nothing in defending Himself against the false charges.
3. The High Priest and court became disturbed and perhaps confused by Jesus' silence. They needed Him to begin speaking, hoping He would add evidence to the charge and thereby incriminate Himself. The High Priest turned, browbeating and attempting to pressure Jesus: "Answeredst nothing...?"

Thought 1. The example of Jesus under attack was forceful.

1) There was the example of *patience*. He had to stand there patiently while *false* charge after *false* charge was levelled against Him.
2) He had to *endure* it all.
3) He had to *control* Himself, his emotions and tongue, and not retaliate.

Thought 2. How difficult it is to remain silent and to control the tongue! Especially when the accusations are false!

> **"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Pt.3:10).**
>
> **"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Pr.13:3).**
>
> **"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles" (Pr.21:23).**

5 (14:62) **Jesus Christ, Claim—Trial**: there was the strong Lord—He claimed to be the Messiah, the actual Son of the Blessed (God). By "blessed" (eulogetos) is meant God. The Jews, when mentioning God's name, would usually say, "God, blessed for ever." The word "blessed" came to be a title for God. Note the strong assertion of Jesus' answer to the court.

1. Jesus' answer was a strong claim. He pulled no punches, left no room for doubt. He used the striking words of deity: "I am" (ego eimi). (See notes—Jn.6:20-21; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18 for discussion.)
2. He called Himself "the Son of Man" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20 for discussion).
3. He gave two proofs of His claim: His resurrection and exaltation and His second coming. Both would prove His person and authority. Note that the believer hopes in the resurrection and exaltation and in the second coming of Christ, but the emphasis of Jesus to these unbelievers was judgment.

⇒ His resurrection declared Him to be the Son of God with power.

> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**

⇒ His exaltation declares His position and authority to rule and reign over all men (Ph.2:9-11).

> **"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:32-36).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).**

⇒ His return will declare His execution of justice and judgment (Mt.24:30; Jn.5:28).

> **"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt.24:30).**

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (Jn.5:28-30).

6 (14:63-65) **Man, Character of**: there was the frenzied mob of religionists—they got their satisfaction, the death of their disturber. Note two things.

1. The true character of the High Priest. The enmity and the bitter hatred of Caiaphas reached its peak when Jesus made the strong claim to be the Son of God. The High Priest ripped his clothes, which was a custom when God's name was disgraced (2 Ki.18:37; 19:1; cp. Is.36:22; 37:1; Acts 14:14), and he shouted out for the verdict. The whole scene was a travesty, a terrible abuse of justice. Caiaphas pictured for us the character of every man who chooses this world and its institutional religion over Jesus.

Thought 1. Two things got the best of Caiaphas:
⇒ He wished to have this world with its rewards of position and wealth, recognition and pleasure.
⇒ He wished to have a religion of self-image instead of God's image.
Too often, the same two things get the best of us.

2. The true character of men.
   a. There was the ridicule of Jesus' claim and the heaping of sarcasm upon Him. This is seen in the religionists' shout to Him, "Prophesy," and in their calling Him "*thou* Christ" (Mt.26:68).
   b. There was bitter behavior and hatred. Spitting in the face was a sign of monstrous disrespect. Beating with the fists and palms (the Greek says rods) was an outburst of the inner bitterness within the hearts of the religionists against Jesus.

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Is.50:6; cp. Is.52:14).
"They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (Mic.5:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:65) **Jesus Christ—Spit Upon**: a sign of utter contempt (cp. Num.12:14; Dt.25:9; Is.50:6).

	J. Peter's Denial: A Lesson in Failure, 14:66-72 (Mt.26:69-72; Lk.22:54 62; Jn.18:15-18, 25-27)	again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.	**crowd—caused an emphatic denial** a. Charged before crowd b. An outright denial
1 The cause of failure: Peter was "beneath in the palace"	66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:	70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.	**4 Failure 3: Fearing a crowd—caused a cursing denial** a. A crowd charged Peter
2 Failure 1: Fearing an individual—caused pretension a. A maid charged Peter with being a disciple b. Peter claimed ignorance & denied association: A denial of pretension	67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.	71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.	b. A denial of cursing & swearing
c. The cock crowed	68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.	72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.	c. The cock crowed **5 The answer to failure: Repentance** a. Peter remembered
3 Failure 2: Fearing a	69 And a maid saw him		b. Peter wept in repentance

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

J. Peter's Denial: A Lesson in Failure, 14:66-72

(14:66-72) **Introduction**: failing the Lord is very, very serious. Peter failed Jesus in several areas, and his failure reached its climax in an actual denial of the Lord. But he was forgiven, and there is forgiveness for any believer who fails.

1. The cause of failure: Peter was "beneath in the palace" (v.66).
2. Failure 1: fearing an individual—caused pretension (v.67-68).
3. Failure 2: fearing a crowd—caused an emphatic denial (v.69-70).
4. Failure 3: fearing a crowd—caused a cursing denial (v.70-72).
5. The answer to failure: repentance (v.72).

1 (14:66) **Apostasy—Desertion—Sin, Cause**: the cause of failure is simply stated: "Peter was beneath in the palace." He was where he should not have been. He was with the crowd of rejecters, sitting with them and warming himself by their fire. As the case would be in any similar situation, the crowd was discussing the trial and mocking, joking, and cursing Jesus because of His claims. Peter should have been off alone or else with the other disciples in prayer, seeking an answer to their confusion.

Peter's failure seems to have been due to at least four things.

1. His misunderstanding of God's Word. In particular he misunderstood the teaching concerning the Kingdom of God. He thought of the Kingdom of God in physical and material terms only. He failed to see the spiritual Kingdom of God, that is...
   - the death and resurrection of Christ.
   - the Lord's indwelling power, His rule and reign within the human heart.
   - the remaking of a new heavens and earth, which he was later to understand in the clearest of terms (2 Pt.3:10).
2. His confusion. Peter had drawn his sword and attacked. He had been ready to act in the flesh, to fight to establish the Lord's kingdom (Mk.14:47; Jn.18:10), but Jesus had rebuked him and stopped him. In addition, Jesus had not blasted His enemies nor made His move; but rather, He had allowed them to take Him, voluntarily surrendering to their abuse. Peter could not understand. He was confused. His mind was reeling and searching for answers.
3. His fear. Peter had created a bad situation for himself. He had attacked the arresting party (Mk.14:47; Jn.18:10). He had failed to wait upon the Lord's directive, acting in the arm of the flesh and doing what he thought best. Therefore, to some degree he was now a hunted man. In the scuffle, he had forsaken the Lord and fled for his life. But, as mentioned before, Peter's great love for Jesus and his great hope that Jesus might yet make His move had stopped Peter and turned him around. He followed Jesus, although from a safe distance (see note—Mk.14:54). Throughout the whole incident, his heart had probably been palpitating with fear—fear of being recognized, arrested, and killed.
4. His weak faith. Peter had failed to trust Jesus in the midst of confusing and threatening *circumstances*. Jesus was being tried and condemned to die before Peter's eyes, yet Jesus had said He would arise. Peter had chosen to interpret Jesus' words symbolically, probably thinking Jesus was referring to raising up the kingdom after a struggle with the Romans (symbolically viewed as death, the death of enemies or fallen governments). The point is, Peter never interpreted the Lord's words literally; therefore, his faith was based upon error. This led to weak faith and being unprepared for the events facing him.

Thought 1. One thing will always cause great temptation: being with a crowd of rejecters, associating with and moving among the worldly.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Th.3:6).**

Thought 2. Four things will cause failure:

⇒ misunderstanding God's Word
⇒ being confused
⇒ fear
⇒ weak faith (due to misinterpreting the Lord's words)

2 (14:67-68) **Apostasy—Denial—Fear—Pretension**: the first failure is that of fearing an individual, which caused pretension. Fearing an individual often makes a person pretend. Note what happened. A maid simply walked up to Peter and said that he had also been with Jesus of Nazareth. There seems to be no threat or danger in this statement to Peter. At worst, it seems that it would have led only to some bantering and ridicule. The rejecters standing around were naturally bantering back and forth about Jesus and His claims. In their minds and talk, He was but a fool. Peter had an opportunity, perhaps, to be a witness for Jesus, humbly sharing about the love and enormous care of Jesus for people. Perhaps he could have helped to turn some who were standing there to Jesus or at least stopped some of the mob from ridiculing. We must always remember that John was somewhere in the palace as well, and as far as we know, he was maintaining his composure and testimony for Jesus.

Peter cracked under his fear. He denied Jesus, pretending he knew nothing about Him nor had anything to do with Him. He just claimed ignorance of the whole matter.

Thought 1. The fear of ridicule and embarrassment often causes a person to deny Jesus. Sometimes the denial is...

- by voice
- by act (going along with the person or crowd)
- by silence

Thought 2. When out in the world, too many pretend not to know Jesus. They profess Jesus on Sundays and among believers yet never say a word about Him during the week. Or, they live no differently from the world. No one ever knows they are professing believers. Such pretension is denial.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Prov.29:25).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

3 (14:69-70) **Apostasy—Denial—Fear**: the second failure is that of fearing a crowd. Fearing a crowd sometimes causes outright denial. It did with Peter. This time a maid recognized him and said to the crowd standing around, "This is one of them." The pressure upon Peter was stronger because a crowd was present. He denied it more emphatically this time. Matthew says "he denied with an oath" (Mt.26:72). Note four things.

1. Peter actually denied Jesus before men, and he denied Him using an oath. Instead of denying Jesus, he should have been upstairs in the courtroom standing by the Lord's side and testifying for Him.
2. Peter was falling (progressing) more and more into sin.
   ⇒ He was denying Jesus because he was not by His side; instead he was standing among the Lord's rejecters.
   ⇒ He was standing among the Lord's rejecters because he had fled the Lord.
   ⇒ He had fled the Lord because he had acted in the flesh.
   ⇒ He had acted in the flesh because he had not accepted the Lord's words. The Lord had told Peter and the others exactly what was to happen, yet Peter had refused to open his mind to the truth. Therefore, he was utterly confused and caught off guard.
3. Peter was fearing persecution. This was the first time he was standing face to face with life-threatening persecution. And he was failing to stand. He was failing despite the fact that Jesus had told him time and again that he must suffer for God.
4. Peter followed Jesus ever so readily when Jesus was popular and had a large following. But he could not stand the heat when Jesus was being opposed and rejected by most.

> **"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).**

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).

"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).

4 (14:70-72) **Fear—Denial**: the third failure is also that of fearing the crowd. Fearing a crowd will sometimes cause a cursing and swearing denial of Jesus. Note several things (see notes—Mt.26:73-74; 5:33-37).

1. It was the crowd that approached and confronted Peter this time. The pressure was much greater. It was his Galilaean speech that gave him away, and the crowd knew that Jesus and His disciples were from Galilee. Jesus had been arrested secretly, and few knew about it. They just figured no Galilaean would be out this time of night unless he was a follower of Jesus.
2. Peter's chest was bound to be pounding with emotion and fear. His thoughts were flying, trying to figure out how to escape. His emotions burst forth in a forceful cursing and swearing denial: "I know not this man." Note Peter called his Lord "this man," which was all He was to those standing around. (To all rejecters Jesus is no more than "this man.")
3. Immediately upon his denial the cock crew, and Peter heard it.

Thought 1. A worldly crowd can and will put undue pressure upon a believer. A believer does not belong in the midst of a worldly crowd, hanging around worldly places.

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).

5 (14:72) **Apostasy—Repentance**: the answer to failure is repentance. As soon as Peter heard the cock crow, he called to mind the words of the Lord; and "he thought thereon, [and] he wept." The word "thought" (epibalon) means to throw upon. Peter "threw his thought upon" what Jesus had said: that he, Peter, would deny Jesus three times. Peter's mind was fastened upon what Jesus had told him. His mind would not let Jesus' words go. Quickly, emotion and sorrow began to arise in his chest, and he felt the tears begin to come. He had failed his Lord and failed Him so miserably. Peter loved the Lord, and somehow he knew that he was not where he belonged. He might not understand what was happening to the Lord and the course the Lord had taken, but he should have been by His side all the time testifying for Him. As fast as he could, without attracting attention, he made his way out of the courtyard; and as soon as he reached the outside, he "burst into tears" (eklaie). The Greek is descriptive in illustrating Peter's repentance through godly sorrow and weeping. The idea is that Peter was utterly heartbroken and added weeping upon weeping. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30 for application.)

⇒ He wept, and the more he thought about the situation, the more he wept.
⇒ He fell to the ground and wept, being heartbroken.
⇒ He wept, being grieved with hurt and pain that was unbearable.
⇒ He wept and wept and continued to weep.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land" (Ezra 10:11).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

	CHAPTER 15 **K. Jesus' Trial Before Pilate: The Picture of a Morally Weak Man,** *DSI* **15:1-15** (Mt.27:1-2, 11-25; Lk. 23:1-25; Jn.18:28-40)	with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.	A murderer & an insurrectionist
		8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.	c. The frenzied mob
1 The ruling body met to finalize their charge a. They bound Jesus b. They took Jesus to Pilate	And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.	9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?	d. The wish of Pilate: To release Jesus
		10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.	e. The reason: Pilate knew Jesus was innocent
2 He was indecisive & rejected strong evidence a. Jesus' strong claim: He is King b. Jesus' strong control: Silence	2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.	11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.	**4 He ignored the influence of evil men upon people**
c. Jesus' strong enduring purpose: Under repeated questioning	3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.	12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?	**5 He was too weak to act justly & responsibly** a. His first attempt at justice: Presented Jesus as King of the Jews
d. Jesus' impact: Pilate marvelled, but was still indecisive	4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.	13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.	b. His second attempt at justice: Declared Jesus to be innocent
3 He attempted compromise a. The custom of Rome to pacify the Jews	5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.	14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.	
b. The prisoner chosen:	6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.	15 And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.	**6 He gave in to worldly pressure**
	7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

K. Jesus' Trial Before Pilate: The Picture of a Morally Weak Man, 15:1-15

(15:1-15) **Introduction**: Pilate was a morally weak man, very weak. His treatment of Jesus clearly demonstrated some of the weaknesses of the morally weak—weaknesses that every man needs to evaluate.

1. The ruling body met to finalize their charges (v.1).
2. He was indecisive and rejected strong evidence (v.2-5).
3. He attempted compromise (v.6-10).
4. He ignored the influence of evil men (v.11).
5. He was too weak to act justly and responsibly (v.12-14).
6. He gave in to worldly pressure (v.15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(15:1-15) **Pilate**: Pilate was the procurator of Judea. He was directly responsible to the Roman Emporer for the administrative and financial management of the country. A man had to work himself up through the political and military ranks to become a procurator. Pilate was, therefore, an able man, experienced in the affairs of politics and government as well as the military. He held office for ten years, which shows that he was deeply trusted by the Roman government. However, the Jews despised Pilate; and Pilate despised the Jews, in particular their intense practice of religion. When Pilate became procurator of Judea, he did two things that aroused the people's bitter hatred against him forever. First, on his state visits to Jerusalem, he rode into the city with the Roman standard, an eagle sitting atop a pole. All previous governors had removed the standard because of the Jews' opposition to idols. Second, Pilate launched the construction of a new water supply for Jerusalem. To finance the project, he took the money out of the temple treasury. The Jews never forgot or forgave this act. They bitterly opposed Pilate all through his reign, and he treated them with equal contempt. On several occasions Jewish leaders threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emperor. This disturbed Pilate tremendously, causing him to become even more bitter toward the Jews.

1 (15:1) **Jesus Christ, Trials—Religionists—Sanhedrin**: the ruling body of the Jews (the Sanhedrin) met to finalize its charges against Jesus. The charges had to be strong enough to convince the Romans. What happened was probably

this. The false witnesses had been secured the evening before (cp. Mk.14:53-65). They had probably met until the wee hours of the morning and taken a break for a little rest and breakfast. They were now returning to formulate in writing the charges against Jesus. The charges had to be so strong that the Romans would be forced to condemn Him as a revolutionary. As soon as the charges were finalized, they bound Christ and led Him to Pilate.

Thought 1. Note the picture of sacrifice. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were to be bound with cords (Ps.118:27). Christ was "bound...and carried away; and delivered" as the great Sacrifice for us (Heb.10:5-14).

2 (15:2-5) **Indecisive**: the morally weak man was indecisive and rejected Jesus despite strong evidence.

1. The major charge and Jesus' critical answer. The major charge against Jesus was that He claimed to be the King of the Jews. Pilate asked Jesus about the charge. Note two things.
   a. Jesus' meek and humble appearance. The Greek form of Pilate's question points to Jesus' meekness and humility. The question was emphatic: "Thou! Art thou the King of the Jews?"...the One who stands here...
      - with no revolutionary fire in your eyes or voice.
      - with such a humble and meek aire and look.
      - with no friends or followers supporting you.
      - with such poor clothing, the garb of a peasant.
      - How could *you* be a king?

   b. Jesus' strong claim: "Thou sayest it" (su legeis). The meaning is "[unmistakably] what thou sayest is true." Jesus strongly claimed to be King. But it must always be noted: Jesus went on to explain that He was not a threat to Caesar nor to any other civil government. He was the King of man's spirit and of heaven, not of this earth (Jn.18:36-37). He wished to reign in men's hearts and lives, in the realm of the spiritual and eternal, not in the realm of the physical and temporal.

2. The barrage of charges and Jesus' enduring purpose. The leaders accused Him of many things, "but He answered nothing." He was stone silent before His accusers. Why would Jesus not defend Himself, not try to escape death? His purpose was to surrender to the *sinful behavior* of men. The *sinful behavior* to which He submitted was...
   - the very depth of sin itself.
   - the ultimate demonstration of sin.
   - the greatest sin that could be committed.

The sin to which Jesus subjected Himself was the rejection and killing of the Son of God. Standing before His accusers, He said nothing, enduring their awful indignities. He endured because He was purposed to die for the sins of men.

Thought 1. Indecision is one of the gross mistakes of men, a mistake that dooms many. There is no excuse for indecision; the evidence that Jesus is the Savior of the world is clearly seen to an open and honest heart.

> **"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).**
>
> **"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10:21).**
>
> **"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).**
>
> **"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him" (1 Ki.18:21).**

3 (15:6-10) **Compromise—Man, Morally Weak**: the morally weak man attempted compromise. The scene was set. Jesus had been accused and condemned to die by the Jewish court (Sanhedrin). He was delivered to the Gentile authority, Pilate, who had to pass the final sentence and actually carry out the execution. However, Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent and wished to release Him. But how? He must pacify and maintain fairly good relations with the Jewish authorities. It was the only way he could maintain peace and keep them from reporting him to Rome, threatening his own position (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Pilate*—Mk.15:1-15).

Pilate thought of a way to escape his predicament. It was his custom to release a prisoner, whomever the Jews wished, at every Passover. This was one way he used to gain good will with the Jews. He had a notorious criminal in prison at that very moment, Barabbas, who was a robber, an insurrectionist, and a murderer (Jn.18:40). Pilate felt sure that by pitting Barabbas against Jesus, the people would choose Jesus, the One who had ministered and helped so many of them. How wrong the man of compromise was. The world will always cry out against Jesus to get rid of Him.

Note the moral weakness of Pilate. He knew Jesus was innocent. He knew the Jews sought to kill Jesus because they envied Him. Jesus should have been released immediately, but Pilate attempted a compromise instead of standing up for the truth.

Thought 1. Note a crucial point: when the truth is known, it should be proclaimed and not compromised. Compromise results in three tragedies.

1) Compromise weakens character and testimony.
2) Compromise means that the truth is not being done or lived. A person is agreeing to do something less than what he should be doing.
3) Compromise weakens principle, position, and life.

Thought 2. God accepts no compromise concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. A man either stands for Him or against Him. There is no neutral ground. Jesus is the innocent, sinless Son of God in whom all men are to place their trust and lives.

> **"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).**

"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:23-24).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:7-10).

4 (15:11) **Evil, Ignoring**: the morally weak man ignored the influence of evil men. What happened now was tragic. The religionists moved out among the crowd, arousing and inflamming them to clamor for Barabbas' release. Note that Pilate did nothing. He just sat still and said nothing, ignoring the reality of evil influence.

Thought 1. Men who are set on evil will try to influence others in order to get their way.

Thought 2. The influence of wicked men upon other people cannot be ignored. Evil men do influence others. To ignore the fact is to allow the infiltration and growth of more and more evil.

"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ro.2:24).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father....These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you" (1 Jn.2:22-23, 26).

5 (15:12-14) **Man, Weakness of**: the morally weak man was too weak to act justly and responsibly. Pilate actually made two attempts to get Jesus released.

1. He presented Jesus to the people as their King, the One whom they call the King of the Jews. He was *appealing* to the hope they had for a deliverer. Many had, after all, called Jesus their King, the One for whom they had been looking. He had ministered to and cared for so many. He had declared His kingdom to be concerned only with the spiritual (Jn.18:36-37). He was no threat to Caesar. Why should the people condemn One who had shown so much care and interest in the needs of people? But the people cried out for Jesus' death. Pilate, surprised, made another attempt to free Jesus.
2. Pilate declared Jesus to be innocent. He had done no evil and Pilate knew it. He tried to persuade the crowd to think about the fact. He cried out loudly, "Why, what evil hath he done?" But it was all to no avail. They cried out, inflamed even more, "Crucify Him."

The point to note is the weakness of Pilate. He was a morally weak man.

⇒ He was not strong enough to do what he knew was right.
⇒ He lacked the moral strength to stand up for Christ.
⇒ He was too weak to declare the truth.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Ki.18:21).

6 (15:15) **Man, Weakness of—Worldliness**: the morally weak man gave in to worldly pressure.

1. Pilate was more willing to satisfy and please the people than to do what was right. Fear, of course, lay behind Pilate's action—the fear...
   - of losing the people's favor.
   - of causing problems for himself.
   - of losing his position and security (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Pilate*—Mk.15:1-15).
2. He scourged Jesus (see note—Mt.27:26-38).
3. He released Barabbas and delivered Jesus to be crucified.

Note that Pilate had the authority and the duty to do what was right. But he failed. He was too weak...

- to stand for the truth.
- to declare the truth as the thing to do.
- to free himself from the evil influence of the world.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb.11:24-25).

L. Jesus' Cross: An Outline of Its Mockery and Events, 15:16-41
(Mt.27:26-56; Lk.23:26-49; Jn.19:16-37)

1 The abuse by Pilate's soldiers: A misunderstanding of Jesus' claim
a. They called others to join in
b. They ridiculed & mocked
c. They physically abused

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band.
17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,
18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!
19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him.

2 The rechanging of Jesus' clothes: His life was valued less than royal clothing

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

3 The man who bore Jesus' cross: A picture of conversion by picking up the cross

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

4 The place of death: A symbol of death—Jesus died just like all men

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

5 The refusal of drugs: A resolve to taste death at its bitterest

23 And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

6 The gambling for Jesus' clothes: An indifferent & insensitive spirit

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

7 The crucifixion: The summit of sin & love

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

8 The inscription on the cross: A misunderstood charge

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

9 The two thieves crucified with Jesus: A picture of His life—to the end He was numbered with sinners

27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.
28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with transgressors.

10 The mocking of the people: A misunderstanding of His salvation
a. The mockery of those passing by: Misunderstanding His resurrection
b. The mockery of religionists: Misunderstanding God's Messiahship
c. The mockery of two thieves: Misunderstanding His claim

29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,
30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.
31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.
32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

11 The frightening darkness: A symbol of separation & loneliness

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

12 The terrible cry of separation: A horrifying judgment

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabach thani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

13 The confused mob: A picture of the world's people
a. A man of pity: Offered Jesus a narcotic drink
b. A man of hardness: Ridiculed Jesus

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.
36 And one ran and filled a spunge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

14 The loud cry of death: A picture of glorious triumph

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

15 The rent veil of the temple: A symbol of open access into God's very presence

38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

16 The centurion's confession: A picture of the great confession to be made by many

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

17 The women at the cross: A proof that Jesus lived and served well

40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;
41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

L. Jesus' Cross: An Outline of Its Mockery and Events, 15:16-41

(15:16-41) **Introduction**: the death of Jesus on the cross is the most phenomenal event in history; in fact, it is the most crucial focal point of history. Eternal salvation was secured for man in the death of Jesus upon the cross. Because Jesus died, man can live forever in a perfect state of being. Therefore, the events of the cross are all-important. They hold lesson after lesson for the man who seeks the truth of God's Son.

1. The abuse by Pilate's soldiers: a misunderstanding of Jesus' claim (v.16-19).
2. The rechanging of Jesus' clothes: His life was valued less than royal clothing (v.20).
3. The man who bore Jesus' cross: a picture of conversion by picking up the cross (v.21).
4. The place of death: a symbol of death—Jesus died just like all men (v.22).
5. The refusal of drugs: a resolve to taste death at its bitterest (v.23).
6. The gambling for Jesus' clothes: an indifferent and insensitive spirit (v.24).
7. The crucifixion: the summit of sin and love (v.25).
8. The inscription on the cross: a misunderstood charge (v.26).
9. The two thieves crucified with Jesus: a picture of His life—to the end He was numbered with sinners (v.27-28).
10. The mocking of the people: a misunderstanding of His salvation (v.29-32).
11. The frightening darkness: a symbol of separation and loneliness (v.33).
12. The terrible cry of separation: a horrifying judgment (v.34).
13. The confused mob: a picture of the world's people (v.35-36).
14. The loud cry of death: a picture of glorious triumph (v.37).
15. The rent veil of the temple: a symbol of open access into God's very presence (v.38).
16. The centurion's confession: a picture of the great confession to be made by many (v.39).
17. The women at the cross: a proof that Jesus lived and served well (v.40-41).

1 (15:16-19) **Jesus Christ, Death—Tortured**: the first event was the abuse by Pilate's soldiers—they misunderstood the claim of Jesus. Jesus had explained to Pilate that His kingdom was a spiritual kingdom, but Pilate had not understood what He meant (Jn.18:36-37). The soldiers, of course, knew little if anything about the conversation between Jesus and Pilate. But they had heard about the man Jesus, a carpenter from Nazareth who claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Now Jesus of Nazareth stood before them, guilty of insurrection and of claiming to be the King of the Jews. This, of course, was a threat to their own rule and power. In their eyes, seeing Jesus standing there as a captive, beaten and bloody, He was anything but a King. He was a man condemned as a threat to their power as soldiers and to their government which they had sworn to uphold. To them, He was worthy of death. Two things caused the soldiers to torture Jesus so severely...

- His claim to be the Messiah and the Son of God
- His being condemned as an insurrectionist

Note what the soldiers did.

1. They called all the other soldiers to join in on the "fun" (torture). They were in the Praetorium, which was the main quarters of the soldiers. It was a large court within the palace itself. There were between two and six hundred soldiers taunting and torturing Jesus (see note, pt.2—Mt.27:26-38).
2. They ridiculed and mocked His claim. They stripped Him and took an old, faded, worn-out soldier's cloak, purple in color, and threw it upon His bleeding body. The cloak was a mocking symbol of the royal cloak worn by kings. Then, several soldiers went outside and wove a crown from a thorn bush. Returning, they thrust the crown of thorns upon His head and brow. And they mocked His claim to be the King of the Jews.
3. They abused Him physically. They took the reed, which they had given to Him as a sceptre (Mt.27:29), and beat the crown of thorns down upon His head. They also spat upon Him and continued their ridicule.

> **Thought 1**. What the soldiers did in mocking Jesus demonstrates perfectly the *nature* of the Lord's Kingship. Earthly royalty is symbolized by a royal robe, gold crown, sceptre, and bowing of the knee—all standing for the pomp and power of earthly royalty. Christ could not accept such, not at His first coming.
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> The worn, faded robe, the crown of thorns, the reed sceptre, the mocking—all show that the nature of Christ's Kingship is love, *sacrificial love*.
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> > **"[Christ] being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:6-8).**

2 (15:20) **Jesus Christ, Death—Clothes**: the second event was the rechanging of Jesus' clothes—His life was valued less than royal clothing. This verse is both interesting and revealing. It shows the depth of human depravity. The soldiers would save a worn-out, faded robe, yet the life of an innocent person (even more, the very Son of God) would be destroyed. The cloak was no good; it was a throw-away. They never would have put a *good* cloak upon such a beaten, bloody mass of flesh. The blood and the continued torture would have ruined a good cloak.

The soldiers, of course, did not want a criminal's wearing a soldier's cloak through the streets, even if it were a throw-away. So they stripped the cloak from Him. The dried blood had naturally caused the robe to stick to the Lord's back; therefore, the wounds were reopened and bled again.

The point is twofold.

1. The cloak and what it stood for were valued and honored more than the life of Jesus, more than the very One who had come to reveal God's love and salvation to man. What men need is not to value things more highly than Jesus but to value Jesus more highly than all else combined.

"I counsel thee to buy of me...white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18; cp. Eph.4:23-24).

"These are they which...have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev.7:14).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

2. The soldier's robe had been only a mockery of kingly authority, but it symbolized the world's attitude toward giving homage to God's Son. No man determines the authority of God's Son. He possesses authority because He is God's Son, not because man gives Him authority. God has given Him all authority and rule because He bore the sufferings and death of the cross for man.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:22-23).

3 (15:21) **Jesus Christ, Death—Simon of Cyrene**: the third event was the man who bore Jesus' cross—a picture of conversion by picking up Jesus' cross. Note several things.

1. There is God's plan or providence. Nothing happens by chance, not to the Christian believer. God oversees the life of His people. Thus, Simon's being pressed into carrying the cross for Jesus was in the plan of God.
2. Simon was standing along the roadway watching the armed procession make its way through the streets. Apparently, there was some expression of concern and sympathy for Jesus, something within his heart that was touched and reached out to Jesus. God knew this, and directed the soldiers to enlist his help in carrying the Lord's cross.
3. Simon was "the father of Alexander and Rufus." The comment by Mark is interesting. Evidently they were known believers at the time of Mark's writing (cp. Acts 13:1; Ro.16:13). The indication is that Simon, or at least his two sons, were eventually converted.

Thought 1. The symbol and application are clear. The man who takes up the cross and dies to self will be converted and become a true follower of Christ.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

4 (15:22) **Jesus Christ, Death—Golgotha**: the fourth event was the place of death—a symbol of death. Jesus died just like all other men. Golgotha was a hill outside Jerusalem. It was known as a place of death, a place where executions took place. The very word "Golgotha" means the place of a skull. It stirred the thoughts of death and corruption. The very place where Jesus was crucified symbolized death itself. Every act seemed to point to His dying for the deliverance of man. Here upon Golgotha was the picture and thought of death. And here upon Golgotha, He was to die to deliver all men from the bondage of death.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

5 (15:23) **Jesus Christ, Death—Offered Drugs**: the fifth event was the refusal of drugs—a resolve to taste death at its bitterest. The drink was strong and intoxicating, deadening the senses to some degree. It was given to crucifixion victims as a narcotic to somewhat ease the pain.

Jesus was to die for man. God's will was not to be done in a drunken stupor, in a drugged, insensitive, and unthoughtful state. He was to taste death for man, being fully conscious of doing God's will, being as mentally alert as possible.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God....by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:6-7, 10).

6 (15:24) **Jesus Christ, Death—Clothes, Gambled for**: the sixth event was the gambling for Jesus' clothes—an indifferent and insensitive spirit. Note two facts.

1. Mary, Jesus' mother, was standing by the cross; yet the soldiers showed no compassion whatsoever in sharing His belongings with her. (Cp. Ps.22:18.)

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).

2. Jesus was stripped by the soldiers, stripped of His mortal clothes. He allowed all His mortality to be stripped so that He might abolish death and bring life and immortality to light.

> **"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).**

7 (15:25) **Jesus Christ, Death—Crucifixion**: the seventh event was the crucifixion—the summit of sin and love. Note two things.

1. Jesus was crucified at 9 a.m. (the third hour), and darkness swept the land from 12 noon until 3 p.m. (the sixth to the ninth hour, v.33-34) (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.6:48; cp. Mt.27:45-46; Mk.15:33-34; Lk.23:44).
2. Man demonstrated the height of depravity by rejecting and putting God's Son to death. God demonstrated the height of love by not sparing His Son, but by allowing Him to die for man's sins.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
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> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**

8 (15:26) **Jesus Christ, Death—Inscription**: the eighth event was the inscription on the cross—a misunderstood charge. The sign placed above His head, "The King of the Jews," was placed there by Pilate. Pilate intended to mock the Jewish authorities and to reproach Jesus' claim. However, God overruled and used the title to proclaim the truth of Jesus' Lordship to the whole world (Lk.23:38). The very charges against Jesus proclaimed His deity and honor.

> **"He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).**
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> **"Our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim.6:14-16).**

9 (15:27-28) **Jesus Christ, Death—Two Thieves**: the ninth event was that of the two thieves' being crucified with Jesus—a picture of His life; to the end He was numbered with sinners.

> **"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).**
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> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).**
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> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

10 (15:29-32) **Jesus Christ, Death—Mockery**: the tenth event was the mocking of the people—a misunderstanding of Jesus' salvation.

1. There was the mockery of the mob. They misunderstood His resurrection. As people travelled in and out of the city, they slowed down, and some stopped to see what was going on. When they stopped, they saw the charge above the cross that Jesus claimed to be "The King of the Jews." They were told about His claim of enormous power—power to destroy and rebuild the temple in three days. Such was ridiculous in their minds. Therefore, they joined in the mocking and verbal abuse.

> **"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Is.53:7).**

2. There was the mockery of the religionists. They misunderstood God's Messiahship.

> **"...Christ [Messiah] Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
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> **"Christ [Messiah] Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).**

3. There was the mockery of the two thieves. They misunderstood His claim. The thieves heard the mob's mockery about Jesus' claiming to be the Messiah. A man's making such a claim while dying seemed to be insane and to merit abuse. Thus, they joined the mockers.

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not....Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:23-24).

11 (15:33) **Jesus Christ, Death—Darkness**: the eleventh event was the frightening darkness—a symbol of separation and loneliness. The darkness told man something (see note—Mt.27:45 for detailed discussion).

1. Man was separated from the light.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn.3:19-20).

2. Man stood all alone. He could not see in the dark, not well. He was, so to speak, standing in the world all alone, responsible for his own behavior. And because of what he has done, man must face God someday all alone to give an account for his behavior.

"And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

12 (15:34) **Jesus Christ, Death—Separation from God**: the twelveth event was the terrible cry of separation—a horrifying judgment. What did Jesus mean when He cried out that God had forsaken Him?

1. Jesus did not mean the suffering and ill treatment of the cross, the suffering at the hands of men which He was going through. All through His ministry He knew suffering and foretold of suffering for His followers, even martyrdom.
2. Scripture tells us what Jesus meant (see note—Mt.27:46-49 for detailed discussion).
   a. He was being made sin for us.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

   b. He was bearing our sins as the sacrificial Lamb of God.

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God....So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:13-14, 28).

   c. He was suffering for sins, the just for the unjust.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

   d. He was bearing the curse of the law.

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal.3:13).

Note a critical point: the only thing that could have caused God to separate Himself from Christ was sin (Is.59:2; Ro.5:12. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27.) Sin is the only thing that causes God to withdraw from anyone. Since Christ was perfect and sinless, it was not His own sin that caused God to forsake Him—it was our sin (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 7:26; 1 Pt.1:10; 2:22).

13 (15:35-36) **Jesus Christ, Death—World, Confused**: the thirteenth event was the confused mob—a picture of the world's people.

1. There was the picture of hardness. When Jesus called out to God, some thought He was calling out to Elijah. They mockingly wanted to see what would happen, ridiculing the fact that Jesus would call upon a prophet of old to save Him.
2. There was the picture of pity. Jesus had said, "I thirst" (Jn.19:28-29). One man sensed compassion for the Lord and offered to wet His lips. But the other men standing around—those with hard hearts—stopped Him.

Jesus was seen hanging and suffering on the cross, expressing the utmost pity for man. Yet, when one man tried to show compassion for Christ, the man was stopped.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

14 (15:37) **Jesus Christ, Death—Finished**: the fourteenth event was the loud cry of death—a picture of glorious triumph. What Jesus cried out was one word in the Greek, *Tetelestai*, "It is finished" (Jn.19:30). It is a cry of purpose, a shout of triumph. He was dying for a specific purpose and that purpose was now fulfilled (see note—Mt.27:50 for detailed discussion).

> **"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture....I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep....Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:9, 11, 15, 17-18).**

15 (15:38) **Jesus Christ, Death—Temple, Veil Torn**: the fifteenth event was the rent veil of the temple—a symbol of open access into God's very presence. Note four facts.

1. The veil (curtain) that was torn was the inner veil (katapetasma), the curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. There was another veil, an outer curtain (kalumma), which separated the Holy Place from the outer court of the temple.

The Holy of Holies was the most sacred part of the temple, the place where the very presence of God was symbolized as dwelling in a very special way. It was closed *forever* to everyone except the High Priest. But even he could enter the Holy of Holies only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Ex.26:33).

2. At the very hour that Jesus died, the High Priest was rolling back the outer curtain in order to expose the Holy Place to the people, to those who had gathered to worship in the surrounding court. As he rolled back the outer curtain, exposing the Holy Place for worship, both he and the worshippers stood in amazement. They saw the inner veil rent from the top to the bottom. There they stood, seeing and experiencing for the very first time the Holy of Holies, the very special presence of God Himself.
3. The veil was torn from top to bottom. This symbolizes that it was torn by an act of God Himself. It symbolized God's giving direct access into His presence (Heb.6:19; 9:3-12, 24; 10:19-23). Now through the body of Christ, any man can enter the presence of God anytime, anyplace.

> **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).**

4. The torn veil symbolized that all men could now draw near God by the blood of Christ.

> **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).**

16 (15:39) **Jesus Christ, Death—Centurion, Confession of**: the sixteenth event was the centurion's confession—a picture of the great confession to be made by many.

1. The centurion was bound to be a thoughtful and honest man. He was in charge of the crucifixion. He was responsible for overseeing all that took place. As the events unfolded upon the cross, he was striken more and more with the claim of Jesus and the way in which the events were happening. When Jesus shouted out that His purpose was finished, that His death was the climax of His purpose upon earth, the centurion was convinced. The very fact that Jesus' death was purposeful sealed his conviction. God quickened the soldier's heart to the glorious truth: "Truly this man was the Son of God."
2. The centurion was a Gentile. He symbolized all who were to confess Jesus in coming generations.

> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**

17 (15:40-41) **Jesus Christ, Death—Women at Cross**: the seventeenth event is the women at the cross—a proof that Jesus lived and served well. Note that the women were at the cross despite the danger. They stood off some distance away, but they were there nonetheless. They still loved and cared, no matter what. They symbolized that Christ's life was not in vain.

> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mk.8:35).**

	M. Jesus' Burial: A Discussion of Courage, 15:42-47 (Mt.27:57-66; Lk.23: 50-56; Jn.19:38-42)	calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. 45 And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.	**heart & to die for God's cause**
1 The need for haste because the Sabbath was approaching	42 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,	46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.	**4 Courage made an unashamed commitment to Jesus** a. Took Jesus down from the cross b. Cared for and buried the body of Jesus
2 Courage boldly requested to look after the body of Jesus	43 Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.	47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.	**5 Courage took a public stand by the cross**
3 Courage was willing to experience a broken	44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF GOD'S PASSION MINISTRY: JESUS' SUPREME SACRIFICE—REJECTED AND CRUCIFIED, 14:1-15:47

M. Jesus' Burial: A Discussion of Courage, 15:42-47

(15:42-47) **Introduction**: the burial of Jesus presents a strong picture of courage, the kind of courage that sets a dynamic example for all to follow.

1. The need for haste because the Sabbath was approaching (v.42).
2. Courage boldly requested to look after the body of Jesus (v.43).
3. Courage was willing to experience a broken heart and to die for God's cause (v.44-45).
4. Courage made an unashamed commitment to Jesus (v.46).
5. Courage took a public stand by the cross (v.47).

1 (15:42) **Sabbath—Jesus Christ, Burial**: the need for the haste was threefold.

1. The Sabbath was the day of worship for Jews. The day began at 6 p.m. (Jewish days began at 6 p.m. and ran until 6 p.m. the next night, that is from sundown to sundown.) Strict Jewish law said that once the Sabbath began, no work could be done including the burial of the dead.
2. Jesus died at 3 p.m. (cp. Mk.15:33-34, 37). He died on Friday, the day of preparation for the Sabbath. If any-thing was to be done with Jesus' body, it had to be done immediately and quickly. Only three hours remained for work.
3. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. The latter served as an example of criminal punishment to the public. If Jesus' body was not removed quickly within these three hours, the fate of His body was set. The Romans would not care what happened to Him, and no Jew could remove Him until the Sabbath was over.

2 (15:43) **Courage—Boldness—Discipleship, Secret**: courage boldly requested to look after the body of Jesus. This was a striking picture. A man, Joseph of Arimathaea, was stirred to step forth for Jesus. Several important facts are given by the gospel writers about him.

⇒ He was from Arimathaea.
⇒ He was now a permanent citizen of Jerusalem. He had bought a tomb in Jerusalem for his burial.
⇒ He was an honorable counsellor, that is, a member of the Sanhedrin (Mk.15:43).
⇒ He was a good and just man (Lk.23:50).
⇒ He waited for the Kingdom of God (Mk.15:43).
⇒ He was rich (Mt.27:57).
⇒ He did not vote for Jesus' death in the Sanhedrin (Lk.23:51).
⇒ He was a disciple, but a secret one, fearing his fellow Jews (Jn.19:38).

It was this last fact that revealed a marked change in Joseph. Up until the death of Jesus, he had been a secret disciple. He had probably had several meetings with Jesus when the Lord had visited Jerusalem; but now, after the Lord's death, he was no longer a secret disciple. He became bold in standing forth for Jesus.

Joseph actually marched in "boldly to Pilate" and requested permission to look after the body of Jesus. This was a tremendous act of courage, for Pilate was extremely upset and wearied with the whole situation. He had been forced to give in to the Jewish authorities who were always causing problems for him. He just despised them. He could react severely and cause some serious problems for Joseph, especially since Joseph was one of the leaders of the nation.

The thing that turned Joseph from being a secret disciple to a bold disciple seems to be the phenomenal events surrounding the cross (for example, the behavior and words of Jesus, the darkness, the earthquake, and the torn veil). When Joseph witnessed all this, his mind connected the claims of Jesus with the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, and Joseph saw the prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. He stepped forward, braved all risks, and took his stand for Jesus. A remarkable courage! A courage stirred by the death of Jesus.

Thought 1. The primary thing that stirs courage in the believer is the cross. Seeing the cross and what the cross really means will stir a secret disciple to courageously step forward for Christ.

Thought 2. Joseph courageously asked to take care of the body of Jesus. Today the body of Jesus is the church (Eph.1:22). We are to boldly step forward and take care of the church, in particular when there are special times of need. But note: special courage is often needed to step forward and show care. In those times a fresh look at the cross will be helpful. God can use the cross to stir us.

> **"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (2 Cor.2:2).**
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> **"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God" (2 Cor.4:14-15).**
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> **"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).**

3 (15:44-45) **Courage—Boldness**: courage was willing to experience a broken heart and to die for God's cause. Note: Pilate marvelled that Jesus was already dead. Victims usually lingered for days before dying from exposure to the sun and from thirst and loss of blood due to the scourging and nail wounds. In fact, the victims' legs were often broken to hasten death (Jn.19:31).

All indications point to Jesus' dying from a broken heart. The weight of sin and its inevitable separation and judgment from God were just too much to bear (see notes—Mk.15:34; Mt.27:46-49). The weight began in the Garden of Gethsemane and continued up to the point of His death upon the cross. (See note—Mk.14:33-34. See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38 for detailed discussion.)

The point is the courage of Jesus. He was willing to bear terrible sorrow and pain, so much suffering that it would actually burst His heart and bring death (see note, pt.2—Jn.19:31-37). Just imagine! He did it for us.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Thought 1. The heart of Jesus was broken over sin and the sinner. He loved the sinner (all of us). He was always seeking for, praying for, and weeping over the sinner. He ached so much for the sinner to personally know God, *ached* so much that He never knew what it was to be free from *suffering in heart* for the sinner. His hurt was so deep for the sinner that eventually it was the pain of sin and the sinner that crushed His heart.

Note the great lesson. It took enormous, unswerving courage to bear a broken heart for the sinner. What a lesson for us in courage—the courage to experience brokenness for the sinner, brokenness in prayer, weeping and seeking.

4 (15:46) **Courage—Boldness**: courage made an unashamed commitment to Jesus. Four acts show that Joseph made a courageous commitment to Jesus.

1. Joseph personally took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped the linen cloth around Him, and laid Jesus in his own sepulchre. Joseph personally took care of Jesus. Remember the disciples had fled and forsaken Jesus. But Joseph, witnessing the events of the cross, became thoroughly convinced of Jesus' Messiahship and made a firm commitment to Him. It was doubtful that Joseph understood all that was surrounding the cross and all that was about to take place in the resurrection. No one did. But he apparently believed and courageously acted on that belief.
2. Joseph risked the disfavor and discipline of the Sanhedrin. They were the ruling body who had instigated and condemned Jesus, and Joseph was a member of the council. There was no question that he would face some harsh reaction from some of his fellow Sanhedrin members and from some of his closest friends.
3. Joseph demonstrated a care, even an affection, for Jesus. He gave by giving his own tomb for the burial of Jesus. This act alone would leave no question about his stand for Jesus.
4. Joseph also eliminated himself from taking part in the great Passover Feast—and this was never done, even for the most serious reasons. Joseph, by handling Jesus' body, was considered defiled for seven days for having come in contact with a corpse. Once defiled, Jewish law forbade a person from taking part in Jewish ceremonies.

Simply stated, Joseph, who had been a secret disciple, now stepped forward making an unashamed commitment to Jesus. Everyone would know that he stepped forward to take care of Jesus' body. They would know that he had even given his own tomb for Jesus' burial. Joseph was risking his position, esteem, wealth, and even his life by making such a pronounced commitment to the affairs of Jesus.

Thought 1. The courage demonstrated by Joseph is desperately needed by all.

1) The courage to make an unashamed commitment to Christ.
2) The courage to risk all for Christ, even if it does cost our position, esteem, wealth, and life.
3) The courage to unashamedly care for the body of Christ, His church and its affairs.
4) The courage to be an unashamed witness for Christ, no matter the cost.

> **"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).**

"Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left" (Josh.23:6).

"The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" (Ps.118:6).

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Is.12:2).

5 (15:47) **Courage—Boldness**: courage took a public stand by the cross. The women stood by the cross (Mk.15:40-41, 47). They loved Jesus and felt deep affection and loyalty for Him. They did not understand, but they did *love and believe*. The men may forsake Jesus, but not them. They stood by the cross from beginning to end despite the danger and possible threat of being arrested as a follower of Jesus. Apparently, they loved and believed so strongly that nothing could have driven them away.

What happened seems to be this. Many women followers were present at the cross (v.41). After Jesus died, all but two women either returned to their own home or else escorted Mary, the mother of Jesus, to her residence. The two women who remained behind saw Joseph come to bury Jesus. They watched, probably even accompanied him, so they would know where their Lord was buried.

The women had courage, the kind of courage that takes a stand by the cross. The women...

- were not ashamed to stand by the cross.
- did not allow the fear of men to run them away from the cross.
- did not allow discouragement to defeat them despite not understanding what was going on.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim.1:8).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).

	CHAPTER 16		
	X. THE SON OF GOD'S SUPREME MINISTRY: JESUS' VICTORY OVER DEATH AND HIS GREAT COMMISSION,16:1-20		
	A. The Proofs of the Resurrection,[DS1] 16:1-13 (Mt.28:1-15; Lk.24:1-49; Jn.20:1-23)		
1 The sad & despairing women a. They witnessed His death & burial b. They bought spices to anoint His body c. They were strict religionists who obeyed the law d. They were practical, sensible, thinking women—not hysterical, nor deceived	And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.	6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.	c. He commanded authority
2 The rolled away stone	2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.	7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.	**4 The missing body of Jesus** **5 The compassionate, encouraging word to Peter**
3 The young man clothed in a long white robe a. He sat on the right side b. He made a frightening appearance	3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?	8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.	**6 The fulfillment of the Lord's promise** **7 The fright & silence of the women**
	4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.	9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.	**8 The appearance to Mary Magdalene[DS2]**
	5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.	10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.	**9 The immediate unbelief of the disciples**
		11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.	**10 The appearance to two disciples**
		12 After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.	**11 The continued unbelief of other disciples**
		13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.	

DIVISION X

THE SON OF GOD'S SUPREME MINISTRY: JESUS' VICTORY OVER DEATH AND HIS GREAT COMMISSION, 16:1-20

A. The Proofs of the Resurrection, 16:1-13

(16:1-13) **Introduction**: there are eleven proofs (events) of the resurrection in these verses—proofs that should stir faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The sad and despairing women (v.1-3).
2. The rolled away stone (v.4).
3. The young man clothed in a long white robe (v.5-6).
4. The missing body of Jesus (v.6).
5. The compassionate, encouraging word to Peter (v.7).
6. The fulfillment of the Lord's promise (v.7).
7. The fright and silence of the women (v.8).
8. The appearance to Mary Magdalene (v.9-10).
9. The immediate unbelief of the disciples (v.11).
10. The appearance to two disciples (v.12).
11. The continued unbelief of other disciples (v.13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:1-13) **Jesus Christ—Resurrection**: the order of the resurrection events seems to be as follows: (1) Mary discovers the empty tomb (Jn.20:1-2), and (2) runs to inform Peter and John; (3) they in turn run to see and verify for themselves (Jn.20:3-10).

Then some of the resurrection appearances begin. It should be noted that just how long Jesus stayed with the apostles when He visited them is not given. Some of the visits may have been for days upon days. In fact, He may have even appeared to some of whom we have no record. The exact order of the appearances mentioned by Scripture is hazy, but some

order is possible (cp. 1 Cor.15:5-11): (1) to Mary Magdalene (Mk.16:9-11; Jn.20:11-18); (2) to the women running to tell the disciples about the empty tomb (Mt.28:8-10); (3) then apparently to Peter, probably to assure him of restoration (Lk.24:34; 1 Cor.15:5); (4) to the two Emmaus disciples sometime in the early evening (Mk.16:12; Lk.24:13-42); (5) to the disciples, with Thomas absent (Mk.16:14; Lk.24:36-43; Jn.20:19-25). (6) The next recorded appearance seems to be one week later, on Sunday evening, when Jesus appears to the disciples who had gone fishing (Jn.21:1-25). There were also other appearances although the order is unknown: (7) to 500 believers (1 Cor.15:6); (8) to the apostles (Mt.28:16-20; Mk.16:15-18); (9) to James, the Lord's half-brother (1 Cor.15:7); (10) then there was the appearance to the believers at His ascension (Mk.16:19-20; Lk.24:44-53; Acts 1:3-12).

1 (16:1-3) **Resurrection—Women, At Cross & Resurrection**: the first proof of the resurrection was the sad and despairing women. Several facts point to the women as proofs of the resurrection.

1. They were actual witnesses of His death and burial. They knew He was dead, and they knew where He had been laid. They had followed along behind the procession to the tomb (Mk.15:40-41, 47; cp. Mt.27:55-56, 61; Lk.23:55-56). There was no question in their minds whatsoever about His being dead and buried.
2. They bought spices and came to anoint His body. Apparently, they had bought the spices Saturday evening after 6 p.m. when the Sabbath ended. Note they arose "very early in the morning, the first day of the week [Sunday]" to go and embalm Him. Again, they knew He was dead; but they cared, so they wanted to take care of His body just as loved ones would do.
3. They were religionists who strictly obeyed the law. They were strict in the observance of the Sabbath. Imagine, their loved One was dead, yet they would not break the Sabbath law even to take care of Him (cp. Lk.23:56). The women were obedient to the commandments of God. They were moral, truthful women who would never think about or even consider lying about the death and resurrection of Jesus.
4. They were practical, sensible, thinking women, not hysterical or deceived. Note what was on their minds: how they were going to remove the stone from the entrance of the tomb. Their senses were present; they were thinking about solving the practical problems facing them. Note also that they had stayed right with Joseph of Arimathaea until he had closed the tomb. They knew that a large stone had sealed the entrance. Luke even says they "beheld the sepulchre, and how the body was laid" (Lk.23:55). Apparently they went in, looked over the sepulchre, and perhaps helped Joseph and Nicodemus (and probably their servants) all they could. They probably stayed with them until the *great* stone was rolled into the entrance.

The point is this: the women, despite their sadness and bereavement, were sensible. They knew Jesus was dead. They were not mistaken or deceived. Every step they took was evidence that what they experienced was true: Jesus did arise from the dead.

2 (16:4) **Stone**: the second proof of the resurrection was the rolled-away stone (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:65-66 for a detailed description of the stone). The stone was not rolled back for the benefit of Jesus but for the witnesses to the resurrection. When Jesus arose, He was in His resurrection body, the body of the spiritual dimension of being which has no physical bounds. However, the witnesses needed to enter the tomb to see the truth. The tomb was rolled back for their benefit (see outline and notes—Jn.20:1-10).

Note also that soldiers were guarding the tomb (Mt.27:65-66. Cp. 27:62-66; 28:2-4, 11-15.) The fact that the stone was rolled back is a proof of the resurrection.

3 (16:5-6) **Angel**: the third proof of the resurrection was the young man clothed in a long white robe. He was an angel sent by God as proof of the resurrection. God sent him for four reasons.

1. To roll the stone back for the witnesses (Mt.28:2).
2. To take care of the soldiers guarding the tomb (Mt.28:4).
3. To reassure the women (Mk.16:5-6). They were already grieving over Jesus' death. If they found the tomb empty without any explanation, they would have been devastated even more. The angel was a ministering spirit of God, one who ministered by reassuring God's people (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Heb.1:4-14).
4. To validate and proclaim the resurrection and to give directions (Mk.16:6-7).

4 (16:6) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the fourth proof of the resurrection was the missing body of Jesus. Note several facts, all giving evidence of the resurrection.

1. The women entered the tomb (v.5).
2. The angel verified that Jesus "was crucified" (dead).
3. The angel proclaimed, "He is risen; He is not here: behold [look, contemplate] the place where they laid Him." And the women did.
4. The women "beheld" (saw, contemplated) that Jesus was not there. They saw the place where He had been laid, and the body was missing.

5 (16:7) **Peter—Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the fifth proof of the resurrection was the compassionate and wise word to Peter. The compassion and wisdom of God are clearly seen in this personal word sent to Peter. God knew that Peter was crushed, despite his repentance, and that it would be extremely difficult for him to face the other disciples. He had proclaimed his loyalty too loudly and failed too greatly, even to the point of denying his Lord (cp. Mk.14:26-31, 66-72). Peter was devastated, more than most believers could ever imagine. This is evident from the fact that he needed both this personal word of encouragement from an angel and a personal visit from the resurrected Lord. Apparently, the Lord had to visit him first, all alone, before He appeared to the rest of the disciples (Lk.24:34; 1 Cor.15:5).

This personal word to Peter points to God's being behind the whole event. It demonstrates God's compassion and perfect wisdom. It is evidence of the resurrection.

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev.1:17-18).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Is.43:1-2).

6 (16:7) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Promises, Fulfilled**: the sixth proof of the resurrection was the fulfillment of the Lord's promise. Jesus had told the disciples that He would go into Galilee after He had arisen (Mk.14:28). Fulfilling His promise was proof that Jesus had arisen. Being told to meet Him in Galilee would do two things.

1. It would stir their hearts with some degree of wonder and hope. It would give them hope that their relationship with the Lord could be restored. They would know that everything could be explained to them in Galilee.
2. It would stir them to remember His promise and give evidence that Jesus had actually arisen from the dead. The very fact that He met them in Galilee, fulfilling His promise, is evidence of His resurrection. The promise could not be fulfilled if He had not risen, and since He arose, the promise was to be fulfilled.

"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Ro.4:21).

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor.1:20).

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim.2:13).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).

7 (16:8) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Fear**: the seventh proof of the resurrection was the fright and silence of the women. Note the women were as anyone would be: trembling, amazed, silent, and afraid. As they ran to tell Peter and the disciples, why were they silent and afraid, saying nothing to anyone?

1. The angel had told them to tell only "His disciples and Peter." They were to tell no one else.
2. They feared others might think them *crazy*, so grieved that they were imagining things.
3. They feared the Jewish and Roman authorities, that they might be accused of stealing the body.

Every emotion of the women and their very reaction (trembling, being amazed and afraid) are proof of the resurrection. They reacted in a normal way, just as any group would react, and their normal reaction is evidence of the resurrection. (Note: despite the effect upon their emotions, their thought processes were still very active. They did exactly as the angel instructed. They reasoned and knew to keep silent and quiet about the matter.)

8 (16:9-10) **Mary Magdalene—Devotion**: the eighth proof of the resurrection was the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene (see outline and notes—Jn.20:11-18). The very fact that Jesus visited Mary first, before He visited anyone else, is evidence of the resurrection. It is just like Jesus. He *responds* to love and deep devotion. And Mary, above all others, seems to have loved Jesus more and held Him closer to her heart with more devotion than anyone else. Her need for Him seems to have been greater and felt more than anyone else's.

⇒ She had been forgiven and healed from so much. (Note that even in this reference to her, mention is made that Jesus cast seven devils out of her.)

⇒ She was at the cross through the whole ordeal and her name is one of the names always given, even above Jesus' own mother, Mary (Mk.15:40-41).

⇒ She was present when Jesus was taken down from the cross and until the very last moment at His burial (Mk.15:47; Lk.23:55).

⇒ She was foremost in making preparations for embalming the body over the weekend (Mk.15:56).

⇒ She visited the tomb after the Sabbath at the earliest possible moment, arising very early in the morning when it was still dark (Mk.16:1-2; Jn.20:1).

⇒ She refused to leave the tomb after Peter and John verified that the body was missing (Jn.20:11f).

Mary was a most unusual follower of the Lord, a woman of deep devotion and love, humility and grace; a precious saint who felt the loss of her Lord perhaps more deeply than anyone else. Therefore, Jesus responded to her, meeting her need first of all. This definitely lends proof to the fact that the Lord was risen. (Every genuine believer can attest to the same glorious truth that Mary's experience proclaims: Jesus is risen, for He is ever present with us, responding to our love and devotion and meeting our every need. How precious and strong the presence of our wonderful Lord!)

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).

"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (Jn.14:15-16).

"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (Jn.16:27).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(16:9-10) **Scripture**: these verses are not in the two oldest manuscripts, the Sinaiticus and Vaticanus. Only portions are found in other manuscripts and then in various forms. However, they are found in the Vulgate and Syriac Versions.

9 (16:11) **Disciples, Weak Faith**: the ninth proof of the resurrection was the immediate unbelief of the disciples. Again, the disciples are painted in a bad light, a picture that most likely would not be shown if the resurrection had not really happened. The disciples would be seen as stalwarts of great belief and heroic examples if the resurrection were being fabricated. The very fact that they are seen failing again and again and that they are actually the ones to fail the most tragically and are to be blamed the most, is clear evidence of the resurrection.

"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mk.16:14).

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).

10 (16:12) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Appearance**: the tenth proof of the resurrection was the appearance of Jesus to two disciples. This probably refers to the appearance to the two on the road to Emmaus (Lk.24:13-35). Just who they were is not known. They were simply two disciples of the Lord who were to go to the apostles and prepare them even more for the Lord's appearances to them. Again, the very way in which the Lord appeared and went about preparing His disciples for confrontation with Him is evidence of His having truly risen. His perfect wisdom, tenderness, and care—which is so evident in the way everything is handled—are clear evidence.

11 (16:13) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Disciples, Unbelief**: the eleventh proof of the resurrection was the continued unbelief of the disciples. Again, no fabricated story would paint its main characters in such a bad light, not time after time. In fact, the disciples were not heros but tragic failures throughout the whole gospel story. This is seldom remembered and mentioned by preachers and teachers, yet they are seen as tragic failures, unbelievably weak time and again. They were a far cry from the type of men we would want as heros. Why does Scripture paint them in such a bad light? Because what they said *did* happen. It is the truth. Jesus arose and appeared to Mary and the two disciples, and when they shared their experiences with the apostles, the apostles refused to believe. (They were without excuse. For many months Jesus had drilled the fact of His death and resurrection into them. See notes—Mt.16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27.) The weakness of the disciples and their continued unbelief are evidence that what happened was true. It is proof of the resurrection. The truth—exactly what happened—is being told simply and clearly by honest and moral eyewitnesses.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

	B. The Lord's Great Commission, 16:14-20 (Mt.28:16-20; Lk.24: 46-49; Jn.20:21; cp. Jn.17:18; Acts 1:8)		
1 The two hindrances to the Great Commission a. Unbelief b. Hardness of heart	14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.	17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.	**4 The promise to the believer as he carries out the Great Commission: Power**
2 The Great Commission: Go—preach a. What: The gospel b. Where: All the world	15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.	19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.	**5 The confirmation of the Great Commission** a. The Lord's ascension to the position of power b. The Lord's working through the disciples' ministry
3 The reason for the Great Commission a. Saved: If bel. & bapt.[DSI] b. Condemned: If disbelieve	16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.	20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.	

DIVISION X

THE SON OF GOD'S SUPREME MINISTRY: JESUS' VICTORY OVER DEATH AND HIS GREAT COMMISSION, 16:1-20

B. The Lord's Great Commission, 16:14-20

(16:14-20) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: this was the first appearance of Jesus to all the disciples. It is important to keep in mind that it was Sunday evening, the same day that Jesus had arisen from the dead. He had undergone an extremely busy day, encouraging those who had needed special attention and sending word of His resurrection to the disciples. They were hovered behind closed doors in fear of the Jews. Jesus needed to send word of His resurrection to them bit by bit so they would be prepared to see Him risen and in His resurrected body. The day included the following appearances.

⇒ The appearance to Mary Magdalene (Mk.16:9-11).
⇒ The appearance to the women as they were going to tell the disciples (Mt.28:9).
⇒ The appearance to Peter, which probably was a long conference lasting for hours (Lk.24:34).
⇒ The appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Mk.16:12-13).
⇒ The appearance to the disciples mentioned in this passage (Mk.16:14. This appearance is discussed more fully in Lk.24:36f; Jn.20:19f.)

Note what Mark stresses in this passage (this is the close of His gospel): he stresses the Great Commission. The Great Commission is the whole focus of his attention.

1. The two hindrances to the Great Commission (v.14).
2. The Great Commission: go—preach (v.15).
3. The reason for the Great Commission (v.16).
4. The promise to the believer as he carries out the Great Commission (v.17-18).
5. The confirmation of the Great Commission (v.19-20).

1 (16:14) **Unbelief—Heart, Hardness of**: there are two major hindrances to the Great Commission—unbelief and hardness of heart. Standing before the apostles, Jesus upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart. The word "upbraid" (onedise) means to rebuke, reproach, reprove, scold. Note three things.

1. They deserved the rebuking and scolding. Their unbelief and hardness were inexcusable.
   a. They had witnessed Jesus' power, that is, God's power, throughout His ministry. They had seen His power over both nature and disease, and they had even witnessed His power over death when He raised up Jairus' daughter and a young man and Lazarus, and perhaps others of which there is no record.
   b. They had witnessed His life, His purity and holiness and sinlessness. And they had been taught that sin caused death, that is, that a man dies because of sin (Jn.3:19; cp. 3:16-21; 5:24-29; 8:34-35. Cp. Ro.5:12; 6:23.) Jesus was without sin; therefore, death could never hold Him and enforce its power over Him. They should have been able to reason and see this glorious fact, especially in light of the Scriptures.

> **"Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Ps.16:10; Acts 2:27; 13:35).**
>
> **"Jesus Christ our Lord....declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:3-4).**

   c. They had been taught month after month that He was to die and be raised again.

d. They had rejected the testimony of His resurrection. He had sent them word by Mary Magdalene and the other two disciples (Mk.15:9-11, 12-13).

2. The disciples' unbelief and hardness of heart was very, very serious. Jesus' rebuke (and Mark's stress) of their unbelief and hardness show this (Mk.15:11, 13, 14). It had to be dealt with if the Great Commission were to be carried out.

Thought 1. Jesus dealt with the matter of unbelief and hardness of heart. How much more should we! When we begin to believe that souls are lost and doomed unless they hear and receive Jesus, then we will take the Great Commission seriously and preach the gospel to the whole world. It has now been two thousand years, and a place as small as our world has not even been reached. Unimaginable, when we have had the means of transportation and communication as well as the resources at our disposal to do the job.

3. The *root cause* of unbelief and hardness of heart was very simply the misinterpretation of Scripture and of Jesus' words. The disciples had been told that Jesus was to die and arise from the dead. Jesus had told them time and time again. But the disciples refused to believe the word of Christ; they...

- refused to see the Messiah as a suffering Savior, choosing instead to think in terms of a conquering King (Lk.24:44-45. See notes—Lk.3:24-31; 7:21-23.)
- refused to see the Kingdom of God as a spiritual kingdom, choosing instead to think in terms of a physical kingdom, a kingdom on earth.
- refused to see the death and resurrection of Jesus as a literal fact, choosing instead to think of it in symbolic terms (see note, pt.5—Mt.20:20-21).

Thought 1. Unbelief and hardness of heart are inexcusable within a believer.

> **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).**
>
> **"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (Jn.20:27).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).**
>
> **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).**
>
> **"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).**
>
> **"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**

2 (16:15) **Commission, Great—Ministry**: the Great Commission is a straightforward command. It is brief, yet forceful and uncompromising: *go—preach*. Jesus made two critical points.

1. It is the gospel that is to be preached. We are not to preach our own thoughts and ideas, humanistic and man-centered beliefs, world religions and philosophies. We are to preach the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the news which the world desperately needs to hear.

> **"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:1-4).**
>
> **"The gospel of God (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:1-4).**

2. The gospel is to be carried "into all the world" and preached "to every creature." The gospel is the news which everyone needs to hear. Note two simple facts.

a. The Great Commission was given to the whole church, to every believer. It is a permanent commission given to the church of every generation, not only to the first disciples. Note the words, "He that believeth" (v.16) and "them that believe" (v.17). After a person believes and is baptized, Jesus says the person goes forth with power and signs while he preaches the gospel (v.16-17). Every believer who is genuinely saved is to preach the gospel (v.16; cp. Mt.28:19-20; Jn.20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Tim.2:2; 1 Pt.3:15).

b. The Great Commission does not consider difficulties, dangers, or barriers to be reasons for not going. Jesus did not discuss excuses for not sharing the gospel. His command was an *uncompromising demand*. The issue of eternal life vs. eternal damnation is too critical an issue to allow anything to stop the gospel from going forth. The gospel has to be carried forth. No land is to be neglected, no people are to be ignored. The believer is to be undaunted and unswerved from the Great Commission. The believer is commanded: "Go ye into all the world" (v.15).

3 (16:16) **Salvation—Belief**: the reason for the Great Commission is twofold. Men are either saved or condemned. If the gospel is shared with them and they believe and are baptized, they shall be saved; but if they disbelieve, they shall be condemned. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Baptism*—Mk.16:16 for additional discussion.)

1. A man can now be saved. He no longer needs to walk about, wandering throughout life seeking and searching for fulfillment and completeness, questioning if there is really any purpose to life. Man can be saved and live eternally. He can be delivered...
   - from sin and its power (Ro.6:6-7).
   - from death and its fear and corruption (Jn.5:24; Heb.2:14-15).
   - from hell and its torture and separation from God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).

The message that life is now available must be carried to the whole world.

2. A man is lost and condemned if he disbelieves the gospel. The words "believeth not" (apistesas) mean to disbelieve. And the word "damned" (katakrithesetai) means to be condemned. The man who rejects Jesus Christ, who refuses to believe and follow Him, shall be condemned. Condemned to what?
   ⇒ To the power and enslavement of sin (Jn.3:19; Ro.3:12, 23).
   ⇒ To the fear and corruption of death (Ro.5:12; 6:23).
   ⇒ To the torture and separation of hell (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).

Therefore, the great motive for reaching the world is the desperate need of man to be saved: saved from sin, death, and hell—saved to the uttermost—saved to live forever in the presence of God Himself (Jn.3:16; 5:24-29).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:16) **Baptism—Belief—Salvation—Obedience**: two things are said to be essential for salvation—belief and baptism. There are two basic positions on baptism: first, one must be baptized to be saved, and, second, baptism is a symbol or sign that one believes and has been saved. Note four things.

1. Perhaps what is often overlooked by both positions is this: *belief* is an *act of obedience* to God's demand if a person wishes to be saved, and *baptism* is an *act of obedience* to God's demand if a person believes.

Baptism is an act of obedience to God's demand just as belief is an act of obedience to God's demand. Very simply, if a man wishes to be saved, God says (demands that he) *believe*; and if a man believes, God says (demands that he) *be baptized*.

A legitimate and straightforward question needs to be asked: "How can a person honestly be saved if he immediately rebels against being baptized? How can a person really believe, be genuine in his confession, if he rebels at obeying His Lord about baptism?"

Facing the reality of the situation, Scripture is strong: a person who truly believes in the Lord will not refuse to follow His Lord *in baptism* or in anything else (Lk.9:23). To believe and to obey are the same thing. The two, belief and obedience, are one and the same.

> **"He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey him*" (Heb.5:9. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.5:9 as well.)**

Another way to say the same thing is this. There is no such thing as faith alone, not without works or fruit. Faith without obedience is not what the Scripture means by faith. In the Scripture, faith is the movement of the heart which embraces the Lord, the Lord who is the fulfillment of the law (Mt.5:17-18. See note—Mt.5:17-18 as well.) Faith is that which "cometh to God believing that He is, and...*diligently seeking* Him" (Heb.11:6). Faith, Biblical faith, diligently seeks to obey the Lord. Therefore, the man who truly believes will follow the Lord in baptism and in everything else.

This does not mean the person will be perfect and never fail. Far from it. He will fail, but he will *not continue in sin*. He will get up out of his sin, ask God to forgive him, and begin to follow the Lord even more diligently. His faith works and bears fruit, for He knows that God exists and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

> **"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (Jas.2:14).**
>
> **"Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (Jas.2:17-18).**
>
> **"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas.2:20-24).**

Thought 1. There is no such thing as cheap salvation, not the kind that is too often preached and stressed. Following Jesus or being saved costs. It costs all that a person *is and has*. A man is not saved without following Jesus (Lk.9:23), and following Jesus means being baptized and diligently seeking Him (living righteously).

2. The person who is condemned is said to be the person who disbelieves, not the person who is not baptized. This is a matter for close attention. The word "baptized" is omitted from *disbelieveth*. Not being baptized is not mentioned as a reason for being condemned. This does point toward *disbelief's* being the reason for condemnation, and conversely, toward belief's being the reason for salvation. However, as discussed above, it is very difficult to explain how a person can be genuinely saved and not be baptized if he is physically able to be baptized. Believing is commitment, doing what God says, and commitment is believing (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:24). Therefore, a man is saved by doing what God says: believing, being baptized, living righteously. A man is not saved if he does not believe, that is, refuses to do what God says. To truly be saved, a person must be committed to Jesus Christ, committed to being baptized and to living righteously.

3. Something that should be looked at is the nature of belief and baptism. Belief and baptism are two different substances, of two different natures, of two different dimensions. In dealing with belief, the same things can be said about belief that is said about salvation. Both are of the spirit, not of the body nor of the physical world of man. Belief is a spiritual thing or substance. Its nature is spiritual; it is of the spiritual dimension of being; it is an act of the spirit of man.

However, baptism is of a different nature. It is man's physical body being placed into water (a material thing or substance). Baptism is of the physical or material dimension of being; it is an act of the body of man.

4. Very practically, in a world of billions of people, some are born mentally alert and responsible; yet they are tragically deformed, or injured, or diseased. Some are so deformed and physically affected they could never be immersed in the waters of baptism. Some of these do come to believe in Christ and do live righteously, obeying God in so far as their heart and body allows them.

In conclusion, the thrust of Scripture seems to be that a person who genuinely believes *is* baptized and will not fail to be baptized unless it is physically impossible, nor will he fail to live righteously. Yet the moment of salvation is not at baptism nor at any other act or work of doing righteousness. It is at the moment of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a man really believes and really *entrusts* his life into the hands of Christ, *God knows that moment*, the very second of trust. Therefore, at that very moment God quickens his spirit, causing him to be *born again*, and making him alive spiritually (not physically. It is not a physical thing or substance.) Then the man arises from confession on his knees, is baptized, and begins to follow the Lord in righteousness.

4 (16:17-18) **Power**: the promise to the believer as he carries out the Great Commission is critical. The believer must have *supernatural power* as he goes forth throughout the world. The world is a dangerous place. The believer will sometimes be called upon to face treacherous land, violent storms within nature, savage and poisonous animals, unbelieving and hostile men, spiritual evil of unbelievable force. The evil of men, of nature, and of spirits can be so threatening to the believer that the believer's witness would be stopped if God did not provide His strength and power. This is the point of this passage. God does give power to the believer—all the power necessary to carry the gospel "into all the world" and "to every creature."

This, of course, does not mean that every believer will be delivered from every threat and from ever being martyred. Some believers are persecuted and some even martyred. As God wills, He teaches and touches lives and moves history and society itself through the persecution and martyrdom of believers. Things do not always run smoothly for believers. But God does give power to believers—the power to walk through the difficulties in His confidence and peace, even through the fire of martyrdom if faced. It is often the witness of the God-given power, confidence, and peace that reaches others for Christ and that causes an enormous movement toward God.

To repeat, this is the point of these two verses. As the believer carries out the Great Commission, God promises power, the power needed to get the task done. Note the power or signs mentioned by Mark. Such power will be present in the life of the believer (when needed) as he proclaims the gospel around the world.

⇒ Casting out devils (cp. Acts 16:18).
⇒ Speaking with new tongues (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Acts 2:4).
⇒ Taking up serpents (Acts 28:5).
⇒ Drinking any deadly thing (Mk.16:18).
⇒ Laying hands on the sick and healing them (Acts 28:7-8).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor.2:4).

"That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph.3:16).

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (1 Th.1:5).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:7-8).

"But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin" (Mic.3:8).

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.4:6).

5 (16:19-20) **Commission, Great**: the confirmation of the Great Commission is seen in two acts.

1. There is the Lord's ascension to the right hand of God, that is, the position of power (cp. Lk.24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11). The ascension assures (proves, confirms) that seven things are absolutely certain. (See note, *Ascension*—Jn.6:62 for more discussion.)
   a. The ascension assures us that God is and that He is alive. Christ could be raised from the dead and received up into heaven *only* by the power of God. The fact that Christ was raised up from the dead and "carried up into heaven" (Lk.24:51) proves that God exists. Only God could do such a thing. (1 Cor.6:14; 2 Cor.4:14; cp. Jn.3:16. Cp. Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:14; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33-34; 17:31.)
   b. The ascension assures us that Christ is God's Son. The very fact that God raised up Christ and "received [Him] up into heaven" proves that Christ is God's Son (Ro.1:3-4; Ph.2:5-11).
   c. The ascension assures us that heaven is real (Ph.3:20-21).
   d. The ascension assures us that the gospel is true. When God raised up Christ and received Him into heaven, God showed that the message of Christ is true. What Christ proclaimed and revealed is true. The problem with man is sin and death, a future of condemnation and separation from God. But man can be saved, saved by the cross of Christ (Mk.16:16; 1 Pt.2:24).
   e. The ascension assures us that the Great Commission is the call and mission of believers. Two things show this.
      ⇒ First, Christ has ascended into heaven. He is gone, no longer on earth. If the gospel is to be carried to the ends of the earth, believers have to do it. They are the ones left on earth to do it.
      ⇒ Second, it is the risen and ascended Lord who gave the Great Commission. As the ascended Lord, He demands that His commission be fulfilled (Mk.16:15; cp. Mt.28:19-20).
   f. The ascension assures us that power is available to carry out the Great Commission (Mt.28:18; cp. Mk.16:20).
   g. The ascension assures us that we have a very special Helper in heaven, One who really loves and cares for us. He is One who is "touched with the feelings of our infirmities, One who was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15). Therefore, He is ever ready to forgive us and to look after us and to carry us through all of life.
2. The Great Commission is confirmed by the Lord's working through the disciples' ministry. The Great Commission is to be carried out. The early disciples "went forth" immediately and "preached everywhere." The believers of every generation are to go forth immediately and preach the gospel everywhere.

Note two simple facts.
1. "The Lord worked" with them.
2. "The Lord...confirmed the Word [of God] with signs."

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

LUKE

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INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: Luke (1:3). Luke is also the author of Acts.

The early church fathers held Luke to be the author of both the Gospel of Luke and Acts: Irenaeus (about A.D. 130-200); Clement of Alexandria (about A.D. 150-215); Origen (about A.D. 185-254); and Tertullian (about A.D. 160-200). (See *The Pulpit Commentary*, Vol.16. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1950, p.1f, for an excellent discussion on the introductory material on Luke.)

A study of both books bears evidence that Luke is the author. The writer was evidently a physician. Greek medical terms are used. An analysis of the Gospel and Acts together shows the same style and language. There is also a clear understanding of the Roman and Greek world of the first century. The content of the two books shows a strong unity. There is a stress upon the resurrection, the Holy Spirit, the person of Christ, and the ministry to the Gentiles.

There is also enormous evidence that the writer of Acts was an acquaintance of Paul. This is clearly seen in the "we" section of Acts. In three sections of Acts, there is a remarkable switch from "they" and "he" to "we." The "we" sections give a first-hand account (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 27:1-28:16).

1. Luke is first seen with Paul at Troas. He switches from using "he" and "they" to "we." Luke joined Paul on his journey to Philippi and evidently remained in Philippi until Paul returned from Jerusalem (Acts 16:10).
2. Luke later went to Jerusalem with Paul when Paul was arrested (Acts 20:5-21:15).
3. Luke is seen with Paul again while Paul was a prisoner in Caesarea. He also accompanied Paul the prisoner to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:15).
4. Paul calls Luke "the beloved physician" (Col.4:14; Phile.24).
5. Luke is the last one to remain with Paul in his imprisonment (2 Tim.2:11).

DATE: uncertain. Probably A.D. 58-62.

The author ends Acts abruptly with Paul's two-year imprisonment at Rome, so the writing would have been done some time after Jesus' ascension, just prior to the end of Acts. Another factor is that Luke says nothing about the Fall of Jerusalem. The fall of the city was prophesied by Jesus, and it actually took place in A.D. 70; therefore, the writing took place before A.D. 70. Considering these two factors, Luke must have written the Gospel sometime between A.D. 58-62.

TO WHOM WRITTEN: to "the most excellent Theophilus," a Gentile convert (Lk.1:3; Acts 1:1). The words "most excellent" indicate that he was a high official in the Roman government. The book of Acts is also addressed to him personally. (See note, *Theophilus*--Acts 1:1 for more discussion.)

PURPOSE: to set forth an eyewitness account of Jesus, the Son of Man, the Savior of the world.

Luke wished Theophilus to know the certainty of those things which he had believed. Thus Luke sets out to write an orderly and accurate account of the whole life of Jesus (Lk.1:1-4).

SPECIAL FEATURES:

1. Luke is "The Gospel for Man" or "The Gospel for Gentiles." Luke shows that God is interested in all men everywhere, not just in the Jews (Lk.2:14, 32; 3:38; 4:25-27; 7:2-10; 9:51-54; 10:30-37; 13:29; 17:16; 24:47).
2. Luke is "The Gospel of Individuals." Luke shows that Jesus was deeply interested in individuals. He tells of Zechariah and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist (Lk.1:5-25, 39-45; 67-79); of Mary and Martha (Lk.10:38-42); of Zacchaeus (Lk.19:2-10); of Cleopas and his companion (Lk.24:18); and of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet in the home of Simon the Pharisee (Lk.7:36f). The parables in Luke also tend to stress individuals, whereas in Matthew they stress the Kingdom.
3. Luke is "The Gospel of Salvation." Luke uses the words "salvation" and "Savior" or their various forms many more times than any of the other Gospel writers.
4. Luke is "The Gospel of the Outcasts and Sinners." Luke tells of the feast Matthew held for tax collectors and sinners (Lk.5:30); of the woman anointing Jesus' feet with her tears and wiping them with her hair (Lk.7:36-50); of tax collectors and sinners drawing near to hear Jesus teach (Lk.15:1). He alone tells of the Prodigal Son (Lk.15:11-32); of the Pharisee and tax collector (Lk.18:9-14); of Zacchaeus, the tax collecting "sinner" (Lk.19:1-10). Many of his parables center around the outcasts (Lk.7:41f; 12:13-21; 16:1-12, 19-31; 18:1-8, 9-14).
5. Luke is "The Gospel of the Poor." Luke tells of the shepherds who were of a poor class (Lk.2:8f); of Mary, who made the purification offering of the poor (Lk.2:24; cp. Lev.12:8). He says that Jesus came to preach the Gospel to the poor (Lk.4:18-6:20), and the poor have the Gospel preached to them (Lk.7:22).
6. Luke is "The Gospel of Women." Luke's world was a world that treated women only as things, as little more than chattel property, knowing nothing of women's rights. But Luke gives them a special place. He shows how God honored Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna (Lk.1:5f; 2:25f). He tells about the widow of Nain (Lk.7:11-18); the sinful woman who anointed Jesus' feet (Lk.7:36-50); and the three women who were healed of evil spirits including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna (Lk.8:2-3). He writes about the sisters Mary and Martha (Lk.10:38-42); the bent-over lady (Lk.13:11-13); the widow who gave all to God (Lk.21:1-4); and the women who lined the road and wept as Jesus sagged under the weight and burden of the cross (Lk.23:27-31). He also includes women in some of his parables (Lk.15:8-10; 18:1-8).

7. Luke is "The Gospel of Children." The birth of Jesus and John the Baptist are given in detail (Lk.1-2). Luke's point is to show that God was at work even in the infant stages of the Savior. Luke alone gives the story of Jesus' boyhood (Lk.2:41-52). He alone emphasizes Jesus' ministry to the "only son" and "only daughter" of a desperate parent (Lk.7:12; 8:42; 9:38).

8. Luke is "The Gospel of Prayer" or "The Gospel of Devotion." Prayer is often emphasized.
   a. There are the prayers of Jesus: at His baptism (Lk.3:21); in the wilderness (Lk.5:16); before choosing the disciples (Lk.6:12); immediately prior to predicting His death (Lk.9:18); at the transfiguration (Lk.9:28f); when the seventy returned (Lk.10:17-24, esp. 21-22); before giving the Lord's Prayer (Lk.11:1); for Peter (Lk.22:32); in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lk.22:39-46); for His enemies (Lk.23:34); and on the cross (Lk.23:46). Most of these are recorded by Luke alone. They show Jesus' facing every crisis of life by prayer.
   b. There are the parables of Jesus that deal with prayer: the friend at midnight (Lk.11:5-8); the unjust judge (Lk.18:1-8); the Pharisee and Publican (Lk.18:9-14).
   c. There are the exhortations and warnings about prayer (Lk.6:28; 11:2; 10:47; 22:40, 46).

9. Luke is "The Gospel of Praise." He uses the phrase "praising God" more than all the rest of the New Testament combined.
   a. Some of the great Christian hymns are taken from Luke. The "Ava Maria" from the words of the angel to Mary (Lk.1:28-33); "The Magnificat" from Mary's song (Lk.1:46-55); "The Benedictus" from Zacharias (Lk.1:68-79); the "Gloria in Excelsis" from the song of the heavenly angels (Lk.2:13-14); and "The Nunc Dimittis" from the rejoicing of Simeon (Lk.2:29-32).
   b. People are seen praising God when helped (Lk.2:20; 5:25-26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15; 18:43).
   c. The words "joy" and "rejoicing" are used time and time again (for example Lk.1:14, 44, 47; 10:21).
   d. There are references to laughter (Lk.6:21) and merriment (Lk.15:23, 32) and to joy (Lk.15:6, 9; 19:6).
   e. The Gospel ends with joy (Lk.24:52) even as it began with joy (Lk.1:14).

10. Luke is "The Gospel of Christ's Passion." This is seen in three significant emphases.
   a. There are the many references to His death. Moses and Elijah discuss Jesus' death at His transfiguration (Lk.9:31). Luke says the time for Jesus to be received up has arrived (Lk.9:51); therefore, Jesus sets His face to go up to Jerusalem (Lk.9:51). Jesus refers to His death as a baptism and stresses a constraint to accomplish it (Lk.12:50). Jesus sends a message to Herod that after His ministry He will finish His course on the third day (Lk.13:32). He then continues to speak of perishing in Jerusalem (Lk.13:33-35). And Jesus foretells His passion in a statement that is unique to Luke (Lk.17:25).
   b. There is the long space given over to the passion narrative.
   c. There are the times that Scripture is said to be fulfilled by Jesus death (Lk.9:22; 13:33; 17:25; 18:31; 20:17; 22:37; 24:7, 26f, 44, 46).

11. Luke is "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit."
   a. The persons involved in the preparation for the Savior's coming are said to be Spirit filled and Spirit led: John the Baptist (Lk.1:15); Elizabeth and Zechariah (Lk.1:41, 67); and Simeon (Lk.2:25-27).
   b. The Holy Spirit is said to be active in the life and ministry of Jesus. Mary was told that the Holy Spirit would come upon her (Lk.1:35). John the Baptist predicted Jesus would be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire (Lk.3:16). The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus after His baptism "in a bodily shape, like a dove" (Lk.3:22). The Holy Spirit filled and led Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Lk.4:1). Jesus returned from His temptations to begin His ministry in Galilee "in the power of the Spirit" (Lk.4:14). While preaching, He claimed "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Lk.4:18). He rejoiced in the Spirit when the seventy returned and gave a good report (Lk.10:21); He told His disciples that the Father would give the Spirit to those who asked (Lk.11:13). He said that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is an unforgivable sin (Lk.12:10). He told His disciples that the Holy Spirit would tell them what to say in emergencies (Lk.12:12). He closed His ministry by assuring His disciples, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you...." (Lk.24:49).

OUTLINE OF LUKE

THE PREACHER'S OUTLINE & SERMON BIBLE™ is *unique*. It differs from all other Study Bibles & Sermon Resource Materials in that every Passage and Subject is outlined right beside the Scripture. When you choose any *Subject* below and turn to the reference, you have not only the Scripture, but you discover the Scripture and Subject *already outlined for you—verse by verse*.

For a quick example, choose one of the subjects below and turn to the Scripture, and you will find this marvelous help for faster, easier, and more accurate use.

In addition, every point of the Scripture and Subject is *fully developed in a Commentary with supporting Scripture* at the bottom of the page. Again, this arrangement makes sermon preparation much easier and faster.

Note something else: The Subjects of Luke's Gospel have Biblical titles, but they have also been given *practical titles or titles of application* which sometimes have more appeal to people. This *benefit* is clearly seen for use on billboards, bulletins, church newsletters, etc.

A suggestion: For the quickest overview of Luke, first read *all the major titles* (I, II, III, etc.), then come back and read the subtitles.

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	CHAPTER 1	believed among us,	
		2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from	**2 The gospel is a record of eyewitnesses & ministers of the Word**
	I. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52	the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;	
		3 It seemed good to me also,	**3 The gospel is a record of a man who was led to write**
	A. Luke's Gospel Account: The Truth of the Word, 1:1-4	having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,	
1 The gospel is a record of historical events	Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely	4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.	**4 The gospel is a record to establish the truth**

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

A. Luke's Gospel Account: The Truth of the Word, 1:1-4

(1:1-4) **Introduction**: the Gospel of Luke is a written proclamation of the truth about Jesus Christ. This is the thrust of this first passage in Luke's gospel. Luke is writing to declare the glorious news that the Son of Man, God's Son, has come to earth to seek and to save all who are lost. Luke's gospel is an accurate, orderly account of the truth about Jesus Christ. Note: this introduction of Luke is the very form used by the historians of his day. This points strongly to the fact that Luke intended it to be circulated among churches and believers.

1. The gospel is a record of historical events (v.1).
2. The gospel is a record of eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word (v.2).
3. The gospel is a record of a man who was led to write (v.3).
4. The gospel is a record to establish the truth (v.4).

1 (1:1) **Scripture—Gospel**: Luke's gospel is a record of historical events. Note several facts.

1. "Many...set forth" the events of Christ's life. Many had written about the life and work of Christ, but they were not as *complete* nor as *orderly* as Luke wished to record (cp. v.3). A quick comparison of the first two chapters of Luke with Mark and Matthew will show this. Luke includes many more events than the other two Synoptic Gospels, and the Gospel of John had not yet been written. The fact that *many* had written a record on the life of Christ is strong evidence that the events are true.

2. The events or things of Christ's life were "most surely believed." The words for "most surely believed" (plerophoreo, peplero phoremenon) also mean things that were fulfilled, that were actually performed, or that had run their full course (cp. 2 Tim.4:5). Luke is saying that the *things of Christ* were not only believed, but they were also accomplished or fulfilled among the believers of that day. The *things* (events, matters) of Christ actually took place; they were purposeful; they were destined to be accomplished and fulfilled.

The point is this: the things of Christ are a record of historical events, things that actually happened and that actually fulfilled the purpose of God. Therefore, the things are "most surely believed among us [believers]." What are the *things* accomplished and believed? Both the things of the New Testament and of the Old Testament. The whole Bible is a record of "those things."

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"(Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:14-18).**
>
> **"[Christ Jesus] who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given**

him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:6-11).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"[God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:13-20).

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:9-10).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

Thought 1. The early believers had no difficulty whatsoever believing the *things* of Christ.
1) The *things* were "most surely believed."
2) Many were writing an account of the events.

Thought 2. The "many" who wrote about the life of Jesus are not known by name. They are the silent and humble heroes of God, never known by the world, but well-known by God. Some of their writings served as a *source* for Luke (v.3). Note two things.
1) Their ministry of writing was used greatly by God. Some of what they wrote was either included in the Gospel of Luke or at least stirred thoughts in Luke's mind to record an event.
2) God's silent, quiet, and humble servants are always used by Him just as much as the ones out in the forefront. Their ministry is just as important, if not more so. Some that are last will most definitely be first.

"And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last" (Lk.13:30; cp. Mt.19:30; 20:16; Mk.10:31).

2 (1:2) **Ministers—The Word, Proof of**: Luke's gospel is both a record of *eyewitnesses* and a record of *ministers of the Word*. Luke himself was not an eyewitness of the day-to-day life of Christ. If he ever saw Christ personally, there is no mention of it. However, Luke was a constant and very dear companion of Paul (see Introduction—Luke; note—Acts 16:10). He also had contact with other apostles. What Luke says is that the sources of his writing were eyewitnesses of Christ and ministers of the Word of Christ. The apostles, of course, would be his prime sources. In addition, there were other disciples who followed Jesus either continuously or occasionally. Note these simple facts.

1. The ministers of the Word were eyewitnesses of both *The Word* (Christ Himself) and of the Word of Christ (His teaching, doctrine, and instructions).
2. The ministers of the Word were eyewitnesses "from the beginning," eyewitnesses of every event and word of Christ, eyewitnesses of His life day by day.
3. The ministers of the Word heard as well as saw Christ; some heard and saw Him day by day. Therefore, Luke's gospel is a true record of both the acts and words of Christ.
4. The ministers of the gospel set out immediately to *minister* the Word to others. The word was of critical importance to them. They gave their lives to the ministry of the Word.
5. The ministers of the gospel did not create the Word (message) themselves. They were not ministering their own ideas and thoughts; they were ministering "*The Word of God.*"
6. The ministers of the Word have given us a written gospel that is an eyewitness account. It agrees exactly with what was seen, heard, and proclaimed by Christ and preached to the people of His day and to the world since then.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 Jn.1:1-4).

3 (1:3) **Gospel—Scripture**: Luke's gospel is the record of a man who was led to write. Four facts point out just how strongly Luke felt led to record the life of Christ.

1. Luke had "perfect understanding [parakoloutheo] of all things." The word "understanding" means to study, to follow up, to search out diligently, to investigate, to trace accurately, to become acquainted with. Luke says that having been acquainted with and having investigated *all things*, he was determined to record the facts himself.
2. Luke says he had perfect understanding (investigated all things) "from the very first." The word "first" (anothen) can and often does mean *from above*. Some understand Luke to be saying that he had investigated the things *from above*. Several things point to this translation.

a. If Luke meant *from the first or beginning,* why did he not use the same word (arches) which he used in verse 2? It seems to be much more accurate to say he chooses a different word (anothen) because he is saying something different, *from above*.

b. The prophets are said to have proclaimed things *from above*. They are said to "have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pt.1:10-12). Scripture also says, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pt.1:21).

c. Luke is certainly recording *all things from above*, investigating and searching diligently to write what "the Spirit of Christ which was in [him] did signify" (1 Pt.1:11). He is certainly speaking as a holy man of God "moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pt.1:21). He is certainly proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the good news of Him who came from above.

3. Luke says he is writing things "in order" (kathexes). Luke is the only writer in the New Testament to use this word. He uses it in the gospel only once and in Acts twice (Acts 11:4; 18:23). The question is, what does Luke mean by *orderly*? Consecutive or chronological arrangement? Logical arrangement? Subject arrangement? Inspired or Spirit-led arrangement? The meaning is not clear. Perhaps he is saying that he is writing a full account of the life of Christ and that his account is a *better arrangement*, that is, it has more order and is better arranged than those in existence.

4. Luke is writing to a man named "Theophilus." Who was he? We are not told. But note two facts.

a. He was called "most excellent Theophilus." "Most excellent" (kratistos) is a title of rank and honor. The same title is used of Felix and Festus (Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25).

b. He was a person who desired or needed to know about Jesus Christ. He was probably a convert for whom Luke deeply cared. Some feel he was a man investigating the validity of Christianity. Theophilus is the immediate reason Luke *felt led* to write. (See note, *Theophilus*—Acts 1:1 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Note two critical points.

1) A person must be *prepared* to serve Christ. A person must study, investigate, search out, become acquainted with the truth of Christ.

> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**

2) A person must be led to serve Christ, no matter the task. He must be led by the Spirit of Christ.

> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Ro.8:14).**
>
> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**

Thought 2. We can have great confidence in the truth and accuracy of the written record of Christ.

> **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**

Thought 3. Note a tremendous challenge to us. Luke cared so much for one man that he dedicated himself to writing not a long letter, but a whole book in order to instruct the man. Imagine the dedication and the days and months required! All for one person (initially)!

> **"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" (Lk.15:4).**

4 (1:4) **Gospel—Truth**: Luke's gospel is a record to establish the truth. Luke's purpose is clearly stated: "That thou might know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."

1. The man (Theophilus) *had already heard*.
2. The man *needed to know* the absolute truth of those things.

Thought 1. Luke's account of Christ is the absolute truth. We can "*know* the certainty of those things."

Thought 2. Hearing the things of Christ, even being instructed in them is not enough. We are to study and learn, to know the absolute certainty of them.

> **"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pt.1:21; cp. Mk.13:31; Lk.21:33).**
>
> **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).**

	B. Zacharias and Elisabeth, The Parents of John the Baptist: Godly Parents, 1:5-25	even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.	d. Their son was to be a prophet
1 The parents of John the Baptist a. They lived in the days of Herod b. The father was a priest & the mother was of a priestly family	5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.	17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.	e. Their son was to be the forerunner of the Messiah
2 They were parents who were righteous	6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.	18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.	**7 They were parents who found it difficult to believe the humanly impossible**[DS1]
3 They were parents with human problems a. They had no child b. They were elderly	7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.	19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings.	
4 They were parents who worshipped	8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, 9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.	20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.	**8 They were parents who had to be disciplined by God**
5 They were parents who prayed & led others to pray	10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.	21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.	
6 They were parents greatly favored by God a. Their worship & prayers were favored by a visit from an angel	11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.	22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.	
b. Their prayers were answered: They received the promise of a son	13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.	23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.	**9 They were parents who saw God fulfill His promise**
	14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.	24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,	
c. Their son was to be great	15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost,	25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.	

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

B. Zacharias and Elisabeth, The Parents of John the Baptist: Godly Parents, 1:5-25

(1:5-25) **Introduction**: every generation needs the example of godly parents. The parents of John the Baptist were godly, dynamic examples of what parents should be. They were human, showing some weaknesses, but they were striking examples for all.

1. The parents of John the Baptist (v.5).
2. They were parents who were righteous (v.6).
3. They were parents with human problems (v.7).
4. They were parents who worshipped (v.8-9).

5. They were parents who prayed and led others to pray (v.10).
6. They were parents greatly favored by God (v.11-17).
7. They were parents who found it difficult to believe the humanly impossible (v.18-19).
8. They were parents who had to be disciplined by God (v.20-22).
9. They were parents who saw God fulfill His promise (v.23-25).

1 (1:5) **John the Baptist, Family of**: the parents of John the Baptist. Note three facts.

1. The baby John was promised to his parents during the reign of Herod the Great, right at the very end of his reign (B.C.37-4) (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.2:3-4.)
2. John's father was Zacharias or Zecharias.
   a. His name means *Remembered of Jehovah.*
   b. He was from the country, a mountainous or hilly section.
   c. He was of "the course of Abia [or Abijah]." This simply means a division of the priests. Remember that all the male descendants of Aaron were priests. There were over twenty thousand at this time and only one temple, so they had to be divided into groups (1 Chron.24:1-6). Zacharias served in the eighth group or division (1 Chron.24:10). There were twenty-four groups, and each group served in the temple for one week, twice a year.
3. John's mother was Elisabeth, or Elizabeth.
   a. Her name means *One whose oath is to God.*
   b. She was the daughter of a priest.
   c. She was a pure woman, a virgin at her marriage. A priest was required to marry a virgin (Lev.21:14).

2 (1:6) **Righteousness—Family**: they were parents who were righteous. Note four facts.

1. They "were *both* righteous." They were joined together and committed to each other, and they lived for God and for each other as husband and wife.
2. They were "righteous *before God.*" Together they came "before God" seeking Him, that is, seeking to please Him and to live as He said.
3. They were "walking in *all* the commandments and ordinances of the Lord." They controlled their thoughts, minds, tongues, and behavior, diligently seeking to please the Lord in all they did.
4. They were "blameless." This, of course, does not mean they were perfect. It means they were faithful, living in such a way that no one could charge them with open sin. They offended no one; they lived honestly before both God and men.

3 (1:7) **Family—Parents**: they were parents with human problems. Being righteous did not free them from problems. They had to face the problems of this world just as all persons do. But there was a difference: they were righteous before God. Therefore, they had the presence of God to help them through the problems. They had two serious problems.

1. They were childless. This was a terrible calamity to the people of that day. Children were considered a blessing from God, a great heritage of the Lord. In fact, a Jew whose wife could not bear children was thought to be cut off from God. He was expected to divorce his wife, remarry, and bear children. Therefore, being childless was a critical problem to Zacharias and Elizabeth, a problem that weighed ever so heavily upon their hearts and never left their minds. They felt disfavored and displeasing to God.
2. They were elderly. All the problems that come with age either faced them or stood before them as a threat.

> **"He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt.5:45).**
>
> **"There hath no temptation [trial] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**
>
> **"Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none" (Ps.69:20).**

4 (1:8-9) **Parents—Worship**: they were parents who worshipped. Zacharias was faithful to his priesthood. He had been chosen and ordained by God to be a priest, and he was faithful to that call. He was faithful and steadfast in his duties despite the lack of blessings from God, that is, being childless. Remember that bearing a son in that day and time was considered one of the greatest blessings and signs of God's approval. Not having a son was thought to be an indication of God's disapproval.

What happened was this. In the temple's daily worship, incense was burned upon the altar by a priest before the morning sacrifice and after the evening sacrifice. The offering of incense symbolized that the sacrifices were being offered up to God in the sweetest and most prayerful of spirits. The aroma of the incense was just like prayer; it enveloped the sacrifice and carried it before the very throne of God.

The priests considered the burning of incense to be the highest privilege of the priestly functions. However, because of the large number of priests, some never had the opportunity to offer it up to God. Just who received this privilege was determined by drawing lots. On this particular day, Zacharias experienced one of the greatest days of his life. The lot fell upon him. He was the chosen priest to offer the incense.

The point is this: Zacharias was faithful to God's call. He had been chosen and ordained by God to be a priest, and he had accepted and given his life to that call. He was faithful in his worship despite his *problems and lack of blessings* from God (being childless).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [trials]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas.5:11).

5 (1:10) **Father—Prayer**: they were parents who prayed. Zacharias was praying while he offered the incense up to God, and he had led the people to pray while he sought the Lord in their behalf (cp. v.13). He had led them to be a praying people. They were to be as involved in the prayer and worship as he was. (What a lesson for congregations!)

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.18:19).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

6 (1:11-17) **Parents—Blessings**: they were parents greatly favored by God. God is bound to bless and highly favor any parent...

- who is righteous.
- who worships.
- who prays.
- who leads others to worship and pray.

God favored Zacharias and Elizabeth in five ways.

1. Their need was met by God in a very personal way. God sent an angel to Zacharias. Note the angel appeared on the right side of the altar of incense, the very place of prayer. It was while he was praying, in the act of obedience, that God met his need in this special way.
2. Their prayers were answered. Note the exact words of the Scripture: "Thy prayer is heard." What prayer?
   ⇒ Was Zacharias pouring his heart out about being childless, despite his age?
   ⇒ Was Zacharias praying for the redemption of Israel, for the coming of the Messiah?

Scripture does not say. But *both* prayers were now being answered. Elizabeth was to bear a son, and the Messiah was to be born. Their son was to be named John which means *the grace of Jehovah*.

3. Their son was to be great.
   a. He would cause his parents to rejoice because of his *life*. He was to be everything that parents could want in a child. He would not shame them, but he would bring joy to their hearts.
   b. He would cause many to rejoice because of his *contribution* to society. He would bring joy to all their friends, and he would bring joy to the nation as a whole. Many would joy in such a commitment and contribution as his.
   c. He would be great in the sight of God Himself, great because of his *faithfulness* (obedience). He would be like one of the great prophets of old.
   d. He would live a *disciplined* and *controlled* life, abstaining from wine and strong drink and from the very appearance of evil.
   e. He would be filled with the *Holy Spirit* from the very first, a vessel chosen by God for a very special service, *fitted* in a very special way.

Thought 1. Note the five traits that made John great. How desperately believers need the same traits in their own lives.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

Thought 2. The point to see about Zacharias and Elizabeth is that God did hear their prayer and bless them richly. He favored them because they were faithful to Him.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).

4. Their son was to be a prophet, turning many to the Lord God.
5. Their son was to be the forerunner of the promised Messiah. His ministry was to be like that of Elijah, the greatest of the prophets (Mal.4:5; cp. Mt.17:10).

7 (1:18-19) **Parents—Promises—Faith, Weakness of**: they were parents who found it difficult to believe the humanly impossible. Note two things.

1. Zacharias just could not believe the message and the promise of God. He had been praying, but apparently he had not thought God would answer, certainly not by doing the impossible—by overruling the laws of nature. Note that Zacharias' question was the question of unbelief. He asked the very same question asked by Abraham (Gen.15:8), but Zacharias asked the question in a spirit of unbelief. He informed the angel that he and Elizabeth were too old to have children.
2. The very Word and promise of God should have been enough to convince Zacharias, but he was weak in faith. He had to ask for additional assurance. He asked for a sign—a sign other than *God's Word and promise* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Gabriel*—Lk.1:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:19) **Gabriel**: means the *man of God* or the *hero of God* or the *mighty one of God*. Note that Gabriel said two things about himself...
1. He is the one who actually stands in the presence of God.
2. He is the one who brings good news to men.
   ⇒ He shared the restoration of Israel with Daniel (Dan.8:16; 9:21f).
   ⇒ He shared the birth of the forerunner with Zacharias (Lk.1:13f).
   ⇒ He shared the birth of the Messiah with Mary (Lk.1:26f).

8 (1:20-22) **Distrust—Unbelief—Discipline of God**: they were parents who had to be disciplined by God. Zacharias had failed to believe God; therefore, he had to be disciplined and taught to grow in trust more and more.
1. Zacharias had asked for a sign. He had let his tongue speak instead of his heart. Therefore, God gave him a sign—the sign of stopping his tongue during the nine months before John was born.
2. Zacharias had failed to receive the Word of God. Therefore, God took away his ability to share the Word to men.
3. Zacharias had spoken words of distrust and unbelief; therefore, God saved him from speaking any more words of distrust and unbelief.

Thought 1. Every true child of God knows the discipline of God's hand. His discipline differs with each of us, but each of us can recognize His discipline nevertheless (see outline and notes—Heb.12:5-13).

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, or faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb.12:5-6).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee" (Dt.8:5).

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law" (Ps.94:12).

"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: for whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Pr.3:11-12).

"O LORD, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing" (Jer.10:24).

Thought 2. God will not allow man to disbelieve and distrust forever. The day is coming when he will stop all disbelief and distrust just as He did with Zacharias.

Note that Zacharias tarried in the temple much longer than usual. The people became restless, wondering what had happened. When he came out, he was supposed to lead the people in a benediction, but he was unable to speak. All he could do was motion with his hand. Note a significant lesson: the people could tell Zacharias had been in the presence of God. They thought he had seen a vision. Despite Zacharias' unbelief, he had still lived a faithful life before God; therefore, God still met him and gave His promise to Zacharias and Elizabeth.

Thought 1. What hope for us all, even when our faith is weak!

9 (1:23-25) **Promises—Seeking God**: they were parents who saw God fulfill His promise. But note: these parents did two things that reveal why God was able to bless them.
1. They were responsible. Zacharias was sick; he had lost his voice completely. Yet he fulfilled his duties despite being disciplined with the infirmity. He did what he could, responsibly and faithfully. What an example!
2. They withdrew into the presence of God. After Zacharias completed his duties, he and his dear wife returned home. Of course, Zacharias would stick close to home, walking in meditation and prayer because of his experience and being unable to talk with others. But note especially Elizabeth's behavior. She hid herself for five months. Why? For the same reason any of us would withdraw after being visited by such an angelic being with so great a message. She needed time alone with God to absorb all that was happening and to prepare herself for the rearing of one who was destined to be so greatly used by God.

Note how the thought that she was hiding her pregnancy from the public is inaccurate. She hid herself only for the first five months of her pregnancy. She became public after the five months (cp. v.39-40, 57).

Thought 1. Note a crucial point. The call to special service necessitates a period of preparation, especially the preparation of oneself in the presence of God. Time alone with God for meditation and prayer over God's call is essential.

> **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:12-13).**
>
> **"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:22).**
>
> **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).**
>
> **"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast" (Ps.57:1).**

	C. Mary, the Mother of Jesus: Submission to God's Will, 1:26-38 (cp. Mt.1:18-25)	be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:	1) Son of the Highest 2) Son of David[DS3]
1 The angel Gabriel a. Was sent from God b. Was sent to the most obscure place	26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,	33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.	c. His eternal kingdom
2 Mary was pure, a virgin[DS1]	27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.	34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?	**6 Mary was expected to believe the miraculous** a. Her perplexity
3 Mary was highly favored by God	28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.	35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.	b. Her conception: By the Holy Spirit & the power of God c. Her child: The Son of God
4 Mary was very human a. Greatly troubled	29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.	36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.	**7 Mary was encouraged to believe: "With God nothing is impossible"** a. God's other miracle
b. Fearful	30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.	37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.	b. God's great power
5 Mary was told she was to bear the Messiah a. His name: Jesus[DS2]	31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.	38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.	**8 Mary was submissive**
b. His great person	32 He shall be great, and shall		

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

C. Mary, the Mother of Jesus: Submission to God's Will, 1:26-38

(1:26-38) **Introduction**: little information is given about Mary in the Bible. However, what is said is striking and sets before us a tremendous example of *submissiveness to God's will*. Submissiveness to God is an absolute essential for every believer.

1. The angel Gabriel (v.26).
2. Mary was pure, a virgin (v.27).
3. Mary was highly favored by God (v.28).
4. Mary was very human (v.29-30).
5. Mary was told she was to bear the Messiah (v.31-33).
6. Mary was expected to believe the miraculous (v.34-35).
7. Mary was encouraged to believe: "With God nothing is impossible" (v.36-37).
8. Mary was submissive (v.38).

1 (1:26) **Nazareth—Gabriel**: the angel Gabriel was sent from God. This was Gabriel's second mission surrounding the birth of Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.1:19). Note the time is given. It was six months after Elizabeth's conception that Gabriel was sent to an obscure village, Nazareth of Galilee. Galilee bordered Gentile or heathen nations; therefore, it was sometimes called Galilee of the Gentiles. Nazareth was a despised city, considered inferior by the rest of Israel. The people were a conquered people especially despised by the Romans. The city and its citizens were the object of deep prejudice by Jews and Romans alike (cp. Jn.1:46). (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Nazareth*—Mt.2:23; 13:53-58.)

Thought 1. God is no respecter of persons or places. He sends a message to Nazareth as readily as He does to Jerusalem (cp. Lk.1:5-25), to a believer in Nazareth (Mary) as quickly as he does to a believer in Jerusalem (Zacharias).

Thought 2. A place, whether city or nation, is not judged by its institutions and advantages, but by the righteous people within its borders (cp. Gen.18:23f).

2 (1:27) **Jesus Christ, Birth—Mary—Betrothed—Espoused—Purity**: Mary was pure, a virgin. She had never been touched by a man, not immorally. This is unmistakably and clearly stated. She confirmed the fact herself (cp. v.34).

1. The argument that the Hebrew word "alma" means a young woman who could have a questionable character is weak (Is.7:14). When a Hebrew spoke of a young woman (alma) he meant virgin. This is clear when the word *alma* is studied. The word is used six times in the Bible, always referring to a young woman with pure character.
   - ⇒ Rebekah, the young woman, was certainly a virgin (Gen.24:43). The whole context verifies the point.
   - ⇒ Miriam, the young sister of Moses, was also pointed to as a virgin by the context (Ex.2:8).
   - ⇒ Young women of pure character were those who were worthy to participate in the worship of God (Ps.68:25).
   - ⇒ The young women who were worthy of Solomon's love were not of impure character (Song of Sol.1:3).
   - ⇒ There were young women who were compared with queens and concubines (Song of Sol.6:8).
   - ⇒ The maiden (young woman) of Proverbs was contrasted with the adulterous woman (Pr.30:19-20).

In view of the heavy weight of this argument, the logical translation of *alma* is virgin. Of course, the virgin birth does not rest on this argument. However, we need to realize that unbelief snatches at every little gnat, trying its best to add every thing it can to disprove the divinity of Christ.

Thought 1. Man desperately needs to turn from his unbelief and to trust Christ with all his heart. There is little time left for any of us.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).**

2. Mary was espoused to Joseph. Being espoused was something like an engagement, except it was more binding. It lasted one year. Two matters are important in discussing Mary's virginity.
   a. In the espousal period sexual contact was adultery and resulted in stoning.
   b. The espousal was so serious a matter that if it were broken a divorce had to be secured.

3. Mary and Joseph were both godly, so godly that God could choose them to be the parents of His Son. It was impossible that God would have chosen an immoral man and woman to bear and rear His Son, not when He had the power to control the events.

Thought 1. There are two striking lessons in the purity of Mary.
1) God expects both women and men to be sexually pure, untouched by a man or woman until they are married.
2) God is looking for pure women and men to use in the ministry of the gospel and in meeting the desperate needs of the world.

> **"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour....For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness" (1 Th.4:3-4, 7).**
>
> **"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor.7:1-2).**
>
> **"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph.5:3).**
>
> **"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" (1 Tim.5:22).**
>
> **"The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness....that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit.2:3-5).**
>
> **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in heart" (Mt.5:27-28).**
>
> **"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev.14:4).**
>
> **"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully" (Ps.24:3-4).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:27) **Jesus Christ, Virgin Birth**: in looking at the virgin birth of Christ, man needs to think deeply and honestly. Both are necessary: man must be honest, and he must engage in concentrated thought. One question needs to be asked. Why would God's Son have to enter the world through a virgin? Or more simply put, why was Christ born of a virgin? Why was a virgin birth necessary? (Note: Mary confirmed that she was a virgin, v.34.)

1. The birth of God's Son required a miracle. He could not be born through the natural process as other men are. If He had been born as other men, His very birth would indicate that He was no more than mere man. Very simply, any person who enters the world through a man and a woman is a mere man or a mere woman. He or she can be nothing more. But this is not so with Christ. Christ already existed. Therefore, if God willed to send His Son into the world, He would

have to choose another way. All Christ needed was a body. As He Himself said to God the Father: "A body hast thou prepared for me" (Heb.10:5).

2. The birth of God's Son required a combined act on God's part and on woman's part. If God's Son were to become a man and identify with men, He had to come through the process of conception through a woman. Why? Because man can only come through the woman. Therefore, if God willed to send His Son into the world as a man, He would have to perform a miracle, causing Mary to conceive by an act of His divine power.

Thought 1. A question needs to be asked. Why is it so hard to believe that God can cause Mary to miraculously conceive? Why is it so hard to believe that God exists and that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16)?

Thought 2. Just imagine what science can do in the fertilization of female eggs today. Is God not able to do so much more? How foolish our unbelief causes us to act. The problem is not God, but our faith: "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37; 18:27. Cp. Heb.11:6, which is a warning to all.)

3. The birth of God's Son required a miraculous nature—both a divine nature and a human nature.
   ⇒ He had to be born of a woman to partake of human nature. (Cp. Heb.2:14-18.)
   ⇒ He had to be born by a miraculous act of God so as not to partake of man's corruption. This was critical if we are to escape corruption and live forever. Think about it. Our faith must be in an incorruptible Savior if we are to be covered by His incorruption. God had to identify with us by becoming one with us and by conquering our depraved and doomed nature. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Jesus Christ, Birth*—Mt.1:16 for more discussion.)

4. The birth of God's Son required the birth of a perfect nature. Why? Because a perfect life needed to be lived. Righteousness, that is, perfection, needed to be secured. An Ideal Life (that is, a perfect, righteous life) had to be lived so that it could stand for and cover all men in perfection and in righteousness. Honest thought confesses that no man has been or is perfect. Man comes short. His *coming short* of God's glory is tragically pictured in the ultimate fate of life: death.

But God acted. God did everything to secure righteousness and perfection for man. He took every step and performed every act necessary to *save His people* from their sins and from death. He did it from beginning to end, from birth to exaltation. God sent His Son into the world, not through a man and a woman but through a miraculous act of His own upon the virgin Mary. Jesus Christ was thereby the God-Man. This says at least four things. (See notes—Ro.5:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:3 for more discussion.)

   a. As God-Man, Christ was able to consummate both the human and divine. He had the capacity and innate power not to sin (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16). Therefore His Godly nature empowered Him to live righteously, never doing wrong and always choosing and doing right (Heb.5:8; 2 Cor.5:21). By living a sinless life, Christ was able to secure righteousness, the Ideal Righteousness, that will cover and stand for all men.
   b. As God-Man, Christ was also able to bear the sins and the judgment of sin for all men. When He died, He died as the Perfect and Ideal Man. Therefore, His death is able to cover and stand for all men.
   c. As God-Man, Christ was able to arise from the dead. Note the phenomenal words: "...His [God's] son Jesus Christ, our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh [that is, made a man]; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to *the spirit of holiness* by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:3-4). He lived a perfect and holy life by which He became the Perfect and Ideal Man; therefore, His resurrection covers and stands for every man.
   d. As God-Man, Christ was exalted to sit at the right hand of the Father—to live eternally in the heavenly dimension of being, in God's very own presence. As the Perfect and Ideal Man, His exaltation into the heavenly or spiritual dimension is able to blaze the path into heaven for every man. He is the forerunner into heaven for every man (Heb.6:20). His exaltation as the Ideal Man covers and stands for the exaltation of every man.

5. The birth of God's Son required the creative Word of God. God created the world by simply speaking the Word. God always creates by the power of His Word and the power of His Word alone. Therefore, when God chose...
   • to create a body for His Son, He created that body by simply speaking the Word (Heb.10:5).
   • to send His Son into the world, He sent His Son by simply speaking the Word.

It is the same with the new birth or the re-creation of man's spirit. It is by the Word of God, God's simply speaking the Word, that man is born again. The act of the spiritual birth, of the re-creation, is not seen, felt, or touched. Nothing physical happens, but the re-creation does occur. *It occurs by the Word of God* (cp. 1 Pt.1:23).

6. The birth of God's Son required the virgin birth because Christ is the *only begotten* Son of God. He is God's only Son, who possesses all the nature and fulness of God Himself (Ph.2:6-7; Col.2:9). Therefore, His birth had to be different. He had to enter the world differently from others, for He is different by the very nature of His being. He had to enter the world in such a way as to proclaim His divine nature, yet in such a way that would allow Him to partake of human nature. This is critically important. His birth had to involve both the act of mankind and of God Himself. Why? Because the Son of God had to be proclaimed to be the Son of God.
   ⇒ There is no salvation apart from His *being* the Son of God.
   ⇒ There is no salvation apart from His being *proclaimed* to be the Son of God.

Man can be saved only if the Son of God *is*, only if He exists, and only if He is *proclaimed*. The Son of God must *exist*, and we must *hear* of Him if we are to be saved. He and His message are both essential. His virgin birth proclaims Him to be the *only begotten* Son of God, the only Son sent into the world by the direct and miraculous intervention of God.

7. The birth of God's Son required a second Adam, a second man...
   • born just like the first Adam, by the Word of God using natural substance.
   • born to become what the first Adam failed to become: the Representative Man, the Ideal Man, the Pattern, the Perfect One in whom all men could find their Representative, their Ideal, their Pattern, their Perfection.

- born to be what Adam failed to be: the Man who always chose to love and obey God in all things, thereby passing on the nature of the ideal righteousness and perfection that can stand for and cover all men.
- born to become what the first Adam failed to pass on to man: the Way to God, the Truth of God, and the Life of God which all men can trust and follow (Jn.14:6).
- born to offer what the first Adam failed to pass on to man: the nature of righteousness and life, both life abundant and life eternal (cp. Ro.5:15-19; Jn.10:10).

8. The birth of God's Son required an espoused state, and not a single or married state. Why?
   ⇒ Because a single woman would cause far more questioning and heap far more contempt upon Christ and His followers.
   ⇒ Because a married woman would not be a virgin and God's Son had to be born of a virgin as indicated by the points above.

The espoused state provided the ideal marital relationship for God to use in sending His Son into the world (see note 2—Lk.1:27). The fact that Jewish society was using the espoused relationship as a preparation for marriage shows how God was preparing the world for the coming of His Son. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Fulness of Time*—Gal.4:4.)

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal.4:4).

3 (1:28) **Grace—God, Call of—Favored by God**: Mary was highly favored by God. Three simple, yet meaningful, things were said to Mary.

1. She was to be highly favored by God. Note the angel did not immediately tell Mary how she was to be favored by God, that she was God's choice to bear and to be the mother of the Messiah. That came later in the conversation. The angel had to give her time to adjust to the shock of his spectacular appearance. For right now, he simply announced that she was to be highly favored by God—*a unique privilege.*

Thought 1. Just think! God does *favor* us: He saves us, gifts us, uses us. We are favored by the God of the universe—a phenomenal privilege and an awesome responsibility to make ourselves available to receive His favors.

2. The Lord was also with Mary. She did not walk through life alone. God was with her. Mary's life had pleased God to the point that He could favor her and be with her. She allowed God to walk with her and look after her life, so God was able to be with her. This means that God...
   - *had been* with her (past).
   - *was* with her (present).
   - *would be* with her (future).

No matter where Mary had to walk or what she had to do, God promised to be with her.

3. Mary was to be blessed among women. It should be noted that this clause is not in the oldest and best manuscripts. Nevertheless, the point is made in v.48. Mary was to be blessed and to be called blessed by men of all generations (cp. Judg.5:24 for a similar declaration by Deborah concerning Jael).

4 (1:29-30) **Humility**: Mary was very human. She was both troubled and stricken with fear. The fear was understandable, for an angelic being from God stood before her. He stood in all the dazzling splendor that is necessary to reveal that he was truly from God. The fact that Mary was *troubled* needs to be briefly considered.

1. Mary was "troubled at his saying," at what the angel told her. It was the message that caused her to be troubled, the fact that...
   - she was highly favored.
   - the Lord was with her.
   - she was blessed among women.

Thought 1. Since Christ has come, every person can now...
- be highly favored by God.
- have the Lord's presence.
- be blessed among all others.

2. Mary was troubled because she did not understand how God could so greatly favor a person like herself. She never expected to be greatly favored by Him. This was deep humility. Mary was not a proud, self-centered, flighty, or frivolous young lady who was conscious of herself or felt that she merited and deserved the attention of others. She was a young lady who loved God and had determined to live a pure and responsible life. Apparently, from her response throughout this passage, she had a sweet spirit that was full of softness, warmth, and tenderness, and was responsive and willing, subjective and giving, thoughtful and kind. However, Mary never dreamed she was anyone special. Therefore, when she heard that God was to favor her and use her in a very special way, she was troubled. How could she, so ordinary and humble, do anything special for God? What a striking example Mary was!

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).

"For all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).

"Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off" (Ps.138:6).

5 (1:31-33) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: Mary was told by the angel how she was to be favored by God. She was to bear and be the mother of the Messiah. Note three startling and profound things about Mary's Son.

1. *His name*. Mary was actually told what she was to name the Messiah: Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus*—Lk.1:31).
2. *His great person*.
   a. He was to be called the Son of the Highest. The Highest, of course, is God. Therefore, Jesus is the Son of God, that is, of the very nature of God. He is "over all, God blessed for ever. Amen" (Ro.9:5).
   b. He was to be the Son of David and was to receive the throne of David. He was of the line of David. This indicates that Mary was a descendant of David; therefore, Christ Himself would become a descendant of David (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Lk.1:32-33).
3. *His eternal kingdom*. Jesus was to teach that His kingdom would not be of this earth, for nothing on this earth lasts (Jn.19:36). Therefore, the kingdom was to be spiritual, by which it would be eternal (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:31) **Jesus** (iesous): Savior; He will save. The Hebrew form is *Joshua* (yasha), meaning Jehovah is salvation or He is the Savior. The idea is that of deliverance, of being saved from some terrible disaster that leads to perishing (cp. Jn.3:16). (Cp. Lk.9:23; Ro.8:3; Gal.1:4; Heb.2:14-18; 7:25.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(1:32-33) **Jesus Christ, Names—Titles, Son of David**: Christ is the Son of David, a descendant of David. Note two things.

1. Christ is to reign upon the throne of David. But it will not be the people who will give Him the throne. They will not allow Him to rule over them. The throne will be given to Him by God. God will be the One to place Him upon the throne and give Him the rule over the people (see note—Mt.1:1).
2. The promise of ruling over the house of Jacob and of possessing a kingdom forever apparently has both a literal and a spiritual meaning, both a temporal and eternal meaning (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; note—Lk.3:24-31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45; DEEPER STUDY # 4—1:49; note—Ro.11:1-36, esp. 11:25-36).

6 (1:34-35) **Jesus Christ, Birth; Deity; Son of God—Faith**: Mary was expected to believe the miraculous, but she was puzzled. She was not doubting or distrusting the message. She was not asking for some sign or proof like Zacharias (v.18). She was simply asking for more information. She was single and had never known a man sexually. How could she possibly bear a child without knowing a man? Note exactly what is said about her conception.

1. "The Holy Spirit shall *come upon thee*." The thought *is not after* the manner of men, but *after the manner* of God's Spirit. What is the manner or operation of God's Spirit? God's Spirit sets apart and activates, creates and re-creates by *the Word of God*. God's Spirit simply speaks and it is done (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.5—Lk.1:27). There is no such idea as a *crude mating* between the Holy Spirit and Mary. God's Spirit simply speaks and it is done, no matter what is to be done. (How foolish are the *crude thoughts* and unbelief of men!)
2. "The power of the Highest [God] shall overshadow thee." God Himself was going to look after the whole matter. The child's conception and growth during pregnancy and His birth and life were under the shadow and wing of Almighty God. It was God's power that saw to the whole operation, not the presence or power of an angel or of a man or of any other creature.
3. The child born of Mary would *be holy*, "the Son of God." Note the most critical point: who "the Son of God" is.
   ⇒ He is "the holy One" born by the power and the Word and the will of God through the virgin Mary.
   ⇒ He is "the holy One" whom "God sent forth...made of a woman" by His power, Word, and will (Gal.4:4).

Thought 1. Believers are to believe the miraculous.

> **"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).**
>
> **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).**
>
> **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).**

7 (1:36-37) **Faith—God, Power of**: Mary was encouraged to believe that "with God nothing is impossible." God encouraged Mary with two *impossible* facts.

1. The news that her sister Elizabeth, who was beyond child-bearing age, had conceived a son in her old age and was now six months pregnant. The fact that God could take her sister in her old age and cause her to conceive demonstrated God's power. Visiting Elizabeth would encourage Mary.
2. With men much is impossible. To say that all things are possible with men is far from the truth. When Mary heard and meditated upon the simple statement, "With God all things are possible," she was bound to be encouraged. The statement was simple and striking. It could be easily remembered and understood.

Thought 1. God expects us to believe Him and His power, regardless of circumstances and our feelings of insignificance.

> **"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).**
>
> **"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job.42:2).**
>
> **"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps.115:3).**

8 (1:38) **Surrender**: Mary was submissive. Her response was immediate and brief, only one short sentence, yet it was striking and meaningful.

1. The word "handmaid" (doule) means slave-girl. Mary was saying that she was a bond-slave, willing to sell herself out completely to God. She would possess herself no longer but would give herself completely to God.
2. God's Word was her will. She surrendered totally to obey God. She would serve as He willed, being completely obedient and fulfilling His purpose entirely. She would act "according to *Thy Word*."

Imagine what Mary was saying, the enormous depth of her trust and dedication to God.

1. There was the idea of being an unwed mother (Lk.1:26f; Mt.1:18). Who of that day would ever believe Mary's story? Required was a willingness to be available to God regardless of the price.
2. There was Joseph's discovery of her pregnancy (Mt.1:19). The shock of broken trust and of personal embarrassment were more than a person could be expected to bear (Mt.1:20). Required was a willingness on Joseph's part to forget self completely.
3. There was the threat of being condemned to death because of adultery (Dt.22:23f). She had to face the possibility of being stoned because she would appear to be immoral (cp. Jn.8:5).

Thought 1. Surrender to God is an absolute essential both for salvation and service.

> **"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt.12:50).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:17).**
>
> **"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps.40:8).**
>
> **"Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness" (Ps.143:10).**
>
> **"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (Pr.23:26).**

	D. Elizabeth's Supernatural Proclamation: A Very Unusual Testimony, 1:39-45	Holy Ghost:	with the Spirit 4) Spoke loudly
1 Mary visited Elizabeth a. Went with haste b. Went to the town of Juda c. Entered Elizabeth's home & greeted her d. Was welcomed by Elizabeth's supernatural proclamation 1) Heard Mary's greeting 2) Felt the babe leap 3) Was instantly filled	39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the	42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blesssed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.	**2 She proclaimed a uniqueness about Mary & her child** **3 She proclaimed that Mary's child was her Lord** a. The great confession b. The clear sign **4 She proclaimed that Mary's faith would receive the promise**

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

D. Elizabeth's Supernatural Proclamation: A Very Unusual Testimony, 1:39-45

(1:39-45) **Introduction**: whatever confession was borne about the Baby conceived in Mary was of critical importance. Why? Because the baby was...

- Jesus (v.31).
- The Son of the Highest (v.32).
- The Son of David (v.32).
- The Ruler over the house of Jacob forever (v.33).
- The Ruler whose kingdom has no end (v.33).
- The One born of the Holy Spirit (v.35).
- The Son of God Himself (v.35).

In this passage God sees to it that a supernatural confession is proclaimed, a crucial confession that needs to be studied in depth. Note that this is the very first testimony ever given by human lips about Jesus.

1. Mary visited Elizabeth (v.39-42).
2. Elizabeth proclaimed a uniqueness about Mary and her child (v.42).
3. Elizabeth proclaimed the child to be her Lord (v.43-44).
4. Elizabeth proclaimed that Mary's faith would receive the promise (v.45).

1 (1:39-42) **Encouragement—Comfort—Trials**: Mary visited Elizabeth, and her visit was memorable. She went "with haste" (spoudes). The word means speed, diligence, care, earnestness, zeal. The idea is that Mary went with purpose and earnestness. She was not going on a casual, friendly visit. She had a very specific reason for going, a meaningful purpose. She was going so that she and Elizabeth could encourage and share with each other. They both had similar situations. God had acted upon both their bodies, performing a miracle for both. Elizabeth's womb was made alive for the son of Zacharias to be conceived, and Mary's womb had conceived as a virgin. Mary in particular could be encouraged, for Elizabeth was already six months pregnant. The six months' pregnancy was visible evidence that God had already acted upon her miraculously. It should be noted that Mary knew about Elizabeth's miraculous conception, but Elizabeth did not know about Mary's conception. Zacharias and Elizabeth lived in Juda. The town is unknown today, but most commentators think it was the same as Hebron. Hebron is said to be in the hill country of Juda and to belong to the priests (Josh. 21:10-11).

Mary entered Elizabeth's home and greeted her. It was at the *very moment* of Mary's greeting that Elizabeth's supernatural greeting began. Mary greeted Elizabeth, and three unusual things immediately happened.

1. The babe leaped in Elizabeth's womb. The baby had leaped or kicked before, but this leap was different from all the others. It was a sign to Elizabeth that the Babe within Mary was someone very, very special, someone who was about to be revealed to her under the filling (influence) of the Holy Spirit.

2. Elizabeth was instantly "filled with the Holy Spirit," and a very special spirit of prophecy was given her. The Holy Spirit seized her and led her to greet Mary as the mother of the Messiah, the coming Lord. Note: Elizabeth was living an obedient life before God. This was the reason God was able to use her and the Holy Spirit was able to infill her with His presence.

3. Elizabeth spoke in a loud voice. She was full of joy and exaltation for the Messiah, full of unusual emotions. She was under the influence and impulse of the Spirit of God. She was being guided to proclaim that the Baby of Mary was "the Lord" (v.43, 45).

2 (1:42) **Jesus Christ, Honored—Mary, Blessed—Humility—Envy**: Elizabeth proclaimed a uniqueness about Mary and her child. Note three things.

1. The very first act toward Christ was a *proclamation of praise*. Elizabeth was the *first* person to know about the birth of Christ other than Mary, and God saw to it that her first act was to honor His Son. God would have His Son to be honored on earth even as He is honored in heaven.

> **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).**
>
> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).**

2. Mary was blessed, but she was blessed because "the fruit of her womb" was great.
3. Elizabeth demonstrated a very sweet and humble spirit, a meekness and love that were so desperately needed by so many. She was older, and by being the wife of a priest, she was recognized by the world as being of a higher social class and more honorable. Yet Mary, poor and unrecognized by the world, had been chosen by God to serve in a more special way. Elizabeth showed no envy or jealousy, no hurt or withdrawal. Contrariwise, she rejoiced over Mary's call.

> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

3 (1:43-44) **Confession—Jesus Christ, Deity**: Elizabeth proclaimed the child to be her Lord.

1. Note the great confession of Elizabeth. Elizabeth called Mary's Baby, "my Lord." In a moment of quickening power, the Holy Spirit revealed that the Babe was not only the promised Messiah, but He was the Son of the Highest, of God Himself (Lk.1:32, 35). There was no question that Elizabeth was using the term "Lord" in its highest sense. She was under the power of the Holy Spirit; therefore, she was confessing the truth under the influence of God. The truth was that the coming Child of Mary was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. She was also contrasting her son with the Son of Mary. Her own son was to be great, but the Son of Mary was greater. He was *her Lord*, the Lord God Himself, the Son of the Highest.
2. Note the clear sign given to Elizabeth. The sign was unmistakable. Upon hearing the greeting of Mary as she entered the door, Elizabeth's heart leaped for joy and the babe in her womb leaped much more than usual. In Elizabeth's words, "The babe leaped in my womb *for joy* [exultation]." God caused the babe to leap (the word is strong, indicating a struggling leap) as a sign of great joy in the presence of One so great that Elizabeth would call Him "my Lord."

> **Thought 1.** Elizabeth's confession of her Lord was a very personal thing. She apparently never shared it with John. John did not know Jesus was the Messiah until Jesus' baptism (Jn.1:31-34). John had to discover and confess Christ for himself. So do we all. It is a *personal* decision.
>
> > **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
> >
> > **"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.16:15-17).**
> >
> > **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**
>
> **Thought 2.** Elizabeth's confession was bound to encourage Mary.
> 1) *God sees to it that we are encouraged* when we need encouragement. Mary needed assurance, so God took her where she could be assured. But note: she obeyed God. She went where God led her. It was while she was obeying that God was able to encourage her.
>
> > **"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt.10:30-31).**
> >
> > **"For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not: I will help thee" (Is.41:13).**
> >
> > **"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Is.43:1).**
>
> 2) Elizabeth willingly humbled herself to help Mary. She was older and held a higher position as the wife of a priest, yet she denied and surrendered herself to push Mary and her child forward.
>
> > **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
> >
> > **"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Ro.12:15).**

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

4 (1:45) **Faith—Promise**: Elizabeth proclaimed that Mary's faith would receive the promise. Note two significanct points.

1. There are two reasons why Mary has been blessed by believers of every generation.
   a. Mary believed the Word of God sent to her (Lk.1:38). Contrast her belief with Zacharias' unbelief (Lk.1:20).
   b. Mary was related to Christ in a very, very special way.

Thought 1. The same two facts are essential for us if we wish to be blessed by God.

1) We must believe the Word of God sent to us.

"Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Lk.11:28).

"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th.2:13).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

2) We must become related to Christ by adoption. We must become the adopted children of God.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

2. The result of Mary's believing the Word of God was that she was to see the performance of God's promises, the things told her from the Lord.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).

"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" (Dt.7:9).

"He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations" (Ps.105:8).

	E. Mary's Magnificent Song About God: God's Glorious Mercy & Deliverance, 1:46-56		
1 God was the subject of her song	46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,	to generation. 51 He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.	**4 God had reversed the order of things on earth** a. Had scattered the proud
2 God was her Savior	47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.	52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.	b. Had dethroned the mighty & exalted the humble
a. Had considered her low estate	48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.	53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.	c. Had filled the hungry & emptied the rich
b. Causes her to be remembered	49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.	54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;	**5 God had helped His people** a. Remembered His mercy
3 God was to be proclaimed a. His power	50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation	55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.	b. Remembered promise to send the Messiah
b. His holiness		56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.	**6 Conclusion: Mary visited Elizabeth for about three months**
c. His mercy			

Holpen - to take hold of

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THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

E. Mary's Magnificent Song About God: God's Glorious Mercy and Deliverance, 1:46-56

(1:46-56) **Introduction**: Mary's song is known as the *Magnificat*. It has some similarity to the Song of Hannah (1 Sam.2:1-10). However, there is a striking difference between the two songs. Hannah proclaimed a triumph over her enemies; Mary proclaimed God and His glorious mercy to man. Mary was proclaiming the salvation of God, a salvation wrought through the promised Messiah, her Savior. She predicted that the Savior would be welcomed by those who reverenced Him (v.50); but He would be rejected by the proud, the powerful, and the rich (v.51-53).

1. God was the subject of her song (v.46).
2. God was her Savior (v.47-48).
3. God was to be proclaimed (v.49-50).
4. God had reversed the order of things on earth (v.51-53).
5. God had helped His people (v.54-55).
6. Conclusion: Mary visited Elizabeth for about three months (v.56).

1 (1:46) **Praise of God**: God was the subject of Mary's song. Mary was not singing about herself; she was not praising herself. She was not thinking about things which she might accomplish. She said very definitely, "My soul doth magnify *the Lord*." The Lord was the subject of her song, the subject of her praise and rejoicing. Note two things.

1. Mary was bound to be tired and exhausted. She had just arrived from a long trip and had not even had time to sit down. As soon as she walked in the door, Elizabeth began her proclamation of praise under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Mary's song followed right on the heels of Elizabeth's song. Mary forgot her tiredness, for her faith was being confirmed. She now knew that the angel who had come to her was not a figment of her imagination, not an illusion, not a false vision, not some dreamy state of mind (v.28). He was real; and his message that she, as a virgin, would bear the Son of God was true. Her faith was reassured and confirmed.

> **Thought 1.** God assures and confirms the faith of us all. We believe and trust, and as the need arises, God steps in to confirm the reality of what we believe.
>
> > **"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" (Dt.7:9).**
>
> **Thought 2.** The one thing that can overcome tiredness and exhaustion is an experience with God. More than anything else, the experience of *genuine* prayer and seeking God will cause a person to forget tiredness of body. How desperately we need to seek God!
>
> > **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**

2. The word "magnify" (megalunei) means to declare the greatness of. The idea is habitual; that is, it was the habit of Mary's soul to magnify the Lord. She kept on magnifying Him.

Thought 1. Mary was greatly blessed by God, yet she did not slip into the sin of pride, nor did she think that she was a favorite of God. The more we are blessed by God, the more dangerous the sin of pride becomes. We must learn to live praising God more and more. The more He blesses us, the more we must learn to praise Him.

> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).**
>
> **"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps.9:11).**
>
> **"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Ps.100:4).**

2 (1:47-48) **Humility**: God was Mary's Savior. Mary said three significant things.

1. God saw her need for a Savior. Mary recognized her need, that she was a sinner and needed a Savior just like everyone else. And, more importantly, she made a *personal confession*: "God is *my* Savior." She was proclaiming that God saw her need and saved her.
2. God saw her low estate. Mary recognized where she had come from, just how lowly a person she was. In the eyes of the world, she was a *nobody: poor*, *obscure*, *unknown*, *insignificant*, of *little purpose* and *meaning* in life. The very expression "the low estate of His handmaiden" suggests that Mary was even considered the least within her own household.

Thought 1. God usually chooses the least person to more clearly demonstrate His mercy and power (cp. Gideon, Judg.6:15; Leah, Gen.29:31; believers, 1 Cor.1:26-29).

Thought 2. We must all know where we have come from, just how far down we were when God saved us (Ro.3:23).

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Thought 3. No matter how *low*, how *nothing* we may be, God cares and will reach down and out to us. He will take us by the hand, lift us up, and give us purpose, meaning, and significance. God will make us somebody and use us, giving us a full and meaningful life (Jn.10:10).

> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**

3. God will cause her to be remembered. All believers will highly esteem her and her great dedication to God. But note what Christ said:

> **"And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Lk.11:27-28).**

3 (1:49-50) **God, Attributes**: God was to be proclaimed. Mary proclaimed three of the glorious attributes of God.

1. Mary proclaimed God's power. Two things in particular were in her mind, two phenomenal things.
   a. The promised Messiah was *now* to be born. The hope of the world was now to be fulfilled after so many generations of waiting. God's power was now to be demonstrated in a way never before witnessed.
   b. The promised Messiah was to be born of a virgin. It was to be an event and a method never before witnessed. A miracle was to be performed! The enormous power of God was to be demonstrated *even in the birth of the Messiah*! As Mary testified, "He that is mighty hath done *to me* great things."

> **"And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen" (Lk.19:37).**
>
> **"O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise" (Ps.51:15).**
>
> **"And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing" (Ps.107:22).**

2. Mary proclaimed God's holiness: "Holy is His name"; that is, God is to be set apart as different from all others (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.1:15-16). His very nature, His very being is different. God is both pure being and pure in being, both perfect being and perfect in being. God is holy in name and holy in being, set apart and different from all others.

"Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (Ex.15:11).

"Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy" (Ps.99:9).

3. Mary proclaimed God's mercy. There were at least two thoughts in Mary's mind.
   a. God's glorious mercy to her. He had proven to be her personal Savior (see note—Lk.1:47-48).

"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam.3:22-23).

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Mic.7:18).

   b. God's glorious mercy in finally sending the Messiah (Savior) to those who feared (reverenced) Him. Note that Mary saw God's mercy passing down from generation to generation.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:12-13).

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds" (Ps.108:4).

4 (1:51-53) **God, Sovereignty—Power**: God had reversed the order of things on earth. Mary proclaimed what the results of the Messiah's coming were to be. There were to be three results, and all three are given in the Greek aorist tense; that is, they are proclaimed as having already happened. Mary saw into the future, and standing there in the future, she proclaimed what the Messiah's coming had already done.

What Mary saw was that the Lord had reversed the order of things on earth. And note: He had done it with "the strength of His arm," that is, not by love but by power.

1. The Lord had scattered the proud. The proud are prideful in their thoughts, in "the imagination of their hearts." They think themselves better...

- by looks
- by person
- by position
- by wealth
- by ability
- by heritage
- by achievement
- by possessions

Mary predicted that at the end of time, the Lord will have scattered all such pride. The proud will have been scattered "in the imagination of their hearts."

2. The Lord had dethroned the mighty and exalted the humble. The mighty are those who sit in positions of power, authority, and influence over others. The picture concerns those who take their power and...

- seek their own ends
- fail to serve
- deprive others
- push others down
- abuse others
- enslave others
- bypass others
- misuse others

Mary predicted that at the end of time, the Lord will have dethroned the mighty and exalted them of low degree (see notes—Mt.19:28).

3. The Lord had filled the hungry and emptied the rich. Those who were rich only in this world's goods are seen stripped of all their earthly goods and sent away empty. And those who had nothing of this world, but who put their trust in God, are seen as having received all good things (see note—Eph.1:3 for discussion).

5 (1:54-55) **God, the Savior; Love of**: God had helped His people. Two specific helps were proclaimed.

1. God had remembered His mercy. The people (Israel) desperately needed God's mercy and God's deliverance. They were enslaved by the Romans; therefore, they were frantic in their search for deliverance, so frantic many were turning to false messiahs and other answers to escape their plight. Some were even finding their security in the Roman state and in humanistic answers instead of God. If a people ever needed God to remember His mercy, it was then. Mary proclaimed that the Lord had remembered His mercy.

2. God had remembered His promise of the Messiah. He had promised the Messiah to the fathers of Israel, to Abraham and to Abraham's seed. And note: the promise had now been fulfilled. God had sent the Messiah, the Savior of the world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Abraham*—Jn.4:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25 for more discussion.)

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal.3:16).

"If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:24-29).

6 (1:56) **The Conclusion**: Mary remained with Elizabeth for about three months, the very time that was needed to make sure she was pregnant. She needed the encouragement of Elizabeth until the fact had actually happened and was proven. Note the simple childlikeness of Mary, her need for the support and encouragement of her older sister who was probably more spiritually mature.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

	F. John's Birth and Naming: An Event for All Generations, 1:57-66	that is called by this name. 62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.	
1 The child's birth a. Sealed God's power	57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.	63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.	c. The father confirmed the name John
b. Sealed God's mercy	58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.	64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.	**3 The child's birth caused several important results** a. The father was miraculously healed and praised God
c. Caused all to rejoice	59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.	65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.	b. The people were awestricken
2 The child's name sealed a prophetic witness a. The child was circumcised: Given up to God	60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.	66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.	c. The events were spread abroad
b. The name was disputed	61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred		d. The sense of destiny surrounded the child

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F. John's Birth and Naming: An Event for All Generations, 1:57-66

(1:57-66) **Introduction**: the birth of a child is a significant event for every parent. But the birth of John was a significant event for every generation, an event that says much to every man.

1. The child's birth (v.57-58).
   a. Sealed God's power.
   b. Sealed God's mercy
   c. Caused all to rejoice.
2. The child's name sealed a prophetic witness (v.59-63).
3. The child's birth caused several important results (v.64-66).

1 (1:57-58) **God, Mercy of—Mercy**: the child's birth sealed God's power and mercy.

1. The child's birth sealed God's power. Note these facts.
   ⇒ Elizabeth had conceived when she was old, beyond child-bearing years (Lk.1:18, 36).
   ⇒ Zacharias had been visited by the angel of God and told exactly what would happen (Lk.1:11f).

The fact that the child was born just as God had said is evidence of God's glorious power. God was able to control natural events and to send forth the forerunner of the Messiah *exactly* as He had promised.

> **"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).**
> **"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).**
> **"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).**
> **"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps.115:3).**

2. The child's birth sealed God's mercy, showed that God was merciful in two ways.
   a. The fact that John was born as a *baby of promise* demonstrated that God has mercy upon people, even upon an insignificant woman with a desperate need (see note—Lk.1:7).

> **"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Ps.103:8; cp. v.1-8 for a description of God's mercy).**
> **"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him" (Ps.103:17).**
> **"Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps.106:1).**

   b. The fact that God used John in His plan of salvation demonstrated God's mercy. John was to be greatly involved with the Messiah. God allowed him the glorious privilege. Such a high privilege and call clearly demonstrated God's glorious mercy.

Thought 1. The very same privilege is given to us. God wants to use everyone of us in His plan of salvation, both to be saved and to bear witness of His salvation.

> **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:3-5).**

3. The child's birth caused all to rejoice. God's mercy upon a person's life was bound to make some rejoice. Elizabeth's neighbors and cousins rejoiced with her and all believers rejoice since her. God has had mercy upon the world, and John's birth was one of the significant proofs of His mercy. God sent the forerunner to proclaim the coming of the promised Messiah. The fact that John was born as Scripture predicted and as Zacharias witnessed is proof of God's mercy. God did exactly as He had said. He sent the forerunner to prepare the way for the coming Savior of the world.

2 (1:59-63) **Prophecy, Fulfilled—Obedience**: the child's name sealed a prophetic witness. What happened is interesting. All Jewish males were circumcised on the eighth day after birth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ph.3:3; cp. Gen.17:12; Lev.12:3). Circumcision was the Jewish ceremony where the child was offered up or dedicated to God. Circumcision was the rite or sign that the child was to be a follower of God, a true Jew. It was also the day on which the child was officially named.

Some of the neighbors and relatives wanted the child to be named after the father, Zacharias. However, Elizabeth objected, knowing that the angel had told Zacharias to name the child John. The relatives took the matter to Zacharias, asking him to write the name out for all to see. They, of course, were expecting Zacharias to be pleased with their suggestion that the child be called after him. But Zacharias shocked them. He confirmed that the child was to be named John. He dared not doubt and disobey God again. He was under the discipline of God for having disobeyed Him before.

The point is that the name John sealed the prophetic witness. The angel had told Zacharias what to name the child. His name was to be John, and Zacharias had borne witness to the angel's visit and promise, even to the angel revealing that the child was to be named John. John was the *prophetic name* given by God's messenger. Zacharias obeyed God and bore testimony to the prophecy; thus, Zacharias sealed the prophetic witness by confirming the name John.

Thought 1. The very fact that the child was named John adds proof to the whole event's being true, as having really happened.

Thought 2. The prophetic witness is true. Zacharias confirmed it by naming the child John.

> **"These [signs] are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).**

Thought 3. Note that the obedience of Zacharias removed the discipline of God for his sin. Zacharias named the child John despite all the pressure from friends and the practice of the day to name the first son after the father. God had *told* Zacharias what to do in naming the child, and when he obeyed, the discipline of God was removed from his life.

3 (1:64-66) **John the Baptist, Birth**: the child's birth caused several important results.

1. The father was miraculously healed; consequently, he began to praise God. The restraint upon Zacharias' tongue was removed. Note: he had been shut up with his own thoughts, deaf and dumb for nine months. God healed him, opened his ears and loosed his tongue and he began to do exactly what he should do: praise God. Note that his last spoken words had been words of questioning, distrust, and unbelief (Lk.1:18).
2. The people were awe-stricken. The word "fear" (phobos) does not mean terror and fright, but reverence. It means a reverential awe, a reverential fear of God. The people stood in reverence before the events, awe-stricken over what was happening and wondering what else was going to happen. God was working. His hand was evident.
3. The events were spread abroad. God's hand upon the child was the subject of the countryside. (Note. It *should* have been the subject of all. God's movement should always be at the very center of men's conversations.)
4. The sense of destiny surrounded the child. Note that the people kept the things "in their hearts." They did not forget what they were hearing. There was something unusual about the message surrounding the child. Expectations were running high, and many were holding the things in their memory waiting for the child to grow, to see what would happen.

Thought 1. All four results should take place in our lives. We should be praising God; we should be awe-stricken at the events; we should spread the events abroad; we should see the destiny surrounding John. We have the privilege of knowing just who John was, the forerunner of the Messiah Himself.

> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, *pass the time of your sojourning here in fear*: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" (1 Pt.1:17-20).**
>
> **"*He sent redemption unto his people*: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever" (Ps.111:9-10).**
>
> **"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saint, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).**

	G. Zacharias' Inspired Prophecy: God's Savior & His Forerunner, 1:67-80	74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,	1) Enables us to serve God without fear
1 Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit	67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,	75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.	2) Enables us to live righteously & to serve God forever
2 Part 1: God's Savior[DSI] a. The One through whom God visited & redeemed His people b. The mighty Savior: Of David's house c. The One prophesied 1) The time: Since the world began	68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:	76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,	**3 Part 2: God's forerunner, John the Baptist** a. To be called the prophet of the Highest b. To prepare Lord's way c. To proclaim salvation: Forgiveness of sins
2) The prediction: He will save us from our enemies d. The One who fulfilled the promised mercy & covenant, the oath made to Abraham	71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,	78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. 80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.	d. To proclaim the rise of the heavenly Son 1) Thru God's mercy 2) To give light **4 Conclusion: John's childhood fulfills the prophecy**

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

G. Zacharias' Inspired Prophecy: God's Savior and His Forerunner, 1:67-80

(1:67-80) **Introduction**: Zacharias' song is known as the Benedictus to many worshippers. Benedictus is the opening word of the song in the Latin translation. It is sometimes recited in worship services. Note that it is a prophecy (v.67) about the coming Messiah (v.68-75) and His forerunner, John the Baptist (v.76-80). The person and ministry of both are predicted and proclaimed.

1. Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit (v.67).
2. Part 1: God's Savior (v.68-75).
3. Part 2: God's forerunner, John the Baptist (v.76-79).
4. Conclusion: John's childhood fulfills the prophecy (v.80).

1 (1:67) **Holy Spirit**: Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit. Once Zacharias obeyed God, God removed His discipline and healed him of his deafness and dumbness (v.62, 64). Immediately thereafter, God filled Zacharias with the Holy Spirit. The infilling with God's Spirit indicated two things.

1. Zacharias was forgiven his sin of unbelief. It was his questioning of God, that is, his distrust and unbelief, that had caused his deafness and dumbness (Lk.1:20-22). As soon as Zacharias demonstrated faith in God's promise, he was healed and was forgiven his sin (cp. v.64-66).
2. Zacharias' being filled with the Holy Spirit is a picture of what happens to us. We believe and obey God, then God immediately forgives our sins and fills us with His Spirit.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

2 (1:68-75) **Jesus Christ, Son of David—Covenant, Abrahamic—Salvation—Righteousness**: the first part of Zacharias' prophetic song concerned God's Savior. Four things were predicted about the Messiah. Note that Zacharias was standing in the future and looking back. The verbs are in the past tense. He was predicting how someone could stand in the future and proclaim *what the Messiah had done*.

1. The Messiah was the One through whom God visited and redeemed His people. It was God Himself who visited the earth in the Person of the Messiah. He had not neglected nor left the world alone. In the past, God had been actively involved in the world's affairs. He had sent His Word and His messengers to the world, but now God was becoming *personally* involved in the world. He was visiting the world Himself.

Note the purpose for His visit. He came to redeem His people, to save and rescue them from sin and death and separation from God. It cost Him; He had to pay the enormous price of redemption—a life for a life (see note, *Redemption*—Eph.1:7).

2. The Messiah was the mighty Savior of David's house. The phrase "horn of salvation" is a reference to Christ. The word "horn" throughout the Old Testament was a symbol of strength, power, and might. The Messiah is called the "horn" or the "mighty One of salvation" because He alone possesses the might, the strength, and the power to save.

But note where the horn or the Messiah was raised up: "in the house of His servant David." David was raised up by God to deliver and to rule over His people Israel. But Christ was raised up to deliver and to rule over God's people. There is one huge difference. Christ was sent to deliver and to rule over everyone, and His deliverance and rule were to be forever. The Messiah was the horn promised to David, the One who fulfilled the prophecies made concerning David (see note—Mt.1:1).

> **"There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed" (Ps.132:17. Cp. Ps.89:24, 29.)**

3. The Messiah was the One prophesied. The idea is that God was working out His plan for the world. He was on the throne bringing to pass all that He had promised.

a. The Messiah had been foretold since the world began. He was *the Seed of the woman* who was to break the serpent's head (Gen.3:15). He was the Seed promised to Abraham and his heirs (Gen.12:1-4. See *Deeper Study # 1*—Ro.4:1-25.)

b. The prediction of the Messiah dealt with salvation. The Messiah was to save believers from their enemies and from all who hated them. Carnal men (the Jews, the fleshly, the worldly-minded) think of salvation as material and physical deliverance; but God never meant salvation to last only for a few short years, the years of a man's life. He cares much more for man than that. By salvation God means spiritual and eternal salvation, a deliverance and life that will never end. He is interested in saving men from the enemies that wage an endless war against the spirit and enslave men both now and eternally: the enemies of sin, death, and condemnation.

4. The Messiah was the One who fulfilled the promised mercy and covenant, the oath made to Abraham. God had promised Abraham both mercy and the covenant of faith. God promised Abraham that if he would get up and leave his old country to follow Him, then Abraham would receive both the mercy of God and the covenant of faith. The covenant was based upon "the promised seed," Christ Himself. Thus Zacharias, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was proclaiming the Messiah to be the fulfillment of the promised mercy and covenant to Abraham. The Messiah was *the promised mercy and Seed to Abraham* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Abraham*—Ro.4:1-25 for detailed discussion. Cp. Dt.6:9, 12-13; 1 Ki.8:23; Neh.1:5; 9:32.)

⇒ The Messiah brings the mercy of God to man (the mercy promised to Abraham and his seed): the Messiah delivers man out of the hands of his enemies (cp. v.71, 74).

⇒ The Messiah establishes the covenant of faith with man (the covenant promised to Abraham and his seed): the Messiah saves all who believe the promises of God just as Abraham believed (cp. Ro.4:1-25).

> **"He [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it [faith] was imputed [counted] to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed [counted] to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed [counted], if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:20-25).**

Now note: God has mercy and delivers man through faith for two very specific purposes.

1. The first purpose is that men might serve Him without fear. God does not want men living in fear, fearing the future and the *imaginary gods and demons* of this world. He does not want men's fearing the pain of death and the coming judgment of hell. God wants men to have peace of mind and heart, to feel secure and to know meaning and purpose throughout all of life.

> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation" (Is.12:2).**

2. The second purpose is that men might live righteously and serve God *forever*.

> **"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:68) **Israel**: Zacharias addressed God as "the Lord God of Israel." Why did he limit God to Israel? Why did he not address God as *the Lord God of the earth*? There are several reasons (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Israel*—Jn.4:22).

1. Israel was the chosen people of God, the people chosen to love, obey, and worship Him supremely.
2. As the *chosen* people of God, Israel had been given (entrusted with) both the Word and promises of God to a lost and dying world.
3. As the *recipient* of God's Word and promises, Israel was to be given the Messiah, His salvation and redemption.
4. As the *people* of salvation and redemption, Israel was given the task to make God known, to be the missionary force to reach a lost and dying world.

Zacharias was thinking of God's promise to Israel, of the glorious fact that the promise of the Messiah was now being fulfilled. He knew nothing of Israel's rejection of the Messiah, of God's turning to the Gentiles, of the birth of a new people (the church). Therefore, he did the natural thing: he praised the Lord God of Israel.

3 (1:76-79) **John the Baptist—Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the second part of Zacharias' prophecy concerned John the Baptist. Four things were also predicted about John.

1. John was to be the prophet of the Highest. Note several facts.
   a. There had been no prophet in Israel for some four hundred years. John was to be the first since Malachi.
   b. Christ was called "the Highest," that is, the *Most High* which is a title for God. Thus the deity, the very Incarnation of God in Christ, was being proclaimed. He is "God blessed for ever" (Ro.9:5).
   c. John was called the prophet of the Highest, of Christ, or of God Himself.
2. John was to prepare the Lord's way. He was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, the one who was to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord (cp. Lk.3:3-6).
3. John was to proclaim salvation, even the forgiveness of sins. Note that salvation comes by the forgiveness of sin. Salvation is conditional. One's sins must be forgiven before he can be saved (Eph.1:7). John's purpose was to call men to salvation, to be forgiven of their sins.
4. John was to proclaim the heavenly Son's rise. Note that Christ, the Messiah, is called "the Son of righteousness" (Mal.4:2; 2 Pt.1:19; Rev.22:16). He is the "Dayspring from on High," the morning light, the rising sun who has "visited us." John was to proclaim the rise of the Messiah, and in particular two things about His rise.
   a. The Messiah was being sent through the tender mercy of God.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph..2:4-5)**

   b. The Messiah was being sent to give light...
      - to those who sit in darkness.

> **"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Lk.2:32).**
>
> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men....That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn.1:4, 9).**
>
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (Jn.3:19-21).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).**

      - to those who are in the shadow of death.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

- to guide our feet into the way of peace.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

4 (1:80) **John the Baptist—Growth, Spiritual**: John's childhood is described only in this single verse. Nothing else is known. He grew as a normal boy physically, but three things are said about him that differ from the normal child.

1. He advanced far beyond other boys spiritually. He waxed (grew) strong in spirit. He was a boy of strong heart and commitment, of strong will and decisiveness, of strong conscience and conviction, of strong drive and initiative. He was God's servant, a young man who was committed to follow, obey, and serve God.
2. He was reared in a different environment than most boys—in the desert. The desert was an obscure place, a place of quietness, far from the worldliness of the cities and masses of men. The desert was made for meditation and thought, for seeking God.
3. He stayed at his desert home until God called him to launch his ministry to Israel. This points to a life of obedience both to parents and to God.

Thought 1. The crying need of the hour is for believers to grow in the Lord Jesus Christ—to grow strong in the spirit.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph.4:14-15).

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Pt.3:18).

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

	CHAPTER 2	clothes, lying in a manger.	& dress
	H. Jesus' Birth: Its Unusual Events, 2:1-24 (Mt.1:18-25; 2:1; cp. Jn.1:14)	13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,	**4 The spectacular appearance of the heavenly host**
1 The miraculous taxation	And it came to pass in those	14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.	
a. An event of the world used by God to fulfill His plan	days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.	15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.	**5 The excited shepherds seeking evidence** a. They immediately decided to visit
	2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)		
	3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.		
b. An event that forced Joseph to Bethlehem 1) From Galilee 2) Out of Nazareth 3) Into Judaea 4) To the city of David, Bethlehem	4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)	16 And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.	b. They rushed to see
		17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.	c. They excitedly shared the message
c. An event that led to the fulfillment of Scripture despite man's plans	5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.	18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.	d. They caused a stir
	6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.	19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.	**6 The awe-stricken, pondering mother**
2 The shocking place of birth	7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.	20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.	**7 The common, non-religious shepherds worshipping God**
3 The unbelievable appearance of a real angel to shepherds	8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.	21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.	**8 The unusual naming of the child: Named by God Himself**
a. His appearance: Shone in the glory of the Lord	9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.	22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;	**9 The unexpected observance of the legal ceremonies** a. Circumcision[DS3] b. Purification after childbirth c. Dedication to the Lord
b. His message: Reassured—good news	10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.	23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)	
1) A proclamation: The Messiah's birth[DS1,2]	11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.	24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.	**10 The deliberate choice of God to have a poor family bear His Son**
2) A charge: Visit the child 3) A sign: The location	12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling		

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

H. Jesus' Birth: Its Unusual Events, 2:1-24

(2:1-24) **Introduction**: the prophecy given by Jacob back in Genesis was now being fulfilled.

"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [the Messiah] come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen.49:10).

1. Note how the scepter of rule had departed from Judea. Judea was under the rule of Rome with Caesar Augustus reigning as emporer. Cyrenius was governor of Syria, and Judea was included in the province of Syria. Herod was now the *King of Judea*. A usurper, a foreign, alien power, now ruled over Judea.
   - ⇒ Judea was no longer ruled by one of its own princes; it was ruled by an Idumean prince, a descendant of Esau, Herod the Great.
   - ⇒ The promised land was no longer in the hands of Israel; it was in the hands of a heathen power.
   - ⇒ The prince (ruler) was no longer appointed by God; he was empowered by Rome.
   - ⇒ The temple was no longer cared for by the prince of God; it was (misused) under the authority of a usurper.
   - ⇒ The priests of God were no longer the ministers of God; they were the servants of the secular world.
2. Note how clearly and how dramatically the prophecy was fulfilled: the scepter had most definitely departed from Judea, and *now* it was time for Shiloh to come. And He would come. God destined His coming in the counsel and foreknowledge of His will.

The prophecy of *Shiloh's coming* was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was Shiloh who was to come. His coming into the world was surrounded by the most unusual events.

1. The miraculous taxation (v.1-6).
2. The shocking place of birth (v.7).
3. The unbelievable appearance of a real angel to shepherds (v.8-12).
4. The spectacular appearance of the heavenly host (v.13-14).
5. The excited shepherds seeking evidence (v.15-18).
6. The awe-stricken, pondering mother (v.19).
7. The common, non-religious shepherds worshipping God (v.20).
8. The unusual naming of the child: named by God Himself (v.21).
9. The unexpected observance of the legal ceremonies (v.22-23).
10. The deliberate choice of God to have a poor family bear His Son (v.24).

1 (2:1-6) **Jesus Christ, Birth—Bethlehem—God, Providence**: there was the miraculous taxation. Three things should be noted.

1. The taxation was used by God to fulfill His plan for the birth of the Messiah. It had been prophesied that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, and Scripture had to be fulfilled. Joseph and Mary lived in Galilee, and Mary was now great with child. How was God going to make sure that the child was born in Bethlehem? The taxation happened just at the right time and in the right way; that is, everyone had to return to the city of his birth to pay his taxes. God was miraculously controlling the events of the world, working all things out for good so that He might fulfill His promise to send the Savior into the world.
2. The taxation forced Joseph to Bethlehem. Everyone had to return to the city of his birth. Note the great detail given in describing the journey to Bethlehem. The point is that Bethlehem was the prophesied city of the Messiah's birth (Mic.5:2). The Scribes understood it (Mt.2:5-6) and so did the common people (Jn.7:42). The taxation was certainly an event wrought in the plan of God to fulfill Scripture.
3. The taxation led to the fulfillment of Scripture, despite man's plans. Mary was about to deliver; she was "great with child" (v.5). Apparently, Joseph and Mary had planned for the child to be delivered in Nazareth; but God overruled. He either caused or used the taxation and saw to it that Joseph and Mary were forced to Bethlehem.

Now in summary, why was all this necessary? Why did Jesus have to be born in Bethlehem?

a. The Messiah was the prophesied Son of David (see notes—Lk.3:24-31; Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45; DEEPER STUDY # 4—1:49 for discussion).
b. David had been born in Bethlehem; therefore, it was necessary for the Son of David to be born there.
c. Scripture foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Mic.5:2).

2 (2:7) **Jesus Christ, Birth**: there was the shocking place of birth. Jesus was not born in comfortable surroundings. Shockingly, He was born in a stable and laid in a manger or feeding trough. The birth is covered in one simple verse, yet much can be gleaned from it.

1. Jesus was born in a smelly stable. He was neglected and turned away by men from the very beginning. There was no room in the inn, and Mary was about to deliver. If someone had cared, room could have been made for her.
2. Jesus was born in poverty. If Joseph had possessed the money, he could have bought a room.
3. Jesus was born in obscurity and loneliness. The birth took place away from people, all alone. Note that Mary herself wrapped the child in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger.
4. Jesus was born in humiliation. He did not enter the world...
   - in a hospital,
   - in a comfortable home,
   - in the home of a friend or relative,
   - under a doctor's care,
   - under the stars of heaven, nor even out in the open,
   - but in a smelly stable, the lowest imaginable place for a birth.
5. Jesus was born into a corruptible world full of sin and selfishness, greed and unkindness. This is seen in that...
   - the world (represented in the innkeeper) was so wrapped up in its affairs that it could not help a woman bearing a child.
   - no one would make room for Mary in the inn. Money and personal comfort were more important to all who had become aware of the situation.

Thought 1. Note how so many missed the first coming of Christ. How many will miss the second coming of Christ?

> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).**

3 (2:8-12) **Shepherds**: there was the unbelievable appearance of a real angel to shepherds. In the eyes of many, an angel would never appear to a shepherd. Shepherds would seldom be found praising and worshipping God; as a result they were looked upon as anything but worshippers. Their reputation was lowly at best, and religious people snubbed and ignored them. They were despised because they were unable to attend services and to keep the ceremonial laws of washing and cleansing. Their flocks just kept them too busy. What a beautiful foretaste of the salvation to come: God gave the first message of His Son to common shepherds, those looked upon as sinners.

1. The angel's appearance was that of splendor and glory. This was the shekinah glory (see note—Mt.17:5-8).
2. The angel's message was one of reassurance and good news. He proclaimed the Messiah's birth and charged the shepherds to visit the child. He gave them a sign: they would find the babe lying in a manger.

Thought 1. The Savior was coming to call sinners to repentance; therefore, the first announcement of His coming was given to sinners.

> **"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk.5:31-32).**
>
> **"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:26-29).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:11) **Jesus—Savior**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.1:31; note—2:21.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(2:11) **Christ—Messiah**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; note—Lk.2:21.

4 (2:13-14) **Angels**: there was the spectacular appearance of the heavenly host. The word "host" means an army of angels, "ten thousand times ten thousand" (Dan.7:10; cp. Ps.68:17). God either gave the shepherds a special sight into the spiritual world and dimension or caused the spiritual dimension to appear to physical sight. Note: the angels did two things.

1. They cried out for glory to be lifted up to God...
   - who is the highest possible Being.
   - who dwells in the highest realm of being possible, in heaven itself.
2. They cried out for peace, for good will toward men. By peace is meant the peace of reconciliation, the good will between God and man. The alienation and separation, struggle and divisiveness, restlessness and fear caused by sin needed to be solved. The heavenly host was praising God that the alienation and separation were now being solved in the birth of the "Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

> **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).**

5 (2:15-18) **Shepherds**: there were the excited shepherds' seeking evidence. Note their excitement.

1. They decided immediately to visit. "They said one to another, let us now go...."
2. They *rushed* to see for themselves. There is a sense of extreme urgency in these words. They acted with haste, rushed, hurried. They felt an urgency to act and to act now. They wasted no time. Note: they found the babe just as the angel had said.
3. They shared the message. They first experienced seeing the child themselves, then they shared their experience wherever they went. They were the first to bear witness to the Savior of the world.
4. They caused a stir among the people. Note that nothing is said about these hearers' seeking out the child. They only wondered about what they heard; they never responded and never moved to find Him for themselves.

6 (2:19) **Mary—Humility—Trust**: there was the awe-stricken, pondering mother. This is a beautiful picture of a humble, trusting heart. Mary had been told that her child was of God, truly of God. Above all others she knew that the Messiah, the very Son of God, had now come. She had been through so much: pregnant, yet unmarried; the possibility of being found out and of rumors heaped upon rumors; the discussions with Joseph and with her parents; the long trip from Nazareth; the exhaustion of giving birth without help in a smelly stable; the visit of some rough-hewn shepherds with an amazing story of the heavenly host's proclaiming the praises of God. Mary was tired, as weary and exhausted as a person could be. So much had happened, and she was at the very center of it all. No one could even begin to know the thoughts that had filled her mind for nine months, nor could anyone know the feelings and emotions of the experience. The wonder,

the amazement, the astounding reality was too much to talk about. All she could do was continue in the humble sweetness that had so characterized her over the past months. She merely bowed once again in *humble adoration* to God and *quietly entrusted* all these things into God's keeping. She said nothing, only pondered in her heart what was happening.

7 (2:20) **Shepherds**: there were the common, non-religious shepherds worshipping God.

1. The shepherds had spread the message, but note a shocking fact. The shepherds alone are seen praising God. No one else is seen seeking or praising the Savior.
2. The shepherds were praising God for what they had *heard* and *seen*. God had spoken to them and they had received the message. They obeyed God's instructions to seek out the Messiah; therefore, they had been privileged to see the Messiah. They had reason to praise God. (How many hear and see, yet never respond and never praise God?)

> **"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:11-13).**

8 (2:21) **Jesus Christ, Name**: there was the unusual naming of the child. The child was named by God Himself.

1. The child Jesus was named by God before He was conceived in the womb (Lk.1:31).
2. The name Jesus (iesous) means Savior or He will save. The Hebrew form of the name is Joshua which means *Jehovah is salvation*.

> **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).**
>
> **"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).**

9 (2:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Fulfills Law**: there was the unexpected observance of the legal ceremonies. There were three legal ceremonies which Jesus underwent.

1. There was the ceremony of circumcision (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ph.3:3).
2. There was the ceremony of purification. This was a ceremony Mary had to go through. After the birth of a boy child, a woman was considered unclean for forty days (eighty for a girl child). She could work around the home and engage in normal activities, but she could not take part in religious ceremonies. She was religiously, that is, ceremonially, unclean. After a woman's forty or eighty days were up, she was to make an offering in the temple (Lev.12:1-8).
3. There was the ceremony of dedication to the Lord (v.23; cp. Ex.13:2, 12, 15; Lev.27:6; Num.18:15-16). A male child was presented (dedicated) in the temple when the family was close to Jerusalem.

Why would Jesus, the Son of God, be subjected to the legal observances of the law? He was not a stranger to the covenants of God (circumcision). He had created the covenants Himself. He was not lacking in commitment (the Dedication Ceremony). He was God Himself, the One to whom all babies were dedicated, yet He was subjected to all the legal requirements. Why? Very simply...

> **"[He was] made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal.4:4-5).**
>
> **"[He was] made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).**
>
> **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt.5:17; see note—Mt.5:17-18).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(2:22) **Circumcision**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ph.3:3.

10 (2:24) **Offering of Poor**: there was the deliberate choice of God to have a poor family bear His Son. Note that Mary offered two pigeons. This was the offering of the poor. Rich people were required to offer a lamb and a pigeon. Therefore, God chose a poor family to rear His only Son in an ordinary home without any luxuries.

> **Thought 1.** No matter what we have to bear in life, Christ has already borne it—even poverty (see note 3—Lk.2:40 for discussion). He knows the suffering we undergo; therefore, He is able to strengthen and carry us through the suffering.
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

	I. Simeon's Prophecy: Jesus' Life and Fate Foretold, 2:25-35	thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:	
		30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,	b. The One appointed to be God's salvation
1 Simeon, a man who walked close to God	25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.	31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;	c. The One prepared for all people
a. A man who was just & devout		32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.	d. The light to unbelievers e. The glory to believers
b. A man who looked for the Messiah		33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.	f. The parents marvelled at the predictions
c. A man who was led by the Holy Spirit	26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.	34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;	**3 The child was to cause the rise & fall of many**
d. A man who was given an unusual promise			
e. A man who saw & held the Messiah	27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,	35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.	**4 The child's fate was sealed** a. His fate: To be opposed & put to death b. His purpose: To reveal the inner thoughts of man's heart
2 The child was God's salvation	28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,		
a. The source of peace	29 Lord, now lettest thou		

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

I. Simeon's Prophecy: Jesus' Life and Fate Foretold, 2:25-35

(2:25-35) **Introduction**: it was time for the child to be dedicated and offered up for God's keeping and care. The parents took the child to the temple, and someplace in the temple, they came across a man named Simeon. Just who Simeon was is not known. Some think he was a priest, but Scripture does not say. All we know is what is recorded here. He was a man who loved God very much, so much that God was able to use him in a most magnificent way. He used Simeon to proclaim one of the greatest messages of all time: the events and fate of the child Messiah's life.

1. Simeon, a man who walked close to God (v.25-27).
2. The child was God's salvation (v.28-33).
3. The child was to cause the rise and fall of many (v.34).
4. The child's fate was sealed (v.34-35).

1 (2:25-27) **Simeon—Dedication**: Simeon was a man who walked closely with God. He walked so closely that God was able to use him in a most magnificent way to encourage Joseph and Mary. Five things are said about him personally.

1. Simeon was a just and devout man. The word "just" (dikaios) means righteous, well-behaved, living as one should live. Simeon was a man who treated other people as he should: justly.

The word "devout" (eulabes) means cautious and careful in relation to God. It means reverence for God, being pious. Simeon was very careful in his relation toward God.

2. Simeon was a man who looked for the coming of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). This is what is meant by "the consolation of Israel." Faithful believers among the Jews felt that Israel could find consolation only in the Messiah. They longed and ached with all hope and patience for His coming. Joseph of Arimathaea was another example of one who "waited for the kingdom of God" (Mk.15:43).

Thought 1. The world can find consolation only in the coming of Christ.

> **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:11-14).**

Thought 2. Believers must long for the Messiah, ache with all hope and patience for His return (cp. 2 Pt.3:3-18).

3. Simeon was a man led by the Holy Spirit. The idea seems to be that the Spirit was upon him continually. In most instances throughout the Old Testament the Spirit only came upon men for special service. It is not said that the Spirit abode upon them continually; however, the Spirit does seem to have rested upon Simeon continually. This shows just how closely Simeon was living to God. He must have been a very, very special man, a man who held God ever so dear to his heart and whom God held ever so close to His heart.

4. Simeon was a man who was given an unusual promise. Apparently, Simeon was constantly studying the Scriptures, in particular searching the prophecies concerning the coming salvation of the Messiah (1 Pt.1:10). At some point,

the Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. Just think how closely Simeon must have lived to God! He was unquestionably a very special person to God.

5. Simeon was a man who saw and held the Messiah. Note that Simeon was again led by the Spirit; he was led into the temple. This was the day for which he had longed and ached, the day he was to see and embrace the Messiah. A first-born son was always taken to the temple to be dedicated to the Lord. Immediately, Simeon saw that this child was different from all the others; he recognized the child as the Christ-child. He took the child up into his arms and proclaimed Him to be the long-awaited Messiah.

Thought 1. The point to note about Simeon is his closeness to God. He was a man who stands as a dynamic example of *strong dedication*. Because of his *strong dedication*, God was able to bless Simeon beyond imagination.

"O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first" (Rev.2:19).

2 (2:28-33) **Salvation—Jesus Christ, Life and Fate**: the child was God's salvation. Once Simeon had embraced the Messiah, he broke out into song. The song is called the *Nunc Dimittis*, again being known by the opening words of the song in the Latin. Note several points.

1. The child was God's salvation; He was to be the source of peace for the world. Simeon had "seen and embraced" the Messiah, God's salvation. Therefore, he was now ready to die in peace. Note that He believed and trusted God—all of God's promises. He praised God for fulfilling His Word "according to thy word." It was because of God's faithfulness that he was ready to die. He knew that he would live on "with his fathers" forever. (See note—Jn.14:27.)

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

2. The child was the One appointed to be God's salvation. He was appointed and prepared in "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). Note also this was the confession of Simeon. He confessed that the child was God's salvation.

Thought 1. Everyone must confess that the child Jesus is God's salvation, through whom God saves the world.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

3. The child, God's salvation, was prepared for all people. Simeon saw that God's salvation was not for any one people or nation or group. The Messiah had come to save all men. Anyone could now be saved, no matter who he was or what he had done. Prejudice and favoritism were unknown to God. He was not willing that any should perish.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

4. The child, God's salvation, was to be a light to the Gentiles, to the unbelievers of the world. The child came to be the Light of the world. This simply means that He came to be the Revelation of God, to reveal the way, the truth, and the life to men (see note, pt.4—Lk.1:76-79).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

5. The child, God's salvation, was to be the glory of Israel, of true believers. The Messiah was to be the glory of all Israelites (Jews) who truly believed. In fact, He was to be the glory of all who believed, no matter what nationality. The reason is clearly given by Scripture.

a. The believer is justified.

"In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory" (Is.45:25).

b. The believer is saved to live with God eternally.

"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations....Violence shall no more be

heard in the land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Is.60:15, 18-19).

6. The parents marvelled at the predictions. The predictions would amaze anyone, but they were given for an additional reason. Joseph and Mary needed to be assured and encouraged. Their need was only natural. Imagine what they had been through and were yet to go through because of the child (see note—Lk.2:7; 2:40; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.1:18-25). God saw to it that they were strengthened in this experience.

3 (2:34) **Jesus Christ, Person; Work—Decision**: the child was to cause the rise and fall of many. The child was to be what the Scripture calls the *stone of stumbling* and the *chief cornerstone*.

Many would stumble and fall over Him. They would not notice, look, study, prefer, choose, believe, or trust Him and the salvation He was to bring. They would simply choose another way other than God. Therefore, they would stumble and fall over Him just as they would stumble over a stone lying in their path.

Many would rise because of Him. They would take notice, choose, and believe Him and the salvation He was to bring. Therefore, He would become their foundation, their cornerstone.

Thought 1. Decisively, Jesus Christ causes every man to make a choice. A man either rejects the Messiah, God's salvation, and falls (eternally); or he accepts and he rises (eternally). (See DEEPER STUDY # 7, *Jesus Christ, the Stone*—Mt.21:42; DEEPER STUDY # 9—21:44 for more discussion.)

"Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken" (Is.8:13-15).

"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Pt.2:7-8).

4 (2:34-35) **Jesus Christ, Death—Humanism**: the child's fate was sealed. The child was to be opposed and eventually killed. He was the "sign which shall be spoken against."

Thought 1. Christ was a sign of both God's love and judgment. It is this that causes men to react. Men want a god that brings only enough law and morality to give order to society. They want a god that allows them to live as they desire, not a God who demands total self-denial and obedience (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). *They want a god of indulging love, not of sacrificial love; a god of license, not of demanding love*. Therefore, when Christ is set before men as the Messiah of self-denying love and obedience, they react. Why? Because if they disobey Him and fail to live sacrificial lives, they bring judgment upon themselves.

Thought 2. Within every society, Christ and His genuine followers are *spoken against* with varying degrees of reaction and persecution. The *speaking against* ranges all the way from simply ignoring believers to killing them (martyrdom). There is...

- ignoring
- ridiculing
- abusing
- hating
- imprisoning
- murdering
- persecuting
- slandering

Note the words spoken to Mary, "A sword shall pierce through thine own heart also." This is a reference to the sorrow she was to experience at the cross, seeing her Son, the only begotten Son of God, rejected and killed by men (cp. Jn.19:25-27).

Note also, the purpose for the child's death: to reveal the inner thoughts of man's heart.

Thought 1. Man either sees the love of God and surrenders to the saving grace of God, or else he looks upon the cross as a repulsive sight and rejects the saving grace of God. He either sees Christ's dying for his sins and receives the forgiveness of God offered by the cross, or else he recoils from the thought of sin within himself and turns from the forgiveness of the cross (see note, pts.2-4—Mt.16:21-23).

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Ro.2:4).

"They have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Is.5:24).

"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jer.6:10).

"The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jer.8:9).

"Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts" (Zech.7:12).

	J. Anna's Praise: The Child Jesus is Praised by a Prophetess, 2:36-38	37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.	**4 She never ceased to worship—night or day**
1 She was a prophetess	36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;	38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.	**5 She knew the child instantly & gave thanks**
2 She never lost hope over many, many years			
3 She never grew bitter in the face of sorrow			**6 She shared the message with all believers**

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

J. Anna's Praise: The Child Jesus is Praised by a Prophetess, 2:36-38

(2:36-38) **Introduction**: nothing is known about Anna except what is given here. She was the daughter of Phanuel. Apparently, her father's name had been taken from the place Phanuel, the place where Jacob wrestled with God face to face (Gen.32:24-30). Anna's name means *gracious*. She seems to have been a person of enormous devotion, one who lived as though face to face with God, ever receiving His grace and sharing His grace with others. She knew she had descended from the tribe of Aser.

A man, Simeon, had just borne witness that the child Jesus was the *Salvation of God*. Now a woman, Anna, bore the very same witness. Both men and women acknowledged the child to be the Messiah, the Salvation of God. Both men and women of every generation are urged to hope in Him for salvation. Jesus is our hope.

1. She was a prophetess (v.36).
2. She never lost hope over many, many years (v.36).
3. She never grew bitter in the face of sorrow (v.36).
4. She never ceased to worship—night or day (v.37).
5. She knew the child instantly and gave thanks (v.38).
6. She shared the message with all believers (v.38).

1 (2:36) **Prophetess**: Anna was a prophetess. This was most unusual. There had not been a prophet in Israel for some three hundred years, yet God is seen as having raised up a prophet, and a woman at that. Women leaders were very rare in that day. She was apparently a very special person, one who loved God and hoped in God with all her being (cp. v.37). She was evidently on a spiritual par with other saintly women used by God throughout Scripture such as Miriam, Hannah, and Deborah. As a prophetess, she was constantly studying the Word of God that she might be approved of God and proclaim the unsearchable riches of His grace (cp. 2 Tim.2:15; 4:2). The point is, Anna's hope was in God; therefore, God blessed her greatly. God will always bless the person who hopes in Him.

> **"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD" (Ps.31:24).**
>
> **"Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy" (Ps.33:18).**
>
> **"And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee" (Ps.39:7).**
>
> **"Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (Ps.42:11).**
>
> **"For thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth" (Ps.71:5).**
>
> **"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is" (Jer.17:7).**

2 (2:36) **Steadfastness—Perseverance**: Anna never lost hope over many, many years. She was about eighty-four years old (v.37), but she still believed and still looked for the Messiah. She still looked for the salvation that God was to send to the world. She never forsook her belief, but held fast, *enduring to the end.*

> **"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt.24:12-13).**
>
> **"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (Jn.15:9).**
>
> **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).**
>
> **"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas.5:11).**
>
> **"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).**

3 (2:36) **Dedication—Sorrow—Widow**: Anna never grew bitter in the face of sorrow. She had been married at an early age and had lived with her husband only seven years when he died. She remained a widow, but not out of bitterness or disappointment. She never remarried because of conviction—the conviction that her life belonged to God. Before her hus-

band died, she had been committed to her husband; and from what is recorded in this passage, she was bound to have been an ideal wife. When her husband died, she apparently understood this to be a sign that God wanted her life totally committed to Him. Therefore, she dedicated herself to serving Him and Him alone for the remainder of her life. She placed her hope in God and in God alone.

> **"I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I" (1 Cor.7:8).**
>
> **"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness [anxiety]. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" (1 Cor.7:29-35).**

Note in particular the words, "that ye may attend [concentrate] upon the Lord without distraction."

4 (2:37) **Devotion—Worship**: Anna never ceased to worship, night or day. This is a phenomenal statement: she never left the temple, but "served God with fastings and prayers night and day." This either means that she had been given some kind of *room* at the temple or else she was at worship every day never missing a service (cp. Lk.24:53). Anna was a godly woman, a woman to whom God meant everything. She was totally devoted to God, sold out to Him completely, hoping in Him and in Him alone. Note two things.

1. The fastings and prayers indicate that she was extremely disciplined, possessing the consistency in devotions that so many lack.
2. She fasted and prayed night and day despite being elderly, eighty-four years old. She did not give herself to the flesh as she grew old: overeating, oversleeping, immoral gratification, or meaningless activities that waste time. She devoted herself to serving and hoping in God, praying and bearing witness as His servant.

> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1; cp. Eph.6:18; 1 Th.5:17).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**
>
> **"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).**

5 (2:38) **Jesus Christ, Savior—Redemption**: Anna knew the child instantly and gave thanks. She was the Lord's servant, so the Lord guided her life step by step. He took care of her, looking after her welfare. She belonged to God so much that God could guide her every step. He saw to it that her path crossed the path of the child Messiah. He fulfilled her hope. Note she came in at the very moment that Jesus was in the temple, and she immediately began giving thanks to God for the Christ-child. What is the message of her thanksgiving? *Redemption*. Redemption is that for which she praised God. The child was the Messiah who was to redeem all people (see note, pts. 1, 2, 3—Lk.2:28-33. See note—Eph.1:7.) Note the word "likewise." This refers back to what Simeon had prophesied. She prophesied and proclaimed the same message: the child Jesus is the glorious hope of man's redemption.

> **"He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and reverend is his name" (Ps.111:9).**
>
> **"Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption" (Ps.130:7).**
>
> **"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Is.43:1).**
>
> **"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Ro.3:24).**
>
> **"But of him [of God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).**
>
> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7; cp. Col.1:14).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb.9:12).**
>
> **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers" (1 Pt.1:18).**

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev.5:9).

6 (2:38) **Witnessing**: Anna shared the message with all believers. She knew of others who were looking for the Messiah's coming, so she shared the glorious news with them (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). She had seen the child-Messiah, the salvation of God, the glorious hope of all men.

"Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Ps.107:2).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

	K. Jesus' Growth as a Child, 2:39-40
1 He was led by His parents to fulfill all the law 2 He was reared in Nazareth[DS1]	39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.
3 He grew as a child: Physically, spiritually, & mentally 4 He possessed God's grace	40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

K. Jesus' Growth as a Child, 2:39-40

(2:39-40) **Introduction**: Jesus' growth as a child is simply stated. What is said is meaningful and applicable to the life of all thoughtful readers.

1. He was led by His parents to fulfill all the law (v.39).
2. He was reared in Nazareth (v.39).
3. He grew as a child: physically, spiritually, and mentally (v.40).
4. He possessed God's grace (v.40).

1 (2:39) **Jesus Christ, Fulfilled Law**: Jesus was led by His parents to fulfill all the law. Note two significant facts.

1. God had sent His Son into the world to fulfill the law, not to destroy it. By keeping all the law, Jesus would be perfectly righteous and become the *Ideal Man*, the Man who would be the *Pattern* for all men to follow.

Another way to say the same thing is that God has given us a perfect life to follow, not just written letters and words. By fulfilling the law and by never failing in a single point, Jesus became the Perfect Man, the Ideal Life which men are to imitate. Men are now to look to Jesus and follow Him instead of following the law. Jesus has fulfilled the law; therefore, He embraces and includes all the law *and more* in His life (see notes—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3).

2. In order to fulfill the law, Jesus had to keep the law and every observance of it. He had to "fulfill all righteousness" (Mt.3:15). Now note: by keeping all of the law, Jesus was symbolically predicting what He was to do for sinful man. He was going to secure righteousness and perfection by fulfilling the law, and thereby He was to become the Ideal Man. As the Ideal Man, whatever He did would cover any man who followed Him. The man who followed Jesus would be covered by His righteousness (perfection), His death, His resurrection, and His ascension. The man who truly trusted Jesus Christ to cover him with His righteousness would be covered by His righteousness.

It is for these reasons that God led Mary and Joseph to fulfill all the law for the child Messiah (also see notes—Lk.2:22-23; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20 for more discussion).

> **"And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him" (Mt.3:15).**
>
> **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt.5:17).**
>
> **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).**
>
> **"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor.15:21).**

2 (2:39) **Jesus Christ, Childhood—Nazareth**: Jesus was reared in Nazareth.

1. Luke simply says that after Jesus' dedication in the temple, His parents returned to Nazareth. There is no mention of Matthew's account...
   - of their return to Bethlehem where the wise men visited them (Mt.2:1-12).
   - of their flight into Egypt (Mt.2:13-15).
   - of Herod's slaughter of the children (Mt.2:16-18).
   - of the threat of Archaleus (Mt.2:19-22).
2. Nazareth was an ideal place for the child Messiah to be brought up (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Nazareth*—Lk.2:39 for discussion). However, Nazareth was an obscure place, despised and reproached by other people (cp. Jn.1:46). It was a humiliating place to be reared. Therefore, as with Jesus' birth in a stable, which was the lowest of places, He continued to identify with people in the most severe circumstances. He, too, knew what it was to be born and brought up in a despicable place. From the very first, He *made Himself of no reputation* (Ph.2:7).

> **"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:7).**
>
> **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).**

"For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me" (Ro.15:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:39) **Nazareth**: the hometown of Joseph and Mary and of Jesus Himself during His childhood and early manhood. There were at least two advantages to Jesus' being brought up in Nazareth.

1. It was a quiet town, small and infamous, ready-made for a close community and for neighborliness and quiet contemplation.
2. It was also a town in touch with the modern life and world events of that day. Two of the major roads in the ancient world passed within eyesight of the hills surrounding the city: the road stretching between the great cities of the North and South (from Rome to Africa), and the road stretching between the great cities of the East and West. Jesus can be imagined sitting and standing on the hills observing (perhaps even meeting) some of the travellers and caravans using the major routes as they crisscrossed the world. He had opportunity to observe and study the nature and dealings of all kinds of men and nationalities as they used the major routes. How often His heart must have ached and wept as a child over a world lost and needing to be found.

3 (2:40) **Jesus Christ, Childhood—Humiliation**: Jesus grew as a child—physically, spiritually, and mentally.

1. The idea is that Jesus grew as a normal child. But note the added words: "*waxed strong* [ekrataiouto] in spirit" (a vigorous growth). He did not just grow in wisdom, He was "*filled* with wisdom" (pleroumenon sophiai). Simply stated, Jesus grew perfectly at every stage of life.
   - ⇒ He grew physically as well as the human body could grow (perfectly well and healthy).
   - ⇒ He "waxed strong in spirit," as strong as a child could grow.
   - ⇒ He was "filled with wisdom," as much as a child could be filled.

No other child had ever been or ever will be perfect in growth at the various stages of childhood, but the Christ-child was. He grew as well as a child can grow: *filled* perfectly with all the qualities that fill a child.

2. Why did Christ come into the world as a child and not as a full-grown man? The first man, Adam, stood at the head of the human race as the natural representative of man, and he had been created as a full-grown man. Why not Jesus Christ, the second Adam? He, too, was sent into the world to stand at the head of the human race as the spiritual representative of man. Going through the stages of growth as a baby, then as a child, and then as a teenager is a humbling experience. Why did God subject His Son to such humiliation? There are at least two reasons.

   a. Christ needed to set a striking example for every person, no matter the age, even for children. In *lowliness of mind*, He went through the experience of a helpless babe, then a dependent child, and then an independent and responsible man. The very fact that the Son of God stooped so low is shocking to any thoughtful person. It sets a striking example of *humility and lowliness of mind* for every man.

   "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:3-8).

   b. Christ needed to demonstrate a striking truth to all men: no person can enter heaven unless they first become as a little child. There was no better way to demonstrate the lesson than for the Son of God Himself to go through the humbling experience of becoming a child before becoming a man.

   "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3-4).

   c. Christ needed to experience every situation, condition, and trial of man in order to become the *Perfect Sympathizer or Savior*. For this reason, He experienced the most humiliating experiences possible. He experienced...
      - being born to an unwed mother (Mt.1:18-19).
      - being born in a stable, the worst of conditions (Lk.2:7).
      - being born to poor parents (Lk.2:24).
      - having his life threatened as a baby (Mt.2:13f).
      - being the cause of unimaginable sorrow (Mt.2:16f).
      - having to be moved and shifted as a baby (Mt.2:13f).
      - being reared in a despicable place, Nazareth (Lk.2:39).
      - having His father die during His youth (see note, pt.3—Mt.13:53-58).
      - having to support His mother and brothers and sisters (see note, pt.3—Mt.13:53-58).
      - having no home, not even a place to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58).
      - being hated and opposed by religionists (Mk.14:1-2).
      - being charged with insanity (Mk.3:21).

- being charged with demon possession (Mk.3:22).
- being opposed by His own family (Mk.3:31-32).
- being rejected, hated, and opposed by listeners (Mt.13:53-58; Lk.4:28-29).
- being betrayed by a close friend (Mk.14:10-11, 18).
- being left alone, rejected, and forsaken by all of His friends (Mk.14:50).
- being tried before the high court of the land on the charge of treason (Jn.18:33).
- being executed by crucifixion, the worst possible death (Jn.19:16f).

Note that each of these experiences reaches the depth of humiliation. Christ stooped to the lowest point of human experience in every condition in order to become the *Perfect Sympathizer* (Savior). He can now identify with and feel for any person's circumstances.

> **"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:16-18).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

4 (2:40) **Jesus Christ, Childhood—Fulness of God's Grace**: Jesus possessed God's grace (charis theou). The idea is that God's grace rested upon Jesus in *full measure*, without any lack or shortcoming whatsoever.

Jesus was choosing to grow perfectly, coming short in nothing. Therefore, God showered Him with His grace, His favor. God favored Him by looking after and taking care of Him perfectly.

> **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).**
>
> **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).**

	L. Jesus as a Young Boy in the Temple: Jesus' First Recognition of Messiahship, 2:41-52	after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.	**surprising** a. He listened to teachers b. He asked questions
1 His faithfulness in worship was noteworthy a. Parents' faithfulness b. Parents taught Him c. Jesus' special year: Became a man at age twelve	41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.	47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.	
2 His social development was normal a. His parents left to return home b. Jesus was missing from the caravan c. His parents thought He was with others, playing and socializing	42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. 43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it. 44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.	48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. 49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? 50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.	**4 His mission was misunderstood by His parents** **5 His first known recognition of Messiahship was at an early age** **6 His obedience to His parents was striking**
d. His parents returned to find Him	45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.	51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.	
3 His knowledge was	46 And it came to pass, that	52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.	**7 His growth was in favor with both God and man**[DSI]

DIVISION I

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMING OF JESUS, THE SON OF MAN, 1:1-2:52

L. Jesus as a Young Boy in the Temple: Jesus' First Recognition of Messiahship, 2:41-52

(2:41-52) **Introduction**: this is an extremely important and interesting passage. It is the only passage that covers Jesus' childhood. It is important, for it gives us the first *known* time that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. The lessons found within the passage are inexhaustable.

1. His faithfulness in worship was noteworthy (v.41-42).
2. His social development was normal (v.43-45).
3. His knowledge was surprising (v.46-47).
4. His mission was misunderstood by His parents (v.48).
5. His first known recognition of Messiahship was at an early age (v.49-50).
6. His obedience to His parents was striking (v.51).
7. His growth was in favor with both God and man (v.52).

1 (2:41-42) **Worship—Jesus Christ, Childhood**: Jesus' faithfulness in worship as a young boy was noteworthy. Note several things.

1. Jesus' parents were faithful in their worship. This fact is specifically stated. It was their *custom* to keep the feast of the Passover every year. All male Jews who lived within twenty miles of Jerusalem were required by law to attend the temple three times a year: at the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (Ex.23:14-17). Women were exempt from the law, but they could attend if they wished. Note what Mary chose to do: both "parents went to Jerusalem every year." They were both faithful in their worship by choice, not by restraint.
2. Jesus' parents led and taught Him to be faithful in worship. It is not specifically said that Jesus went to Jerusalem with His parents every year, but the implication is that He did. Note the words "Now His parents went...every year at the...Passover." It was the custom for "all that could hear with understanding" to be present if at all possible (Neh.8:2).

Also note His knowledge and ability to discuss issues with religious authorities (v.46-47). This indicates that His parents continually taught Jesus, seeing to it that He was in the synagogue worshipping and learning at every opportunity. God had placed the child Jesus into their hands as a *bundle of trust*. The child belonged to God. He had only entrusted the child's keeping into their hands to see that He was looked after and taught. It was their responsibility to see that He grew physically, mentally, and spiritually and to see that He became all He could become. The parents were faithful to their duty.

Thought 1. What an example for all parents. Children are but a *bundle of trust* placed into our hands by God. They belong to God, not us. Therefore, we are to train up a child in the way he should go (Pr.22:6).

3. This was a very special year for Jesus. He had just turned twelve years old. When a Jewish boy reached thirteen years of age, he became a *son of the law* which meant that he was now considered a man and was expected to keep all the law. It was suggested that a boy be brought to the Passover Feast a year or two early so that he might become familiar with the Temple and the Feasts. When the eleven- and twelve-year old initiates arrived, they were naturally given a great deal of attention and special instruction (v.46-47).

Thought 1. Note two critical points.

1) Every child should be taught from the very first about God and worship, about the world and a person's responsibility in it.
2) Every child, when he comes of age, should be charged with becoming a "son of the law," a man *before God*, being responsible and making his contribution to the world—*all in the name of the Lord.*

> **"And thou shalt teach them [commandments] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).**
>
> **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr.22:6).**
>
> **"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Ps.34:11).**

2 (2:43-45) **Jesus Christ, Childhood**: Jesus' social development was normal. This is gleaned from what happened in these verses. The parents had finished their worship obligations and were returning home to Nazareth. Jesus had remained behind, but they did not know it. They thought He was off playing and socializing with some of the other families and children in the caravan. The caravans were large and the roads were packed with thousands of pilgrims leaving the Feast. We can glean from this that Jesus was sociable and fit right in with people. The very fact that His parents would think He was off socializing with others points to a normal social development. Note: they were so sure that He was socializing that they did not bother to look for Him until nightfall (v.44). When they did not find Him among their relatives and friends, they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him.

Thought 1. A child's social development is important. A child is to be helped and encouraged, led and directed to play with others. However, he must also be taught how to play and how to associate with others. He must be taught to be..

- patient
- giving
- joyful
- loving
- kind
- helpful
- peaceful
- loyal
- caring
- disciplined

...not bragging, revengeful, arrogant, jealous, selfish, or easily provoked.

3 (2:46-47) **Jesus Christ, Knowledge of**: Jesus' knowledge was surprising. It took His parents three days to find Him. When they found Him, He was in the temple, in the very precinct or room where classes and discussion took place among the doctors of theology and religion. It was a prominent place, and it was a custom to hold open classes and discussions so that the public could listen and learn. The stress of Luke at this point is the surprising knowledge of Jesus. His knowledge and understanding were phenomenal.

1. Jesus was found "in the midst of the doctors." There were some very prominent *Doctors of Religion* in that day, men who were very capable theologically. There was...
   - Gamaliel, the great teacher of Paul or Saul of Tarsus.
   - Hillel, one of the most revered liberal teachers with a large school of followers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12).
   - Shammai, one of the most revered conservative teachers who also had a school of followers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12).
   - Jonathan, who paraphrased the sacred books.
   - Simeon, who was to later succeed Hillel.
   - Nicodemus, who was so revered by his peers that he was sent to interview Jesus alone.

Some of these scholars were probably engaged in the discussion with Jesus, for news of the young boy and his phenomenal understanding must have swept through the halls of the temple, arousing the curiosity of the *Doctors*. Remember, Jesus had been in the temple for at least three days. The point to note is how Jesus was making use of the opportunity He had. He was in Jerusalem exposed to these eminent scholars for only a few days, so He grasped the opportunity to learn and perhaps teach all He could.

2. Jesus was found thirsting for knowledge and understanding. Note exactly what is said.
   a. He was "*hearing*" (akouonta) what the teachers said. He listened closely, attentively, with rapt attention. He was "swift to hear" (Jas.1:19).
   b. He was "asking them questions" (eperotonta). He wanted answers, more understanding. He thirsted for truth and sought it.
   c. He answered (apokrisesin) their questions.

Note that His questions and answers revealed phenomenal knowledge and understanding, so much so that everyone was astonished, even the doctors. The word astonished (existanto de) means that all were amazed, overwhelmed, bewildered, and wondered at His understanding.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:99-100).

Thought 1. This is a striking lesson for both children and adults.
1) Every opportunity to learn the truth should be grasped.
2) We should *thirst* for knowledge and understanding.

> **"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).**
>
> **"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge" (2 Pt.1:5).**
>
> **"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD" (Jer.9:24).**
>
> **"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding" (Pr.2:3).**
>
> **"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" (Pr.3:13).**
>
> **"Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not" (Pr.4:5).**
>
> **"The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness" (Pr.15:14).**
>
> **"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding" (Pr.23:23).**
>
> **"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hos.6:3).**

4 (2:48) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Forgetfulness**: Jesus' mission was misunderstood by His parents. This is seen in Mary's words to Jesus. She was rebuking Jesus rather sternly. In her disturbance and sorrow, she forgot who He was. It is not that she was not to teach and discipline or direct Him; she was. But He was now a young man by law, and He was where He should be, going about His Father's business.

Thought 1. There is warning here. Too often disturbance and sorrow cause us to *forget who Jesus is*. We allow circumstances to cloud our minds, to disturb us and bring sorrow into our lives. And we soon *forget Jesus*, His understanding of the situation and His business of ministering to our needs.

> **"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Dt.4:9).**

5 (2:49-50) **Messiahship**: Jesus' first known recognition of Messiahship was at an early age. This is a very significant point. This is the first time that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Note two points.

1. He called God His Father. Joseph was standing there, so Jesus was gentle in the way He worded His statement, but He was clear and definite in referring to God as His Father. Just *when* He knew He was the Messiah, the Son of God, is not known; and frankly, all suggestions are pure speculation. But this fact is known. At age twelve, He was conscious of a *unique relationship with God*, a relationship unlike other children: God was His Father, and He was the Son of God, the *unique Son* in the sense that He alone had been begotten of the Father.

This is seen even more clearly when Jesus' answer is studied.

2. Jesus was saying to His mother that His Father (God) had been looking after Him. He had been about His Father's business, doing what His Father wanted Him to do; therefore, He was under His Father's care and watchful eye. There was no need for her, His mother, to be worrying.

Thought 1. Every man needs to *place himself under* God's care and watchful eye. A decision to follow Christ as Lord causes God to adopt a person as a child of His and places a person under the Father's care.

3. Jesus was saying that He had work to do for His Father (God) even if that work was not understood. He could not go home with them until He had finished His Father's work. He first had to do what His Father willed.

> **"But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (Jn.5:17).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn.17:4).**

Thought 1. Christ is the Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father (Jn.3:16f).

Thought 2. Every person is to serve God first, even if the work is not understood. And it is often not understood. We must be faithful to God and His call even if we are misunderstood and opposed.

> **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl.12:1).**

Thought 3. Sometimes our families are the strongest opposition confronting our decision and work for God (cp. Mt.10:37).

6 (2:51) **Children—Family—Obedience**: Jesus' obedience to His parents was striking. This is both a beautiful and striking picture. Jesus was *subject* to His parents; He obeyed them. As the Son of God, He set the perfect example of what a child should be to His parents. He obeyed His parents despite the fact...

- that Joseph was not His true father.
- that He was stronger in spirit.
- that He was filled with wisdom.
- that God was His Father.

> **"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph.6:1-3; cp. Col.3:20).**
>
> **"But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite [repay] their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God" (1 Tim.5:4).**
>
> **"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Pr.20:11).**
>
> **"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Pr.23:22).**

Note that Mary again kept all these things in her heart. In humble faith she said nothing, not talking with relatives or neighbors nor boasting in her Son and His uniqueness. She was quiet, humbly waiting upon God to use Jesus as He so willed. In due time she knew that God would reveal Him and His salvation to the world.

7 (2:52) **Jesus Christ, Childhood**: Jesus' growth was in favor with both God and man.

1. Mentally, Jesus was "filled with wisdom" (v.40). He learned from teachers and from personal study and thought just as all children learned. Yet He differed from other children in that He learned perfectly, coming short in nothing.

   Thought 1. Note how few children follow the example of Jesus. Few really seek to learn. Most just take what is assigned and do the minimum that is required. Few pursue real excellence.

2. Physically, He grew in an orderly fashion just as all other children grow.

   Thought 1. Some children do not develop physically, not like they should. Some are incapable due to deformity or abnormality. However, there are other children who fail to develop as they should because they do not get the physical exercise necessary to develop. They sit around instead of being outside playing and working.

3. Spiritually, He "waxed strong in spirit" (v.40) and "in favor with God" (v.52). He looked to God in perfect obedience, and God nurtured Him in His perfect favor.

   Thought 1. Note how few children follow the example of Jesus. Few children really grow spiritually. Few are willing to buck the crowd, accepting the challenge of Jesus and standing up for Him.

4. Socially, He grew in favor with men. He was friendly, loving, caring, helpful, unselfish, pure, honest, and humble. He was welcomed by the other families in His community.

   Thought 1. Note that some children do not follow Jesus' example in developing socially. Some children are not welcomed by other families.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(2:52) **Increased** (proekorten): means to grow steadily, to keep advancing. The picture is that of Jesus' cutting His way through the advancing years just as a pioneer cuts through the wilderness to reach his destination.

	CHAPTER 3	of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.	
	II. THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15	3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;	**3 He was a man who preached repentance & forgiveness of sin**
	A. The Forerunner, John the Baptist: The Pivotal Point of History, 3:1-6 (Mt.3:1-6; Mk.1:2-6; Jn.1:19-28)	4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.	**4 He was a man who cried out apocalyptically: Prepare, make the paths of God straight**
1 He was a man who launched the most pivotal point of history	Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,	5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;	a. Humbled shall be exalted b. Proud shall be abased c. Crooked shall be straightened out d. Rough shall be smoothed
2 He was a man called out of the wilderness	2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word	6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.	e. God's salvation shall be seen

DIVISION II

THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15

A. The Forerunner, John the Baptist: The Pivotal Point of History, 3:1-6

(3:1-6) **Introduction—History, Pivotal Point of**: the coming of Jesus Christ was the pivotal point of human history. When He came to earth, earth saw the Son of God Himself (1 Jn.1:1-3). His impact upon the world can never be overstated. He changed the world so much that men measure their years by Him. Some may dispute His significance, but they are wrong. And their misjudgment will be confronted some day in the future. When? When Christ returns. Scripture declares that He is going to return to earth. He is going to return as a Judge, not as a Savior—the Judge who will prove that He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the God of very God, the Messiah. He is going to prove that He is the Salvation of God Almighty.

A Person of such magnitude, the Person whose coming was to be the pivotal point of history, needed a forerunner. He needed someone who could run ahead of Him and arouse the people to prepare for His coming. That forerunner was John the Baptist, a man who is an example to us all.

1. He was a man who launched the most pivotal point of history (v.1).
2. He was a man called out of the wilderness (v.2).
3. He was a man who preached repentance and forgiveness of sin (v.3).
4. He was a man who cried out apocalyptically: prepare, make God's paths straight (v.4-6).

1 (3:1) **History, Pivotal Point—Jesus Christ—Fulness of Time**: John was a man who launched the most pivotal point of history—the coming of Christ. Some may dispute that the coming of Christ is the most significant event in history, but Scripture proclaims that God will someday reveal the fact to all. Luke points to the fact by dating the coming of Christ with significant events and historical rulers. The very first event was God's call of John. Therefore, the beginning of the greatest period in all history began with the call of John, the Lord's forerunner. Note several facts.

1. Tiberius Caesar was in the fifteenth year of his reign when God called John. Tiberius was the second Roman Emporer, beginning his reign in A.D. 14. Therefore, the emergence of John took place between A.D. 28-29.
2. Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. He was both the civil ruler and a military commander. The situation had grown so bad in Judea that Rome had to remove Archelaus from civil control and move in a military commander. Therefore, Judea was ruled directly by Roman authority at this time. Pilate held office from A.D. 26-36.
3. Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Tetrarch simply means a ruler over a fourth part. Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great. He inherited his territory at his father's death and ruled from B.C. 4 to A.D. 39. Note that he was the ruler over Galilee where Jesus spent most of His time ministering. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2, *Herod*—Mt.14:1-14 for more discussion.)
4. Philip was tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis. He was a reputable leader, known as a fair and just ruler. Caesarea Philippi was built and named after him. Caesarea was where Peter made his great confession.
5. Lysanius was tetrarch of Abilene. Nothing of importance is known about him.
6. Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. This statement throws a revealing light upon the high priesthood of Jesus' day. It shows just how political and corrupt the high priesthood had become. There was never to be more than one priest at any given time, for the priesthood was supposed to be for life and was supposed to be hereditary. But with the coming of Roman rule, the High Priest became a political power base. Rome used the position to secure power over Jewish life. They offered and gave the position to men who were cooperative and willing to let the people follow Roman rule. For example, between B.C. 37-A.D. 26 twenty-eight different men were installed and removed as High Priests.

The point Luke is making is just this: the High Priest's office had become corrupted, and religious positions had become politically motivated. Annas, who had served as High Priest between A.D. 7-14, was still the power behind the throne. Caiaphas was officially the High Priest in Rome's eyes, but Annas was still the one to whom most Jewish leaders looked. This is actually seen during the trials of Jesus. Jesus was taken first to Annas, despite the fact that he was not the official High Priest (Jn.18:13).

> **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).**
>
> **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15).**

2 (3:2) **Minister, Call of—God, Call of—Institutional Religion**: John was a man called out of the wilderness. Note three points.

1. God's call came to John in the wilderness, in an obscure place. The place where John was reared was so slightly populated that it was known as a wilderness. The area consisted of only six small towns or villages scattered far apart. God found him in the most obscure place.

> **Thought 1.** The place where a person is does not matter; a person's heart is what matters. If a person's heart is right toward God, God will call him no matter where he is. No one is hidden from God, no matter how obscure his residence is. The Word of God is not limited; it reaches even to the wilderness.

2. God's call was a very personal matter. Note: John never revealed how God spoke to him. Did God call him through a vision, through the appearance of an angel, through an audible voice, or through an inner sense? We do not know. John kept the matter in his heart; it was just too intimate, too meaningful an experience. And his heart was genuine and pure. He was not willing to lower his intimacy with God by talking about it and boasting in it, that is, by acting super-spiritual.

3. God's call was for John to serve God rather than to serve institutional religion. John was somewhere around thirty years of age, the age when he was to become a full-fledged priest by descent. Remember, his father Zacharias was a priest, and the priesthood was by descent. He was supposed to have been in training for some five years, and when he reached age thirty he was to begin serving in the temple. But God's call to John was to a different ministry, a ministry that fitted into God's plans much more than institutional religion.

> **Thought 1.** It is God who calls a man, not institutional religion. A man's first loyalty is to God, not to institutional religion.
>
> **Thought 2.** God moves outside *institutional religion* as well as within institutional religion (cp. Simeon, probably a priest, and Anna, a prophetess within the temple). Note two things.
>
> 1) *Institutional religionists* often frown and oppose those ministering *outside* the institution. They feel threatened, as though the *outside minister* is against them. Sometimes they are right; the outsider is sometimes against them. But if the outside minister is truly ministering, there should be support and encouragement. However, too often cooperation is not given. The institutional religionist too often fears the loss of authority, position, and security; therefore, he opposes the *outside minister*. Such motives are corrupt and need to be corrected. Ministers, both within and without institutional religion, need to be about God's call and business. They should not be wasting time by struggling against each other. Time is too short, and God's call comes to men both within and without institutional religion. Each needs to support the other in God's calling.
> 2) A man must do and serve God as God calls and wills.
>
> > **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
> >
> > **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation....Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:18, 20).**
> >
> > **"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power" (Eph.3:7).**
> >
> > **"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).**
> >
> > **"Whereunto [the gospel] I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (2 Tim.1:11).**

3 (3:3) **Repentance—Forgiveness—Baptism**: John was a man who preached repentance and forgiveness of sins. Note the exact wording: he preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This simply means that if a man wished to be forgiven his sins, he repented. He turned from his sins, and changed his life; then he was baptized. Baptism was the sign to his neighbors and the world that he was changing his life (repenting) because he wanted God to forgive his sins. The order is this:

⇒ A man wanted God to forgive his sins.

⇒ The man therefore made a decision to repent, to turn from his sinful ways, and to change his life (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30).
⇒ The man was immediately baptized.

Now note. It was baptism that proclaimed to everyone that the man wanted forgiveness and was turning from his sins (repenting). Baptism was the act, the sign, that said to the world that the man was thereafter going to live a changed life so that God would forgive his sins.

Two simple facts are being stated.

1. Forgiveness of sins is conditional. A man must repent to be forgiven, and if he truly repents, he is baptized. Baptism is part of the act of repentance!
2. Baptism is the immediate witness and sign that a man is repenting and changing his life. If a man is truly sincere in seeking forgiveness, he is baptized and does change his life, turning away from sin and turning to God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.3:11; notes—Mk.1:3-5; Jn.1:24-26 for more detailed discussion on John's baptism).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Mt.3:11).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).

4 (3:4-6) **Prepare**: John was a man who cried out apocalyptically: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Roads*—Mk.1:3). John warned the people and he quoted Isaiah 40:3-5 as his authority. He took the points Isaiah had made and proclaimed them to the people.

1. Prepare, for the humbled shall be exalted. Every valley (the humble believers of the earth) shall be filled, that is, received, enriched, raised up, and exalted.
2. Prepare, for the proud shall be abased. Every mountain and hill shall be brought low. The mountains and hills would be the great and the less great, the self-sufficient and the self-confident, the prideful and the boastful, the conceited and the arrogant. They shall lose everything they have and be brought low. They shall be made as the dust of the earth if they do not repent.
3. Prepare, for the crooked shall be straightened. The crooked thief and businessman, the crooked husband and wife, the crooked student and professor—all the crooked sinners of the earth who are bent out of shape—all who repent shall be made straight by the Messiah.
4. Prepare, for the rough ways shall be made smooth. All the rough ways of the earth—the ways of hopelessness, helplessness, loneliness, emptiness, insecurity, guilt, shame, sin, death, false religion, and empty worship—all shall be made smooth. The way to life and peace shall be planed, made level, and easy to reach.
5. God's salvation shall be seen by all flesh. Not only the Jews, but all people shall see the Messiah, God's salvation to the world. When the way is prepared, the Savior will appear.

John's preaching aroused thousands. It woke them and stirred them to prepare and to look for the Messiah. Apparently, it was the multitude who listened to John who eventually became the followers of Christ. It was also the same multitude who created the excitement needed to spread the news of the Messiah's coming.

"Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:12-13).

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:20-21).

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Mt.24:44).

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning" (Mk.13:35).

	B. The Plain Message of John the Baptist: A Message for All Ages, 3:7-20 (Mt.3:7-12; Mk.1:7-8)	13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.	people
		14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.	c. The soldiers: Were to love and care enough to provide security & service to the nation
1 He preached condemnation	7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?	15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;	**6 He preached the Messiah's coming**
2 He preached repentance	8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.	16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:	a. The Messiah's person
3 He preached against pride			
4 He preached judgment	9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.	17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.	b. The Messiah's baptism[DS1] c. The Messiah's judgment[DS2]
5 He preached social justice	10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?		
a. The people: Were to love & care enough to share their material possessions	11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.	18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.	**7 He preached many other things**
		19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,	**8 He preached against sin in high places** a. He preached against the governor's sin
b. The tax collectors: Were to love and care enough to stop exerting their authority & cheating	12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?	20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.	b. The result: He was arrested

DIVISION II

THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15

B. The Plain Message of John the Baptist: A Message for All Ages, 3:7-20

(3:7-20) **Introduction**: the message of John the Baptist was powerful, a message for all ages.

1. He preached condemnation (v.7).
2. He preached repentance (v.8).
3. He preached against pride (v.8).
4. He preached judgment (v.9).
5. He preached social justice (v.10-14).
6. He preached the Messiah's coming (v.15-17).
7. He preached many other things (v.18).
8. He preached against sin in high places (v.19-20).

1 (3:7) **Condemnation—Preaching**: John preached condemnation. Note two things.

1. He preached the truth about men, what they *were* and *had become*. They were "vipers," poisonous. They had allowed themselves to be poisoned and were now poisonous to others. They were sick and doomed, and they were biting others, making them sick and dooming them.
2. He preached the wrath to come (cp. v.8, 17).

> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:5-6).**

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Ps.2:12).

2 (3:8) **Repentance**: John preached repentance. Note that a man must first repent, then bear fruit. And the fruit must be worthy (deserving), consistent with repentance—fruit that shows a changed heart and a turning away from sin. (See notes—Lk.3:3; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die?" (Ezk.18:31).

"Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).

3 (3:8) **Pride—Preaching—Self-righteousness**: John preached against pride (see note—Ro.12:16. Cp. 1 Cor.4:10; 5:6.) Many of the people believed they were acceptable to God simply because they were Jews, that is, because they were children of Abraham and of godly forefathers. Many felt acceptable to God because they had undergone a religious ritual, that of circumcision. They felt the righteousness of their fathers had saved them. How they lived mattered little. They were saved because they were *special*—special enough to be acceptable to God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25).

Thought 1. Most people are prideful. They feel they are special enough to be acceptable to God, that God would never reject them. They feel acceptable because they...

- have godly parents
- have been baptized
- are not too bad
- are good enough
- are blessed with so much
- are somewhat religious
- are members of a church
- are regular worshippers

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Lk.18:9).

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise" (Pr.12:15).

"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits" (Pr.16:2; cp. Pr.21:2).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).

"Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned" (Jer.2:35).

4 (3:9) **Judgment—Preaching**: John preached judgment. Note several things.

1. God is the Divine Woodman who cuts down the trees.
2. The axe is already lying at the roots of the trees.
3. The trees are *not yet* cut down, but all men are warned.
4. There are many trees: some lofty (the proud), some stately (leaders), some diseased, some bearing good fruit, some bearing bad fruit, and some bearing no fruit at all.
5. All trees that do not bear good fruit will be cut down and cast into the fire (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:21-23).

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pt.4:17-18).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

5 (3:10-14) **Justice—Preaching—Fruit—Repentance—Life, Changed**: John preached social justice. John stirred people. The people wanted to know how repentance would affect their lives, just what a changed life would mean. What kind of fruit should they bear? John answered in the most practical terms.

1. The average citizen was to love and care enough to share his material goods with those who were in need. John mentioned clothing and food, the basic necessities of life. But note: the giving was to be sacrificial. The *giver* was to give all but one coat and half a meal. The giver was to love and care so much that he would be gripped with mercy and unself-

ishness. He would give what he had. Such fruit would be evidence of repentance, of a life truly changed, of a man who was truly seeking God to forgive his sins (see note—Lk.3:3).

2. The despised tax collectors were to love and care enough to stop exerting their authority and cheating people. Tax collectors in Jesus' day were literally despised because they represented the Roman government and levied more taxes than necessary, pocketing the excess. A tax collector who wanted God to forgive his sins had to change his life, becoming a man of justice and equitableness. He had to love and care for others enough to treat them fairly and respectfully and justly.

3. The soldiers were to be respectful and loving, truthful and honest, contented and responsible. Note the three specific charges to soldiers.

   a. They were to do violence to no man. The word "violence" (diaseisete) means to shake violently, agitate, terrify. The thought is that some extorted money by terrifying people. Roman soldiers were, of course, posted to protect the interests of Rome. It was common for soldiers to allow illegal things to go on for a bribe.

   b. They were to charge no man falsely. If a man did not pay a bribe, he was often falsely accused by the soldier.

   c. They were to be content with their wages. Dissatisfaction and grumbling over their wages was a common complaint of soldiers.

A soldier was to change his life completely: to respect and love people, be truthful and honest, contented and responsible.

Note that John's message demanded a changed life. What then were the fruits that demonstrated one was truly repenting and seeking forgiveness of sins? Very practically, "*the fruits of righteousness*" (cp. v.8).

> **"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the *fruits of righteousness*, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:9-11).**
>
> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**
>
> **"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).**
>
> **"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (Jas.3:17).**

6 (3:15-17) **Jesus Christ, Messiah—Preaching**: John preached the Messiah's coming. He stressed three points in particular.

1. The Messiah's person. The Messiah was more "worthy" and "mightier" than he.
   a. More worthy: John was not worth the rank of a slave before Christ. Slaves were the ones who loosed the sandals and washed the feet of guests. He was as *nothing* before the Lord. What an attitude of humility!
   b. Mightier: Jesus was mightier in both person (as above) and work (baptism and judgment, v.16-17).
2. The Messiah's baptism (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.3:16 for discussion).
3. The Messiah's judgment. Note these points.
   a. The "fan" or winnowing fork (pluon) is the Messiah's power to pick up both the wheat and the chaff.
   b. The "floor" is the earth which will be purged or cleansed of all chaff.
   c. The "wheat" represents believers who truly repent and bring forth fruit. They will be gathered into His barn (His kingdom or the new heavens and earth).
   d. The "chaff" represents those who only profess, who are counterfeit wheat. They lie on the floor (the earth) with the wheat, but they are not wheat. They shall be "burned with unquenchable fire." (See note—Lk.3:17 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:16) **Baptism**: the word "baptism" (baptizein) means to dip, to immerse, to submerge, to place into. John's baptism was with water, but Jesus' baptism was "in [en] the Spirit and fire."

1. John's baptism was both a preparation and a symbol of the spiritual baptism that Jesus was to bring. John's water baptism meant two things.

First, it symbolized cleansing from all sin. A person was being prepared for the cleansing that Christ would provide.

Second, it symbolized separation or dedication. A person was setting his life apart to God in a renewed spirit of dedication. He was committing himself to the Christ about whom John was preaching.

2. Jesus' spiritual baptism is a double baptism. Only one preposition is used for "the Spirit and fire," the preposition "in."

First, Jesus baptizes the person *in the Spirit*. He dips, immerses, and places the person in the Spirit. A person may be carnal and materialistic, but once he has been baptized into the Spirit by Christ, he becomes spiritually minded (Ro.8:5-7). The Jews had longed and looked for the day when the Spirit would come. The prophets had predicted His coming time and again; therefore, the people knew exactly what John was predicting (cp. Ezk.36:26-27; 37:14; 39:29; Is.44:3; Joel 2:28). Note: John's baptism was called "the baptism of repentance"; that is, the person who repented was baptized. There could be no question; it was understood. If one repented and actually turned to the Lord, he was baptized.

Second, Jesus baptized the person *in fire*. Fire has several functions that graphically symbolize the work of Christ. It illuminates, warms, melts, burns, and utterly destroys. The difference between baptism with water and fire is the difference between an outward work and an inward work. Water only cleanses the outside; fire purifies within, that is, the heart. Jesus Christ separates a person from his former life and purifies him within by the fire of His Holy Spirit. It should

be noted that in John's mind the "baptism of fire" meant that the Messiah was to destroy the enemies of Israel. It was "the messianic fire of judgment" that was to come from the throne of David (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; note—Lk.7:21-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(3:17) **Unquenchable Fire** (puri asbesto): this literally reads "with fire unquenchable." It is fire that cannot be quenched, snuffed out, extinguished. The idea is that the fire is everlasting, burning on and on and never ending (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.25:41).

7 (3:18) **Preaching**: John preached many other things. Note the word "exhortation" (parakalon). It means to admonish, urge, beseech, entreat. John pierced the ears and the hearts of the people; he pressed and pressed upon the people their need to prepare for the coming of the Lord.

> **"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:20-21).**
>
> **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:12-13).**

8 (3:19-20) **Preaching—Sin, Preaching Against**: John preached against sin in high places. He rebuked the ruler Herod for his evil life and carnal excess, for his terrible sin of adultery. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.14:1-14.)

> **"Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you" (2 Chron.24:20).**
>
> **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).**
>
> **"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).**

	C. The Baptism of Jesus: Obedience and God's Approval, 3:21-22 (Mt.3:13-17; Mk.1:9-11; Jn.1:29-34)
1 Jesus' obedience a. Obedient along with the people b. Obedient in prayer	21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,
2 God's signs of approval a. The heavens were opened b. The Spirit descended c. The voice of God spoke	22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

DIVISION II

THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15

C. The Baptism of Jesus: Obedience and God's Approval, 3:21-22

(3:21-22) **Introduction—Baptism**: baptism is both obeying God and securing God's approval. This is why Jesus was baptized, and it is why we are to be baptized.

1. Jesus' obedience (v.21).
2. God's signs of approval (v.22).

1 (3:21) **Baptism—Obedience—Prayer**: baptism is an act of obedience to God. Jesus was obeying God in being baptized. This is seen in two acts.

1. Jesus obeyed God by being baptized with the people. Note the words, "When all the people were baptized." Some scholars say Jesus was baptized *after* all the people were baptized; others *while* they were being baptized. It does not matter which is factual. The point is this: Jesus was right in the midst of the people, *obeying* God with them. He was doing exactly what God wanted, identifying with the people.

One thing sets these people apart from the rest of the public. They heard John's message and responded, doing exactly what God wanted. They were obeying God's call, doing what was right, obeying righteousness. Now again, note that Jesus was baptized "when all the people were baptized," right along with them. He was doing at least two things. (see outline and notes—Mt.3:13; 3:15; Mk.1:9-11 for more discussion).

a. He was demonstrating that He, the Son of God, was *fulfilling all righteousness* (see note—Mt.5:17-18). He, too, was being obedient to God, *fulfilling every law* of God for man.
b. He was demonstrating His humiliation, that He was Man, fully Man. As Man He was required to live obediently to God just as other men were. There was one difference, however; Jesus lived a sinless life, and by such He became the Perfect and Ideal Man, the Pattern for all men (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20).

Thought 1. Every man should respond to the gospel of God; that is, he should seek God to forgive his sins, repent, and be baptized. This is God's will for every man. Every man should obey God and fulfill all righteousness. Baptism is an act of obedience; it is obeying God right along with other believers.

> **"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him" (Mt.3:13-15).**
>
> **"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk.16:16).**
>
> **"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:5).**

Thought 2. No man is above any other man, not in the eyes of God. God's own Son had to obey Him; He had to be baptized as a *sign of obedience* to God. We, too, have to be baptized if we are truly repenting and seeking God to forgive our sins. We are not above God's will and His instructions to "repent and be baptized" (Acts 2:38).

> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Mt.28:19).**

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

2. Jesus obeyed God in prayer. While Jesus was being baptized, He was praying. His mind and thoughts were upon God. He was in fellowship and communion with God. This is as it should be. Why would a person's mind be elsewhere while he is being baptized if he is sincere?

⇒ Baptism is an *outward* sign of God's working *within* the heart of a person. The *inward working* and *inward grace of God is sought by prayer*. Thus, *true* baptism is the first act whereby a man shows that he is in communion with God.

⇒ Baptism, the most significant act of discipleship, will be followed by a changed life. A changed life demonstrates that a person is repenting and seeking God to forgive his sins. Therefore, while a person is being baptized, he is in a spirit of prayer seeking God's grace and favor as he walks out into an alien and wicked world.

⇒ Baptism launches the new life of the believer. Baptism is to be the first act of the repenting believer, the first confession to the public that a person is going to change his life and live for God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Baptism*—Acts 2:38 for more discussion.) *Baptism is the first public confession of a person's inward prayer of confession to God*. Thus baptism, the outward public confession to man, should follow right upon the heels of the inward private confession to God. The spirit of prayer that started it all should be the same spirit of prayer that finishes it all. The prayer that confessed to God privately should continue right on through to the prayer that confesses to the public at large. In fact, from the very moment of the inward prayer of a person's confession to God, the heart should continue in a spirit of prayer right on through life. The believer's very spirit should be a spirit of continued prayer. Such was Jesus' obedience in prayer. Such is to be our obedience in prayer. An unbroken communion with God in prayer is the ache of God for us.

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Continuing instant in prayer" (Ro.12:12).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).

"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you" (Col.1:3).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Night and day praying exceedingly" (1 Th.3:10).

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas.5:16).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Pt.4:7).

2 (3:22) **Baptism**: baptism secures God's approval. When a person is baptized, God is very pleased, for the person is *obeying* and *following* in the steps of Jesus. Jesus' baptism pleased God. God showed His approval in three ways.

1. The heavens were opened (v.21). This was probably for two purposes.
   a. To give Jesus a very special sight and sense of God's glory and presence. The Lord's baptism was the launch of His ministry to men. He needed a very special glimpse and sense of God's glory and presence. He needed the stamp of God's approval and power (cp. Acts 7:56; Ezk.1:1).
   b. To reveal to John and perhaps to the others standing there (if the opening of heaven were visible to all) that Jesus was truly the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Jn.1:29).
2. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in "a bodily shape like a dove." The dove was a sacred bird to the Jews. It was a symbol of peace and gentleness, of purity and innocence, but even more significant it was often identified with the Spirit of God. When the dove descended upon Jesus, it symbolized the Spirit of God Himself descending upon Jesus. He was descending upon Jesus to identify Jesus as the Messiah and to endue Jesus with the power of God (see outline and notes—Mk.1:9-10). John went out of his way to stress that the Spirit's descent upon Jesus was unique: He abode (Jn.1:32) and He remained upon Jesus (Jn.1:33). The Holy Spirit entered the life of Jesus once for all, permanently and powerfully, in His full manifestation and unlimited power.
3. The voice of God was heard (see note—Mt.3:16-17).

Thought 1. When we genuinely obey God and are baptized, God is pleased. We also secure His approval in the same three ways.

1) God opens heaven up to us and gives us a very special sense of His presence, a sense of His approval, a sense that we are pleasing Him immensely.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:4-6).

2) God manifests and reveals His Spirit to us in a very special sense. We are obeying Him, and significant moments of obedience bring special manifestations of the Spirit (see note—Jn.14:21).

> **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).**
>
> **"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph.1:7-10).**
>
> **"The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:26-27).**

3) God's Word is heard. The fact that we are baptized is a sign that we have heard His command to be baptized, and because we are obeying Him, He continues to speak to us day by day as we seek His will in the Bible and prayer.

> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**
>
> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**

	D. The Genealogy of Jesus: The Roots of the Messiah,[DSI] **3:23-38** (Mt.1:1-17)	of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim, 31 Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of	
1 Jesus was about thirty years of age	23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,	Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David, 32 Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of	**3 Adamic heir: To be Messianic High Priest** (v.32-38)
2 Davidic heir: To be the Messianic King (v.24-31)	24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph, 25 Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge, 26 Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda, 27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri, 28 Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi. which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er, 29 Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, 30 Which was the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son	Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson, 33 Which was the son of Aminidab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda, 34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor, 35 Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala, 36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech, 37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan, 38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.	**4 Godly heir: To be Messianic Prophet of God**

DIVISION II

THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15

D. The Genealogy of Jesus: The Roots of the Messiah, 3:23-38

(3:23-38) **Introduction**: Jesus was now ready to begin His ministry. But did He have the *right*? What proof was there that He was the Messiah, the Son of God? In this passage Luke makes a phenomenal point. He says that even the roots of Jesus, His genealogy, prove He is the Messiah. His roots give Him the right to claim Messiahship, to claim that He is the Savior, the Son of God.

1. Jesus was about thirty years of age (v.23).
2. He was Davidic heir: He was to be the Messianic King (v.24-31).
3. He was Adamic heir: He was to be the Messianic High Priest (v.32-38).
4. He was Godly heir: He was to be the Messianic Prophet of God (v.38).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:23-38) **Jesus, Genealogy**: there are two significant facts here. First, Luke follows Mary's line (genealogy), the line of Jesus' mother. Second, he traces Mary's line all the way back to Adam. What he does is show that God's Son actually be-

came a man. Jesus was the promised Messiah. Luke is writing to Gentiles who placed great emphasis on a transcendental God, a God way out in space someplace who was thought to be far removed from the day-to-day affairs of men. Luke had to show that Jesus was man, fully human. He was a man born of a woman, full of emotions and feelings and personal day-to-day experiences just like all other men.

Matthew's genealogy is different (Mt.1:1). Matthew was writing primarily to Jews who placed great emphasis on pure lineage. An impure lineage deprived a Jew of his nationality, of his right to be called a Jew; and tragically, this meant that he lost his right to be called a child of God. To combat this problem, Matthew traces Jospeh's line all the way back through King David and Abraham, the founding father of Israel. He does this to show that Jesus had the legal right to the throne of David and to the promises made to Abraham. This is not to say that Jesus was the actual physical son of Joseph, but rather as the Son of God, Jesus was sent into the family of Joseph. By such He became the legal heir of Joseph (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:23). This meant two things. First, Jesus was legally of the pure line of the Jewish nation. He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies that said the Messiah would be born of the Jewish nation. Second, as a Jew and as the Son of God, Jesus had the legal right to claim Messiahship. He had the legal right to the throne of David and to the promises made to Abraham (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25. Cp. Gen.12:1-3.)

1 (3:23) **Jesus Christ, Age of**: Jesus was about thirty years of age when He launched His ministry. Why did He wait until He was thirty before beginning His ministry?

1. Thirty was the age when the Levites began their work (Num.4:47).
2. Thirty was also the age when a Scribe was allowed to begin his teaching ministry.
3. Thirty was the age whan a man was thought to reach full development and maturity.

Now, note a crucial point. Jesus needed to live thirty years as other men lived, learning and maturing in the day-to-day routine of life and responsibility (cp. Heb.5:8). Why?

1. Jesus needed to prove faithful, to secure righteousness right down where men live, right in the day-to-day duties...
   - of work (He was a carpenter by trade).
   - of family (He became the head of the house when Joseph died).
   - of physical growth (He grew and matured as all men do, day by day).
   - of mental growth (He studied and learned as all men do).
   - of spiritual growth (He sought God as all men should).

> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).**

2. Jesus needed to show (demonstrate, paint the picture of) how men should live in the routine of day-to-day living.
3. Jesus needed to learn from the day-to-day experiences of life (as Man)—learn so that He could teach men from experience exactly how they should live.
4. Jesus needed to learn from day-to-day experiences so He could better help and succor men throughout their lives. By ploughing through the experiences of life, He could better help men plough through their day-to-day experiences (see note—Lk.2:40 for detailed discussion).

2 (3:24-31) **Jesus Christ, Davidic Heir—King**: Jesus was the Davidic heir—He was qualified to be the Messianic King. God had given to David and His seed (the Messiah) the promise of eternal government (2 Sam.7:12; Ps.39:3f; 132:11).

The Jews believed these promises of God. Therefore Jesus, "who is called Christ" (Mt.1:16), was the promised Son of Abraham, the promised Son of David (Mt.1:1).

Note how often Jesus was called the son of David. (Cp. Mt.12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Acts 2:29-36; Ro.1:3; 2 Tim.2:8; Rev.22:16.) It was the common title and popular concept of the Messiah. Generation after generation of Jews looked for the promised deliverer of Israel. The people expected Him to be a great general who would deliver and restore the nation to its greatness. In fact, they expected Him to make the nation the center of universal rule. He would, under God, conquer the world and center the glory and majesty of God Himself in Jerusalem. And from His throne, the throne of David, He would execute "the Messianic fire of judgment" upon the nations and peoples of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; Lk.7:21-23. Referring to these notes will show what the Jewish concept of the Messiah was.) If Luke can prove that Jesus' roots (genealogy) go all the way back to David and Adam, then he will have shown how seriously one must take the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).

1. The Messianic King was prophesied.

> **"He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (2 Sam.7:13).**
>
> **"Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people; and thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me" (Ps.18:43).**
>
> **"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth....Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve Him" (Ps.72:8, 11).**
>
> **"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Ps.89:3-4).**
>
> **"Thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I**

anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him....And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him" (Ps.89:19-21, 23).

"I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth....His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven....His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven" (Ps.89:27, 29, 36-37).

"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Ps.110:1-2).

"The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne....There will make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish" (Ps.132:11, 17-18).

"And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Is.2:4).

"I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Is.6:1).

"The government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Is.9:6-7).

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Is.11:1).

"In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek" (Is.11:10).

"Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness" (Is.32:1).

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty" (Is.33:17).

"Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him" (Is.40:10).

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Is.52:7).

"Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high" (Is.52:13).

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer.23:5-6).

"They shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them" (Jer.30:9).

"For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel" (Jer.33:17).

"Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezk.21:26-27).

"And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever" (Ezk.37:24-25).

"The stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Dan.2:35).

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan.2:44).

"Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan.7:13-14).

"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks" (Dan.9:25).

"Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days" (Hos.3:5).

"The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy

mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more" (Joel 3:16-17).

"Out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting....And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth" (Mic.5:2, 4).

"In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11).

"And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nations shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Mic.4:3).

"The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zeph.3:15).

"And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech.6:12-13).

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation....And he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zech.9:9-10).

(Also see some Topical Bible or Reference Work: God and Jesus Christ, Kingdom of.)

2. Jesus Christ was the Messianic King.

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him....And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Mt.2:2, 6).

"The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity" (Mt.13:41).

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Mt.25:31).

"And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest" (Mt.27:11).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Lk.1:32-33).

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born" (Jn.18:36-37).

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

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour" (Acts 5:31).

"To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).

"But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor.15:23-26).

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:20-22).

"God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim.6:15-16).

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool" (Heb.10:12-13).

"[Christ] who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev.1:5-7).

"These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev.3:7).

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).

"And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer" (Rev.6:2).

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:15-17).

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.11:15).

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night" (Rev.12:10).

"Behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle" (Rev.14:14).

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings" (Rev.17:14).

"I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself....Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev.19:11-12, 15-16).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with a thousand years" (Rev.20:6).

3 (3:32-38) **Adamic Heir—Roots—Genealogy**: Jesus was the Adamic heir—He was qualified to be the Messianic High Priest, the Perfect High Priest who represents man before God and God before man. This was the very *function* of the High Priest: to represent men before God and God before men. The High Priest bore the name of God before men, and He carried the names of men before God (Ro.8:33-34; Heb.2:17; 9:24; 1 Jn.2:1-2; cp. Is.49:16). In relation to the Messiah, this meant two things.

1. The Messiah must *know man perfectly*, and He must *know God perfectly*. He must be the Perfect God-Man in Person, in Being, in Essence. He had to be Man, yes, but He also had to be God Incarnate in human flesh. He had to be born of Adam, that is, of Adam's seed, of human flesh; but He also had to possess the very nature of God. This was the only way man could ever have a Perfect High Priest. It was absolutely necessary—because of the very nature of a depraved world—that a Perfect High Priest be *Perfect God-Perfect Man*.
2. The Messiah must also *be able to represent God before man*, represent God perfectly; and He must *be able to represent man before God*, represent man perfectly. As Scripture says "[Messiah must] be faithful to God that appointed Him" (Heb.3:2).

The Messiah had to live as Perfect God in order to represent God to man. The Messiah also had to live as Perfect Man (never sinning) in order to represent man before God (if man was to be represented as perfect before God).

Scripture declares that Jesus did live a perfect life, that He never sinned (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 9:28; 3:5).

1. The Messianic High Priest was typified by two men or priests in the Old Testament.
   a. By Melchizedek.

> **"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all" (Gen.14:18-20).**
>
> **"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps.110:4).**

   b. By Aaron.

> **"And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats: and thou shalt anoint them, as thou**

didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations" (Ex.40:12-15).

2. The Messianic High Priest was prophesied.

"And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near [as High Priest], and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Jer.30:21-22. Note how the governor draws near in High Priestly fashion.)

"And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech.6:12-13).

3. Jesus Christ is the Messianic High Priest.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him" (Heb.3:1-2).

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:14-16).

"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee...though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:4-5, 8-9). (See outline—Heb.4:14-5:10 for overview. See outlines—Heb.4:14-7:28 for full picture.)

4 (3:38) **Jesus Christ, Prophet**: Jesus is the Godly heir—He was qualified to be the Messianic Prophet of God Himself. Jesus Christ Himself proclaimed what the Messianic Prophet of God was to do.

"He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book...and he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Lk.4:16-21).

1. The Messianic Prophet of God was prophesied.

"The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Dt.18:15).

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Is.9:2).

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Is.11:1-4).

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law" (Is.42:1-4).

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Is.52:7).

"Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off" (Nah.1:15).

2. Jesus Christ was the Messianic Prophet of God (see above statement of Christ, Lk.4:16-21).

"And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" (Mt.21:11).

"And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people" (Lk.7:16).

"Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Lk.13:33).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world" (Jn.6:14).

"Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet" (Jn.7:40).

"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him....Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:26, 28).

"They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, he is a prophet" (Jn.9:17).

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn.12:49-50).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the words....He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:10, 24).

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (Jn.15:15).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me....And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn.17:8, 26).

	CHAPTER 4		
	E. The Temptation of Jesus: Victory Over Temptation, 4:1-15 (Mt.4:1-11, 12-17; Mk.1:12-13, 14-15)		
1 Being prepared to serve God[DSI] a. By being filled with the Spirit b. By spending time alone with God c. By being tried & tested d. By fasting & praying	And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,	7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.	d. Satan's condition: A person must worship & follow him e. Jesus' answer: He must worship & follow God alone
2 Tempt. 1: To meet the necessities of life by His own power a. Satan's temptation: To misuse His power b. Jesus' answer: Man needs more than bread—he needs God's life or spiritual food	2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.	8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.	
3 Tempt. 2: To seek His ambition by compromise a. Satan's enticement: He shows the world's possessions & glory b. Satan's claim: He controls world & its glory c. Satan's offer: He will give the world to whomever he wills	3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. 4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. 5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.	9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: 10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee: 11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. 14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. 15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.	**4 Tempt. 3: To prove Himself through sensationalism** a. Satan's temptation 1) To choose another way 2) To misuse & twist the Scripture to suit his own ends 3) To give people sensations—a religion of feelings b. Jesus' answer: God is not to be tempted—God's way alone is to be followed **5 Conclusion: Satan left Jesus for a while** a. Jesus' great power b. Jesus' great fame c. Jesus' great ministry

DIVISION II

THE SON OF MAN'S APPEARANCE, 3:1-4:15

E. The Temptation of Jesus: Victory Over Temptation, 4:1-15

(4:1-15) **Introduction**: victory over temptation is essential before we can live and minister for God. No temptation has ever confronted man that Jesus Christ has not confronted. This is seen in this passage. In His confrontation, Jesus reveals what lies behind each temptation and how to conquer it. Once it has been conquered, we can then live a victorious life and serve God effectively.

1. Being prepared to serve God (v.1-2).
2. Temptation 1: to meet the necessities of life by His own power (v.3-4).
3. Temptation 2: to seek His ambition through compromise (v.5-8).
4. Temptation 3: to prove Himself through sensationalism (v.9-12).
5. Conclusion: Satan left Jesus for a while (v. 13-15).

1 (4:1-2) **Ministry, Preparation—Service**: Jesus was being prepared to serve God. He was about to launch the most important work ever performed by man. His work was to determine the eternal fate of the world and of every man in the world. Jesus had to be strengthened and prepared perfectly, without flaw. Two things were involved in His preparation.

First, there was God's plan. Jesus had to be totally committed to carry out God's plan no matter what happened. God's plan was the cross, the way of sacrifice and suffering in order to help others. Jesus would always be tempted to choose the easier course of self, power, and glory. He needed to gain the victory *once-for-all*. Not that He would not be tempted again; He would. But He needed a strong moment of victory to show that He could conquer the temptation.

Second, Jesus' preparation involved a personal need for strength and assurance. The only way Jesus could be strengthened and gain assurance was to be tempted. He had to struggle against temptation to become tough and strong, and to be assured that He could conquer and be victorious over the trials of life.

Now, note the first two verses. They give the four essentials necessary for preparation. Jesus had to be prepared to serve God. (How much more do we!)

1. Jesus was "full of the Holy Spirit." Note the emphasis upon the Holy Spirit. He is mentioned twice.

a. Jesus had a dramatic experience with the Spirit at His baptism (Lk.3:21-22).
b. Jesus was "led by the Spirit" (egeto en toi pneumati). Note the Greek word "en." It means *in*, which means that Jesus was not only "led by the Spirit" He was led "in the Spirit," step by step and day by day. A man must be *in the Spirit* to be led by the Spirit.

2. Jesus was led to spend time alone with God. He was led to get all alone in the wilderness. Time alone with God is necessary for preparation.

3. Jesus was led to be tried and tested. Trials toughen us, make us stronger, and give us greater assurance so that we can face whatever lies ahead.

4. Jesus was led to fast and pray, two absolute essentials in one's preparation to do a great work for God.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:1-2) **Temptation** (perirazo): the word temptation is used here in both a good and a bad sense. In the good sense it means to test, to try, to prove. It does not mean to seduce into sin. Its purpose is not to defeat or to destroy. The idea is not that one is tempted, seduced, enticed, and pulled into sin by the Holy Spirit (cp. Jas.1:13); but one is tested, proved, strengthened, reinforced, and purified through the trials of temptation.

In the bad sense, it means to tempt, to seduce, to entice, and to pull someone away from God into the way of sin, of self, and of Satan (Mt.4:1; 1 Cor.7:5; 1 Th.3:5; Gal.6:1; Jas.1:13-14).

Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit *to be tested*. The Spirit did not seduce or entice Jesus to do evil, but He led Jesus into circumstances whereby He could learn obedience and discipline. Through such trials, Jesus was to be perfected and enabled to succor all those who suffer trials (Heb.4:15-16; 5:8). (See notes—Mt.4:2-4; 4:5-7; 4:8-10.)

Six things need to be said about overcoming temptation.

1. Temptation has its bottom root in passion and appetite (Mk.7:20-23; Jas.1:14). It comes directly from within, from man's heart, not from without. And it does not come from God. "God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man" (Jas.1:3). God does not tempt any man in a bad sense. What He does is look upon His people as they endure temptation, and He strengthens them to bear the temptation. By such He teaches them discipline and obedience for a greater work (Ro.8:28; 2 Cor.1:3-4; Heb.5:8; 1 Pt.1:6-7).
2. No man confronts any temptation that is not common to all men (1 Cor.10:13).
3. God does not allow the believer to be tempted beyond what he is able to bear. There is always a way to escape (1 Cor.10:13).
4. Jesus Christ understands temptation. He was tempted in all points just as all men are tempted, yet He never sinned (Heb.2:18; 4:15).
5. Jesus Christ is a sympathetic High Priest in helping the believer through temptation (Heb.2:17-18; 4:15).
6. Temptation is overcome (a) by submitting to God and resisting the devil (Jas.4:7-8; 1 Pt.5:8-9), and (b) by using and obeying Scripture to combat temptation (Lk.4:4; cp. Dt.4:8; 4:12; 6:13, 16; 8:3; 10:20).

2 (4:3-4) **Jesus Christ, Temptation—Self-Sufficient—Necessities**: the first temptation was for Jesus to meet the necessities of life by His own power. Note two things.

1. Satan's temptation was for Jesus to misuse His power and His ability. (See note—Mt.4:2-4.) Jesus was very hungry. He had the power to create food and to meet His need, and the tempter tempted Him to use His power upon Himself. But note the wrong in this temptation. Jesus would have been misusing His power by using it in an illegitimate way. His power had not been given to use upon Himself, but to demonstrate His deity by showing men that He was the Son of God. Never once did He use His power upon Himself nor for His own ends—not even when He was hanging upon the cross (cp.Mt.26:42; Lk.23:35). He always used His power to help men, thereby demonstrating and giving evidence that what He was claiming was true: He is the Son of God sent to save the world.

The point is just this: Satan wanted Jesus to prove His Messiahship by *centering* His attention and power upon Himself. If Jesus had used His power upon Himself...

- He would be trusting Himself and not the Father, acting completely independent of the Father and the Father's will.
- He would be saying that men could use their abilities to center upon themselves instead of helping a world lost in need.
- He would be teaching that men could use their abilities to build themselves up (pride) instead of honoring God and His will.

2. Jesus' answer was that something more than physical food was needed. Man needs to be fed spiritually. He needs his spiritual needs met. The point is that Jesus alone can meet man's spiritual needs; therefore He, the Son of God, must use His power only as God wills. (See note—Mt.4:2-4 for detailed discussion.)

Thought 1. A man has needs, the very necessities of life. There are the necessities of...

- food
- clothing
- shelter
- friends
- acceptance
- recognition
- self-esteem
- work
- rest and recreation

The necessities are legitimate. However, the problem arises when we are tempted...

- to use our ability independent of God, forgetting His will and doing our own thing.
- to focus our ability upon ourselves, getting and banking more and more instead of meeting the needs of a desperate world.
- to use our abilities to build ourselves up instead of acknowledging God as the Source of our abilities. Too many seek fame, honor, and praise for selfish ends. Too many want to be recognized as superior and better, as having more position, authority, clothes, houses, cars, lands, and looks.

The great wrong with this is twofold.

1) We misuse our ability. Forgetting God and His will, we focus upon self.
2) We live for the physical and not for the spiritual, for receiving and not for giving. There is a spiritual hunger that just is not met by bread, that is, the physical and material. (See note—Eph.1:3 for detailed discussion.)

> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live" (Is.55:1-3).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**
>
> **"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12).**
>
> **"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Ps.119:103).**
>
> **"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).**

3 (4:5-8) **Jesus Christ, Temptation—Compromise—Ambition**: the second temptation was for Jesus to seek His ambition (God's kingdom) through compromise. (See note—Mt.4:8-10.) Jesus had come to earth to seek and to save men *eternally*, to secure their loyalty for God, and to set up the Kingdom of God forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). This was the ambition of Jesus. The only way to fulfill His ambition was by the cross (freeing men from sin, death, and judgment). Note what happened in this temptation.

1. Satan enticed Jesus in a moment of time. Satan *flashed* across Jesus' mind all the kingdoms of the world in their enormous glory.
2. Satan claimed that he controlled the possessions and glory of the world. Sometime later, Jesus substantiated Satan's claim. Jesus said that Satan is "the prince of this world" (Jn.12:31; 14:30). Other Scriptures say that he is "the prince...the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2) and the "god of this world" (2 Cor.4:4).
3. Satan offered Jesus all the possessions and glory of the world. The world was under His influence and control; therefore, he could give it to anyone whom he wished.
4. Satan, however, had one condition. Jesus had to worship Satan, that is, follow and obey the way of Satan's world. Jesus had to compromise Himself...
   - by compromising His standards and behavior.
   - by compromising His loyalty and faithfulness to God.
   - by compromising His ministry and mission.

Note Jesus' answer: He was quick and decisive, totally dependent upon Scripture to conquer the temptation. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (v.8). He must worship, follow, and serve God alone, not the way and standards and evil of the world. He would follow God even if it meant not realizing His ambition. There is a right way and a wrong way to achieve one's end and purpose; and He, the Son of God, would choose the right way.

Thought 1. The *power* and the *glory* of the world comes from many things. *Worldly power and glory* come from...

- houses
- lands
- wealth
- authority
- influence
- success
- cars
- possessions
- stimulation
- excitement
- fame
- position

A man is often taken up to a mountain by Satan and shown the power and glory of the world. The man is offered whatever he wants if he will do but one thing: worship Satan, that is, follow the path of *worldliness*. Man feels that if he compromises and goes along with the world (everyone else), he will get what he wants and move ahead much faster.

Thought 2. Note a significant point. There is nothing wrong with ambition and desiring to fulfill one's calling in life. There is nothing wrong with experiencing the power and the glory of whatever one's calling is. The wrong is found in following Satan (evil) when tempted to satisfy one's desires and ambitions instead of following God.

> **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).**
>
> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:3-4).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:11-12).

4 (4:9-12) **Jesus Christ, Temptation—Sensationalism—Obedience**: this particular temptation was for Jesus to be sensational. The thought flashed across Jesus' mind that if He jumped off the pinnacle of the temple, God would cause angels to catch Him. God would never let Him be dashed to bits. Therefore, when the people saw the angels float Him to the ground, they would be stunned into belief and become His followers immediately. (Remember Jesus had not yet done a miracle. Satan had no idea of the miracles to come, nor that men would be slow to believe even with all the evidence of signs and wonders.) Note that Satan's temptation was threefold.

1. Satan tempted Jesus to choose some way other than God's way (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). God's way was the way of the cross and of identifying with man in his trials and sufferings (cp. Heb.4:15-16. Then cp. Heb.2:14-18 with Jn.3:16. Cp. also Heb.5:7-9.)
2. Satan tempted Jesus to misuse Scripture by twisting it to suit His purposes. Scripture did say that God would take care of His Son no matter what. The heavenly angels were given charge to help Him in everything.
3. Satan tempted Jesus to give people sensations, a religion of feelings. People do not want a life of self-denial and sacrifice, of too much discipline and control. They want the spectacular, something that will be a quick fix, something...
   - ⇒ to stir their emotions and flesh.
   - ⇒ to stimulate their feelings and give gratification.
   - ⇒ to meet their needs with less and less effort.
   - ⇒ to feed their body and soul without cost.

Jesus' answer was straightforward and decisive: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." There is no way other than God's way; God's way alone is to be pursued and followed. And God's Word is not to be stretched or twisted (presumed upon) trying to make another way. Men must be taught the truth. The way to God is the way of the cross.

Thought 1. All men are tempted to bypass God, to choose another way. The way of the cross is hard and difficult, yet it is the only way to God (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). Trying to devise another way to God only spells doom. (Cp. Jn.14:6; 1 Tim.1:15; 2:5-6; Tit.3:4-7).

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Ro.5:9).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent" (1 Cor.1:18-19).

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:14).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers" (1 Pt.1:18).

Thought 2. Some try to twist or stretch Scripture...

1) To allow them to do what they want (sin).
2) To devise some way to God other than the cross.

5 (4:13-15) **Ministry**: the conclusion to Jesus' temptations was striking. Satan *departed for a season*. He left Jesus alone for a while. The victory was won; the temptation was conquered, and Satan was routed for a while. He would be back, but for now there was peace and freedom to carry on the ministry. Note the immediate result of the Lord's victory.

1. Jesus' great power was demonstrated.
2. Jesus' great fame was spread abroad.
3. Jesus' great ministry in the synagogue was admired.

Thought 1. Victory over temptation does not mean a person is freed forever from temptation. In this life temptation will always return. It did for Jesus; it will for us (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,3—Mt.4:1-11).

"Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!" (Lk.17:1).

Thought 2. Victory over temptation will lead to great results in a person's life. It will give more power, a greater testimony, and a greater ministry.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

	III. THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17 **A. Jesus Announces His Mission: A Graphic Picture of Rejection, 4:16-30** (cp. Mt.13:53-58; Mk.6:1-6)	22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?	**4 Scene 3: The people's declining response** a. First: They were impressed b. Second: They questioned c. Third: They demanded proof—insisted He heal (prove) Himself, that is, work miracles
1 A dramatic scene a. Jesus visited His hometown b. Jesus entered the synagogue—His custom on the Sabbath	16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.	23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. 24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.	**5 Scene 4: The people's painful rejection** a. Illust. 1: Only one needy widow had her needs met in Elijah's day—because only one widow accepted Elijah
2 Scene 1: Jesus' dramatic reading from the prophet Isaiah—concerned the Messiah a. The Messiah is to be anointed by the Spirit b. The Messiah is to preach the gospel c. The Messiah is to minister	17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,	25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; 26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. 27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.	b. Illust. 2: Only one needy leper was cleansed in Elisha's day—because only one leper accepted Elisha
d. The Messiah is to preach the age of salvation	19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.	28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,	**6 Scene 5: The people's true spirit** a. An insane wrath: A close-mindedness
3 Scene 2: Jesus' phenomenal claim a. The rapt attention of the people	20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.	29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.	b. An insane assault: To silence Jesus
b. The claim of Jesus to be the Messiah	21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.	30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way,	c. The insane behavior of the people failed

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

A. Jesus Announces His Mission: A Graphic Picture of Rejection, 4:16-30

(4:16-30) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ claimed to be the Messiah, and His claim was rejected by the people of His day. His claim is still rejected by people today. A graphic picture of rejection is painted in the present passage.

1. A dramatic scene (v.16).
2. Scene 1: Jesus' dramatic reading from the prophet Isaiah—concerned the Messiah (v.17-19).
3. Scene 2: Jesus' phenomenal claim (v.20-21).
4. Scene 3: the people's declining response (v.22-23).
5. Scene 4: the people's painful rejection (v.24-27).
6. Scene 5: the people's true spirit (v.28-30).

1 (4:16) **Jesus, Worship of**: this was a dramatic scene. Jesus visited His hometown of Nazareth where He had been reared (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Nazareth*—Mt.2:23). On the Sabbath He entered the synagogue for worship. Note it was His custom to worship on the Sabbath. He was faithful in His worship of God and faithful to the church. This was the very synagogue that Jesus had always attended as a child. It was a small community synagogue where everyone would know everyone else. Jesus and the congregation were neighors; some were close to His family.

The synagogue had no preachers or ministers as we know them (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Synagogue*—Mt.4:23). The leaders would simply invite some person to read and preach. They had been hearing a good deal about their neighbor Jesus, so they invited Him to read and preach this Sabbath.

2 (4:17-19) **Jesus Christ—Messiah, Ministry—Mission**: the first scene was Jesus' dramatic reading from the prophet Isaiah. The prophecy centered around the Messiah (cp. Is.61:1-2). Note six things.

1. Jesus stood to read the Scripture because of His reverence for the Scripture. (v.16).

Thought 1. There should always be reverence for the Scripture, both in hearing and in reading it (cp. Neh.8:5).

2. The Messiah was to be anointed by the Spirit (v.18). The Messiah was to be both *called* and *equipped* by the Spirit (cp. Lk.3:21-22).

Thought 1. When God calls, He anoints; He equips the messenger with His Spirit. The Holy Spirit goes with the messenger wherever God sends him.

3. The Messiah was to preach the gospel. The word "gospel" (evaggelizesthai) means to evangelize. Note the Messiah was to preach to two classes of people.
   a. He was to preach to the poor. The "poor" means not only poor in material possessions but also *poor in spirit* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:3).
   b. He was to preach deliverance to the captives (aichmalotois). This is a picture of prisoners of war. (See note, *Redemption*—Eph.1:7.)
4. The Messiah was to minister. A threefold ministry was mentioned.
   a. He was to heal the *brokenhearted*. Note that He was not only to help the brokenhearted, He was to *heal* the brokenhearted, those who were...
      - crushed by grief
      - shattered
      - opposed
      - cut off
      - blemished by sin
      - violated by sin
      - infected
      - diseased
      - weakened
      - subdued
      - injured
      - bankrupt
   b. He was to give sight to the *blind*, not only to those who were spiritually blind, but to those who were blind physically.
   c. He was to set at liberty those who were *bruised*. He was to set free those who were physically, mentally, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually bruised—those who were...
      - disabled
      - injured
      - wounded
      - hurting
      - afflicted
      - battered
5. The Messiah was to preach the age of salvation. The term "acceptable year" means the era, the age or day of salvation (cp. 2 Cor.6:2). It means that the age of the Messiah had come.
6. Note a significant point. Jesus was reading from Is.61:1-2, but He abruptly stopped in the middle of v.2. Why? Because the last part of the verse had to do with judgment and Jesus' present ministry was salvation, not judgment. His future ministry would be to judge the world (Is.61:2b). (Cp. Is.58:6.)

3 (4:20-21) **Jesus Christ, Claims—Messiah**: the second scene was Jesus' phenomenal claim. The scene was one of eager expectation. Jesus closed the book, handed it to the minister, and sat down; sitting was the posture for preaching in the synagogue. All eyes "were fastened on Him" (esan atenizontes autoi), a descriptive phrase meaning fixed, gazing, spellbound. They stared at Him in rapt attention; their eyes were locked upon Him eagerly waiting to see what He had to say.

His voice pierced the air: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears"—a phenomenal claim.

The word "today" is important. The people thought of the Messiah's coming and the Messianic age in terms of the future. Jesus proclaimed that He was the Messiah—that the Messianic Age was then and now—that all the Scripture of Isaiah was *fulfilled* in Him. He proclaimed...

- that He was the One upon whom the Spirit abode.
- that He was the One anointed to preach the gospel to the poor and captives.
- that He was the One who healed the brokenhearted.
- that He was the One who gave sight to the blind.
- that He was the One who freed the bruised.
- that He was the One who preached the acceptable year of the Lord, the age of salvation.

> **"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.16:15-17).**
>
> **"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mt.26:63-64).**
>
> **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Lk.24:25-26).**

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

4 (4:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Signs**: the third scene was the people's declining response. Note how drastically the people's response declined.

1. First, they were impressed with His eloquence, His charm and winning words, and the power of His message. Note the word "wondered" (ethaumazon). It means they began to marvel and to be astonished at the gracious words flowing from His mouth. They were taking *pride* in one of their own neighbor's being so capable.

2. Second, they began to question. This was a quick reaction, a quick change. Sitting there listening, the questions began to arise in their thoughts: "Is this not Joseph's son?" Matthew is even more descriptive. The people were sitting there glancing around, asking in their minds, "Is not this...His mother...His brethren...His sisters. Are they not all with us?" (Mt.13:55-56). "And they were offended in Him" (Mt.13:57). The word "offended" means they stumbled over Him. They could not imagine that someone from their own town—someone whom they had known since a child—could be the Messiah, the Son of God.

3. Third, they demanded proof, insisted that He had to heal, that is, prove Himself by working miracles in their midst. Remember, all this was still thoughts in their minds. They were still sitting there listening to Him, but their thoughts were *stumbling* over His claim to be the Messiah. Jesus knew their thoughts, so He stopped His message and directed a statement to them: "You are thinking, saying to me, Physician, heal, prove yourself. Prove yourself by doing the miracles you did in Capernaum."

The point is this: the response of the people to Jesus' claim deteriorated from being *impressed* to being *offended* to *demanding proof.*

Thought 1. Many are impressed with Jesus Christ at first, but when they are presented with His claims and the cross, they become offended and demand proof. His claim to be the Incarnate God in human flesh—to be the virgin-born Son of God—who must die for man's sin by being crucified upon a vulgar cross, is offensive to some. Many refuse to accept such phenomenal claims and vulgar scenes. They want a religion of grand images, beautiful pictures, and soft words.

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (Jn.4:48).

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor.1:22-23).

5 (4:24-27) **Jesus Christ, Rejection of—Salvation**: the fourth scene was the people's painful rejection. Jesus continued to speak, directing His remarks toward His hometown audience. But note: Jesus knew they had already rejected Him. Therefore, He would not gratify their curiosity and demand for signs, nor would He continue to preach; but rather He would give a twofold warning.

1. "No prophet is *accepted* in His own country." They had rejected Him and He knew it. They could not hide the fact. They had (as is so often the case)...
   - allowed familiarity to breed contempt.
   - thought it farfetched that the claims of a hometown boy could be true.
   - given in to envy among neighbors.

Note the words "His own country." Jesus was bound to be thinking of all Israel as well as Nazareth. The Jewish nation would eventually reject Him, the true Messiah.

2. God would reject those who rejected His prophet, the Messiah. Jesus warned the people by recalling two well known stories in the history of Israel. The audience could not miss the point. In the past, God had not given His mercy to people who just *thought* they were "God's people" (the Jews), but God had given His mercy to those whose hearts were turned toward Him and who accepted Him.

   a. There was the one needy widow in Elijah's day. She was the only widow who had her need met by God in the day of famine. There were many without food, destitute and starving, yet God sent His prophet to help only this one person; and she was a despised Gentile. Why? When there were so many others who *professed to be God's chosen people*, why would God help only this one poor widow? Why would God turn away from

the Jews to another person? The point is clear. She was the only one whose heart was turned toward God and who accepted Him.

b. There was also the one leper who had his leprosy cleansed by Elisha. When God sent Elisha to heal Naaman, Elisha passed by many Jewish lepers, many who thought they were the chosen people of God. But the prophet stopped to help none of these. He was sent to heal the Syrian Gentile, the one person whose heart accepted God.

Thought 1. Salvation requires more than mere profession, more than just thinking one is chosen of God and that one will never be rejected by God. A person's heart must be turned toward God (repentance) and must accept God (belief) in order to be saved.

> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**

6 (4:28-30) **Jesus Christ, Rejection of**: the fifth scene was the people's true spirit. Note what Jesus said to the people sitting before Him.

1. Jesus said (predicted) that God would turn and give His mercy to someone else if the people rejected Him. God would turn to those who were responsive to Him. He would not continue to appeal to those who were always rejecting and hardening their hearts.
2. Jesus also made a much broader statement. He said that God would turn from Israel ("His country," v.24) if Israel continued to reject Him.

As a result of these two statements, the people's reaction grew hostile and violent. They "rose up." Note three facts.

1. Their insane wrath: a close-mindedness.
2. Their insane assault: a violent attempt to silence Jesus.
3. Their insane behavior: a failure. Somehow Jesus was able to escape their assault. How? Perhaps the people were stricken with a moment of confusion, a moment of shock, or some temporary blindness which enabled Him to quickly escape.

Thought 1. The Lord will not continue to strive after a man, not forever. A person can go too far too often and face eternity without the presence of God. A person must surrender to the Spirit of God while there is still time.

> **"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).**
>
> **"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:4-5).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb.3:12-14).**

Thought 2. A person or a people may wish to silence Jesus and His followers, but their efforts will be to no avail. The message of the gospel will never be silenced.

> **"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God....upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt.16:16, 18).**
>
> **"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Lk.21:33; cp. Mt.5:18).**
>
> **"Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people...according to all that he promised" (1 Ki.8:56).**
>
> **"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure" (Ps.111:7).**

	B. Jesus Ministers and Makes an Amazing Impact: A Day in the Life of Jesus, 4:31-44 (Mt.8:14-17; Mk.1:21-39)	country round about.	
1 Jesus came down to Capernaum	31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.	38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with great fever; and they besought him for her.	**4 He cured the most needful** a. So needful, a great fever b. So needful, could not speak or seek Jesus for herself c. So needful, could not even come to Jesus d. So needful, He came & healed her; she arose & ministered
2 He taught in the morning service with authority	32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.	39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.	
3 He delivered the most unclean a. A man with an unclean spirit sat in worship 1) Evil spirits acknowledged Jesus' deity	33 And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, 34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God.	40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. 41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.	**5 He healed the diseases of those who sought Him out** **6 He rebuked the evil spirits from making a false profession**
2) Jesus rebuked the evil acknowledgement 3) Jesus cast out the unclean spirit	35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.	42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.	**7 He sought to be alone, seeking the presence of God** a. He tried to get alone b. He was sought out & was begged to stay
b. The people were amazed	36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.	43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.	**8 He persisted in His mission despite pressure to be sidetracked**
c. The people spread His fame	37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the	44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.	

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

B. Jesus Ministers and Makes an Amazing Impact: A Day in the Life of Jesus, 4:31-44

(4:31-44) **Introduction**: this is one of the most interesting passages in all of Scripture. This is the very beginning, the very launch of Jesus' ministry. What Luke does is paint the picture of a typical day so that the reader will have some idea of what a day was like in the life of Jesus. Note how busy and pressuring and tiring the day was, and note the powerful lessons applicable to our lives.

1. Jesus came down to Capernaum (v.31).
2. He taught in the morning service with authority (v.32).
3. He delivered the most unclean (v.33-37).
4. He cured the most needful (v.38-39).
5. He healed the diseases of those who sought Him out (v.40).
6. He rebuked the evil spirits from making a false profession (v.41).
7. He sought to be alone, seeking the presence of God (v.42).
8. He persisted in His mission despite pressure to be sidetracked (v.43-44).

1 (4:31) **Capernaum—Jesus' Headquarters**: Jesus came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. Note the exact wording and look at verse 44: "He preached in the synagogues of Galilee." Capernaum became the *headquarters* of Jesus. Nazareth was Jesus' hometown, but the city had rejected Him. He had to move elsewhere. The city He chose as the center of His operations was Capernaum. Capernaum was the manufacturing center of Palestine; therefore, it was strategically located, always flooded with travelling merchants. The major roads passed through its borders, roads which connected such metropolitan cities as Damascus, Jerusalem, and the great Syrian cities of Tyre and Sidon. The great caravan route leading to the Mediterranean Sea also ran through the city (cp. Is.9:1). It was an ideal location for the spread of the gospel, an ideal location for the Messiah to use as His base of operations. (See note, *Capernaum*—Mt.4:12-13.)

2 (4:32) **Preaching—Jesus Christ, Teaching of**: Jesus taught in the morning worship service with authority. His teaching was not ordinary, not the kind of teaching the people were used to hearing. They were astonished at His doctrine. It was what He taught that astounded them: "His word was with power."

⇒ His Word had authority, the authority of God's Spirit.
⇒ His message had a commanding force to it.
⇒ His message had the power of God's Spirit upon it, *quickening* the Word to the hearts of the hearers. (See note—Mt.7:29.)

> **"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him" (Jn.7:16-18).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**

3 (4:33-37) **Unclean—Evil Spirit—Sin—Resisting**: Jesus delivered the most unclean. Note several facts. (See outline and notes—Mk.1:23-28.)

1. The man was "in the synagogue," actually attending the worship service; yet he was desperately unclean, as dirty as could be.
2. The man had the spirit "of an unclean demon." "Unclean" (akathartou) means that the man was both morally and ceremonially unclean, dirty, dishevelled, filthy. He was worshipping, but he was morally unclean and corrupt; his life was all dishevelled.
3. The evil spirit *acknowledged* Jesus' deity. He knew three things. (See note, pt.2—Mk.1:23-24 for detailed discussion.)
   a. He had nothing to do with Jesus. He was unclean, dirty, and sinful in comparison with Jesus.
   b. He knew that he was to be destroyed by Jesus, that a day of judgment was coming.

> **"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

   c. He knew that Jesus was "the Holy One of God." (Lk.4:34). He knew and proclaimed that he stood face to face with the true Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Thought 1. The person who is morally unclean and dirty is in desperate straits. He is gripped by an evil force that cries out in the very face of God...

- "Let us alone.
- What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?
- Art thou come to destroy us—now?
- I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God."

> **"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).**
>
> **"And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction" (Jer.32:33).**
>
> **"As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee" (Jer.44:16).**
>
> **"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zech.7:11).**

3. Jesus rebuked the evil spirit's acknowledgement. This is a critical point: Jesus stopped the acknowledgement, the proclamation of the evil spirit. Jesus would not have the evil spirit's witnessing to His deity. Why? Because it was a false witness, a profession only. The evil spirit was not confessing from the heart nor from the will to follow Jesus. He had not been born again. The *only confession* Jesus accepted was the confession of a man who made a deliberate decision to follow Him *as Lord*. (See note—Mk.1:25-26.)

> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:9-13).**

4. Jesus cast out the unclean spirit and saved the man. How? By His Word, by simply saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." Note the great power of the Lord's Word.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (Jn.17:2).

5. The evil spirit threw the man down, but he came out of the man and did not hurt him. (See note, pt.2—Mk.1:25-26 for detailed discussion.)

6. The people were amazed, astonished, shocked, stunned. Note what amazed them: His Word—the authority and power of His Word to *cleanse* even the most unclean.

7. The people spread His fame everywhere, witnessing to His cleansing and healing power. They could do no other, for they were witnessing a power never before seen.

Thought 1. The Lord has the power to save and cleanse anyone who comes to Him, no matter how possessed by evil.

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (Jn.17:2).

"That ye may know....what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:18-19).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

4 (4:38-39) **Helpless, The—Needful, The—Ministering**: Jesus cured the most needful. After the worship service, Jesus went to Peter's home. Peter's mother-in-law was critically ill. Note these simple facts.

1. She was desperately needful, overtaken with a "great fever."
2. She was so helpless she could not even speak to ask Jesus for help.
3. She was so weakened she was unable to rise out of bed to seek the help of Jesus.
4. Jesus came to her and rebuked the fever by simply speaking the Word, and she arose and began to minister.

Thought 1. Jesus is the great hope of the most needful. No matter how *desperate or helpless or weakened*—Jesus will speak the Word of healing. All that is needed is a willing heart and mind.

Even if a person is so helpless that he is unable to speak verbally, that person can call upon the Lord by thought, and God will still save him.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

5 (4:40) **Helpless, The—Ministering**: Jesus healed all the diseases of those who sought Him out. Again, note several simple facts. (See outline and notes—Mk.1:32-34 for detailed discussion.)

1. It was early evening and the sun was setting. Jesus had been ministering rather extensively all day and was tired, yet He was approachable. He could be approached at all hours. There was never a closed door into His presence.

2. The people who came to Him were totally helpless. Every one of them had to be brought, yet someone cared enough to bring them.

Thought 1. Note two challenging lessons.

1) The most helpless can come or be brought to Jesus. He is always available to help.
2) There is a strong challenge to us. We need to care enough to bring the helpless to Jesus.

3. Jesus did not bypass or overlook a single one. He touched every one and healed every one. No matter the disease, they were healed.

Thought 1. No one, no matter how helpless, ever comes to Jesus that He does not help. Rich or poor, strong or weak, the Lord forbids no one.

"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Mt.8:16-17).

"They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk.5:31-32).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall" (Is.25:4).

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Is.53:4).

6 (4:41) **Evil Spirits**: Jesus rebuked the evil spirits from making false professions (see notes—Lk.4:33-37; Mk.1:25-26).

7 (4:42) **Jesus Christ, Prayer**: Jesus sought to be alone, seeking the presence of God. Jesus was exhausted and drained, spiritually as well as physically. Apparently, He had been ministering all day and night, that is, for almost twenty-four hours without a break.

1. He tried to get alone in a desert place. He needed to be refreshed and revived in body and spirit. He wanted time alone with God.
2. He was sought out by the people who begged Him to stay. They were desperate and helpless.

Thought 1. Note two great lessons.

1) We need to seek the renewal of our bodies and spirits in the Lord's presence—seek renewal much more than most of us do.
2) We need to seek Him out and beg for His help while He may be found. When Jesus was on the earth in the body, He could help only those who surrounded Him. Now that He is in the Spirit and able to minister everywhere at once, so few of us are seeking Him out. What an example these people were in seeking Him!

> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (Ps.73:28).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps.145:18).**
>
> **"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:22).**

8 (4:43-44) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: Jesus persisted in His *mission* despite the pressure of some persons to sidetrack Him. Jesus had to preach in other cities as well, so He could not stay with those clamoring after Him. He had to fulfill His mission. He could not be sidetracked. Everyone had to hear the Gospel. He had to give others the opportunity as well. He knew that the more He could reach and disciple, the more others would hear and be reached. So He set His face like a flint and marched on despite all who "stayed Him" (kateichon): tried to prevent, hinder, stop, hold Him back.

> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**

	CHAPTER 5		
	C. Jesus Calls His First Disciples: Steps to Calling Men, 5:1-11 (Mt.4:18-22; Mk.1:16-20; Jn.1:35-51)		
1 Lake Gennesaret **2 Step 1: Seeing a vision of people who need to hear the Word of God**	And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,	and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.	
	2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.	6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.	**5 Step 4: Demonstrating godly power** a. A great catch made b. A catch so great the net breaks c. A catch so great other help is needed d. A catch so great both boats are filled e. A catch so great the boats began to sink
3 Step 2: Seizing resources a. Seeing the resources available		7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.	
b. Seeing a man: Simon c. Leading the man to serve	3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.	8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.	**6 Step 5: Stirring a deep confession** a. Of sin b. Of Christ as Lord c. Of awe—reverence—fear
		9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:	
4 Step 3: Removing reluctant obedience	4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.	10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.	**7 Step 6: Challenging men to discipleship, that is, to catch other men**[DSI,2]
	5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night,	11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.	**8 Step 7: Watching for the decision to forsake all**

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

C. Jesus Calls His First Disciples: Steps to Calling Men, 5:1-11

(5:1-11) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ set out to catch men, that is, to catch them for God. He desires to catch all men, but He is unable to catch everyone by Himself. He needs help, the help of all who will follow Him. The present passage is a descriptive picture of how Jesus goes about calling men to help Him in the enormous task of reaching the world.

1. Lake Gennesaret (v.1).
2. Step 1: seeing a vision of people who need to hear the Word of God (v.1).
3. Step 2: seizing resources (v.2-3).
4. Step 3: removing reluctant obedience (v.4-5).
5. Step 4: demonstrating godly power (v.6-7).
6. Step 5: stirring a deep confession (v.8-9).
7. Step 6: challenging men to discipleship, that is, to catch other men (v.10).
8. Step 7: watching for the decision to forsake all (v.11).

1 (5:1) **Lake Gennesaret**: the scene of this experience took place on Lake Gennesaret which was the same as the Sea of Galilee (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.1:16; Lk.8:22).

2 (5:1) **Word of God, Hunger for—Righteousness—Vision**: the first step to calling men is seeing a vision of people—people who need the Word of God. The people were actually "pressing" (epikeisthai) in upon Jesus. They gathered and crowded around Him. Note why: to hear the Word of God. They pressed to hear the Word of God. They had a craving, a *hunger and thirst* after righteousness. Note two things.

1. Jesus met the hunger and thirst of people.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh" (Lk.6:21).**
>
> **"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).**

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat" (Rev.7:16).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of the house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8).

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

2. Jesus saw that He could never meet the needs of all the people, not by Himself. He needed others to help.

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Lk.10:2).

3 (5:2-3) **Resource—Opportunity, Serving**: the second step to calling men is seizing resources. Jesus had to find some way to handle the throng of people both then and later. The crowds were so large and their needs so many that He just could not handle their disorder. He could not meet the needs of everyone. Standing there and being confronted with the present problem, He scanned the horizon for some way to handle the matter.

As He looked around, He saw an opportunity and laid His plans. He saw a boat and a fisherman in the boat, and He needed both. The boat could be used as a pulpit, and the man could become a disciple. He asked the man to let Him use the boat as a pulpit and to steer the boat out from land a short distance. The point is this: Jesus seized and used the resources available. He had the vision of people's needing the Word of God, but He needed a pulpit and others to help, so He scanned the horizon and found both.

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look to the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-36).

4 (5:4-5) **Obedience—Reluctance**: the third step to calling men is the *removal of reluctant obedience*. As soon as Jesus finished His preaching, He decided to win Peter's loyalty and discipleship. But first, He had to humble Peter. He had to show Peter that He, the Messiah, could look after and take care of him. He told Peter to put out to sea and fish. Peter objected because he had fished all night and had caught nothing. However, he stopped right in the middle of his objection and obeyed Jesus. Note what had happened.

1. Peter was reluctant to obey Jesus. He objected to what Jesus asked. He was thoroughly *exhausted*, for he had "toiled all night." He was *disappointed*, because he had caught nothing, and he had worked enough hours already. Despite needing to be home in bed, he had stayed to help the Lord in His preaching by loaning his boat to Him.
2. Peter caught himself in the middle of his objection and obeyed. What caused the switch, the change from reluctance to willing obedience? Probably two things.
   a. Peter was pretty well convinced that Jesus was who He claimed to be, the Messiah.
   b. Peter was drawn somewhat to follow Jesus. Therefore, when he began to object to Jesus' will, there was a prick of conscience, and he obeyed his conscience. He followed his heart...
      - not his *mind*, thinking there were no fish.
      - not his *experience*, having already tried and failed to catch fish.
      - not his *body*, being too tired and exhausted, just incapable of going on.

Thought 1. Reluctance should always give in to obedience. We need the spirit that will *try* for God, no matter what the obstacles or how hopeless a situation may seem.

Thought 2. When a man is drawn to Christ, he desperately needs to obey his heart and to obey it immediately.

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Ro.12:11).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:12).

5 (5:6-7) **Jesus Christ, Power—Obedience, Results—Humility**: the fourth step to calling men is *demonstrating godly power*. Peter's obedience produced results; his obedience caught fish, and the catch was no ordinary catch. It was much more, so much more that there could be no question about Jesus. Jesus was behind the miracle; Jesus was demon-

strating the power of God. (Remember this was the very purpose of Jesus, to win Peter's loyalty and willingness to become a disciple on a full-time basis.) What happened is a little humorous when we remember what Jesus was doing with Peter, and Peter's reluctance and objection, weariness and exhaustion. There was a sense in which the Lord was really laying it on Peter, really letting him have it. Peter thought he was tired, but he did not know what exhaustion was yet. The Lord must have stood to the side smiling to Himself. How our Lord loved this man Peter, even now! He was after Peter's loyalty, and He was going to get it even if He had to make Peter drop in his tracks (which was exactly what was to happen, v.8). At any rate, there was some humor in what began to happen to this man who was so reluctant, moaning and groaning about his tiredness. Just imagine Peter already bone weary, grumbling in his mind at this carpenter's telling him, the skilled fisherman, how to fish. Imagine Peter's exhaustion and weariness, reluctance and objection, moaning and groaning; and then all of a sudden a catch is made, a catch so great that he was going to have to work wearily along for hour upon hour.

⇒ Peter's net broke.
⇒ Peter had to call for another whole crew and boat to help.
⇒ Both boats were filled as full to capacity.
⇒ Then to top it off, both boats began to sink.

Jesus had His man! What else was Peter to do other than what followed? In all the humor of the situation, our Lord's heart was bound to be full of rejoicing because this big hunk of a fisherman, man though he was, was like a little child before the Lord. He was broken in humility before the Lord, and the experience was but the first of many experiences of brokenness yet to come.

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let [hinder, stop] it?" (Is.43:13).

6 (5:8-9) **Confession**: the fifth step to calling men is *stirring a deep confession*. Peter knew exactly what had happened. He had been reluctant and objected to the Lord's request, and he had not been too happy that the great catch had caused so much trouble. But he was a skilled fisherman, and he knew that the great catch was no ordinary catch; it was a miracle of the Lord, a miracle which the Lord was using to teach him that he was to obey without reluctance and objection.

Note exactly what happened. When Peter saw the boat's beginning to sink, he raced over to Jesus, fell upon his knees, and in a sense (continuing the humor) said, "Lord, I've had enough. Let me alone. I'll do anything." His confession was threefold.

1. He confessed his sin of disobedience and unbelief: of being reluctant to obey the Lord, of questioning the Lord's will and knowledge and power.
2. He confessed Jesus to be the *Lord*. Note that Peter had previously called Jesus "Master" (epistate, v.5), which is a word used to address anyone in authority. But Peter had learned better. He now called Jesus "Lord" (kurie). He is the Lord who is holy and convicting, who must be obeyed and followed.
3. He confessed a fear, a reverence, an awe for the Lord (cp. v.9-10).

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Is.6:5).

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6).

"And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes" (Gen.18:27).

"And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength" (Dan.10:16).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (Ezra 10:11).

7 (5:10) **Call—Discipleship—Mission**: the sixth step to calling men is *challenging men to discipleship*, that is, to *catch other men*. Note two significant facts.

1. The words "fear not" (me phobon) indicate that Peter was actually scared and frightened. Jesus was calming him, telling him to trust and stop fearing. He, the Lord, was in charge and looking after everything.

2. The call to Peter was to "catch men." The word "catch" (zogreo) means to *catch alive* or to *catch for life*. The idea is that Peter was no longer to catch (fish) for death, but he was to catch (men) for life.

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt.4:19).

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit [souls], and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"He [Paul] is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

"Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Is.6:8).

"Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer.1:4-5).

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Pr.11:30).

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:10) **James**: there were two disciples named James. (1) The James mentioned in this passage, the brother of John, was the son of Zebedee. He along with Peter and his brother John formed an inner circle around the Lord (Mt.17:1; Mk.5:37; 9:2; 14:33). He is never mentioned apart from John. He was killed with the sword by Herod (Acts 12:2). (2) James the less was the son of Alphaeus (Mt.10:3). He was called *the less* because he was shorter of stature.

It should be noted that two other men named James are mentioned in the New Testament. (1) There is James the Lord's half-brother (Mt.13:55; Mk.6:3; Gal.1:19). He and the Lord's other brothers and sisters did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah until after Jesus' resurrection (Jn.7:5; Acts 1:14). James, however, became a great leader and pastor in the early church. He pastored the Jerusalem Church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal.1:19; 2:9, 12), and he wrote the Epistle of James. (2) There is also James who was the father of Judas (Lk.6:16; Acts 1:13, ASV).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:10) **Apostle—Witnessing**: see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.10:2. Cp. 2 Cor.5:19-20; Jn.20:21; Acts 1:8.

8 (5:11) **Decision—Dedication—Forsaking All**: the seventh step to calling men is *watching for the decision to forsake all*. Note three things.

1. The men responded immediately.
2. The men left all: their businesses, their professions, and the biggest catch they had ever seen.
3. The men followed Jesus. He was the Lord who had spoken, and they were to be His disciples who obeyed and followed.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

	D. Jesus Cleanses the Untouchable, 5:12-16 (Mt.8:1-4; Mk.1:40-45)	departed from him.	b. The leper was cleansed
1 Jesus was confronted by a desperate man, an untouchable a. He was full of leprosy[DS1] b. He saw Jesus: Fell on his face & called Jesus Lord; he begged for cleansing	12 And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.	14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.	**3 Jesus charged the newly cleansed man** a. To tell no man: Boast not; watch being prideful[DS2] b. To rush to obey God
2 Jesus cleansed the untouchable a. Jesus touched him & said, "I will"	13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy	15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.	**4 Jesus made an impact** a. His fame spread rapidly b. The crowds thronged to hear Him & to be healed by Him
		16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.	c. He withdrew into the wilderness to pray

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

D. Jesus Cleanses the Untouchable, 5:12-16

(5:12-16) **Introduction—Untouchable, The**: some persons are treated by society as though they are untouchable. Some persons are so gripped and enslaved, so depraved and destitute, so different and derelict, so down and out, so helpless and hopeless that they become untouchable to most people. But not to Jesus. And that is the whole thrust of this event. Jesus will touch the untouchable and He will cleanse the untouchable.

1. Jesus was confronted by a desperate man, an untouchable (v.12).
2. Jesus cleansed the untouchable (v.13).
3. Jesus charged the newly cleansed man (v.14).
4. Jesus made an impact (v.15-16).

1 (5:12) **Jesus Christ, Seeking—Sin, Terrible—Spiritual Cleansing**: Jesus was confronted by a desperate man, an untouchable.

1. The man was full of leprosy. The man was evidently full of sores and extremely disfigured (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Leprosy*—Lk.5:12).
2. The man saw Jesus. He forgot all else...
   - forgot all the people surrounding Jesus.
   - forgot the shame of his condition.
   - forgot the embarrassment.
   - forgot that he was not to approach within six feet of anyone.

Nothing mattered but the *hope* he felt within, the possibility that Jesus would help him in his desperate condition. He rushed up to Jesus while people were scattering about, fearing the contagion of the disease. He fell upon his face and cried out, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Note several things. (See outline and notes—Mt.8:1-4; Mk.1:40-45 for additional discussion.)

a. The man's determination to seek Jesus' help. Nothing and no one was going to stop him, not even the fear and threats of people whom he would be frightening with the contagiousness of his disease.
b. The man's humility. He actually prostrated himself, falling upon his face before Christ.
c. The man's confession of Christ. He called Jesus "Lord."
d. The man's request was to be cleansed, not healed. He was asking for both spiritual and physical cleansing. He knew he was dirty and defiled both within and without.

> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).**
>
> **"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:13).**
>
> **"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (Ps.40:17).**
>
> **"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Ps.51:2).**
>
> **"Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake" (Ps.79:9).**
>
> **"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:12) **Leprosy**: leprosy was the most terrible disease in the day of Jesus, and it was greatly feared. It was disfiguring and sometimes fatal. In the Bible leprosy is a type of sin.

1. The leper was considered *utterly unclean*—physically and spiritually. He could not approach within six feet of any person, including family members. "His clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean" (Lev.13:45).
2. He was judged as *dead—the living dead*. He had to wear a black garment so he could be recognized as from among the *dead*.
3. He was banished as an *outcast, totally ostracized* from society—considered without hope of going to heaven. "All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be *defiled*; he is *unclean*; he shall *dwell alone*; *without the camp* shall his habitation be" (Lev.13:46). He could not live within the walls of any city; his dwelling had to be outside the city gates.
4. He was thought to be *polluted, incurable* by any human means whatsoever. Leprosy could be cured by God and His power alone. (Note how Christ proves His Messiahship and deity by healing the leper.)

Imagine the anguish and heartbreak of the leper's being completely cut off from family and friends and society. Imagine the emotional and mental pain. There are other recorded instances of lepers' being healed (cp. Mt.10:8; 11:5; Mk.1:40; Lk.7:22; 17:12; and perhaps Mt.26:6; cp. Mk.14:3).

2 (5:13) **Jesus Christ, Power—Salvation—Spiritual Cleansing**: Jesus cleansed the untouchable. Note several things.

1. Jesus was *moved with compassion*, deeply moved (Mk.1:41). The sight gripped Jesus' heart. The man's condition was wretched. Just imagine...
   - his body full of sores
   - his flesh eaten away
   - his loneliness
   - his alienation
   - his emptiness
   - his hopelessness
   - his helplessness
   - his desperation
2. Jesus reached out and touched the man, an unheard of act. The man was an untouchable, a man full of leprosy, the most feared and dreaded and contagious disease known to the world of that day. Yet Jesus condescended, lowered Himself to touch the man. No other man would. The man had been a leper for years, so many years that he was now full of leprosy, a very advanced stage. During all those years no one could help him. He had not been touched by a human hand for so many years, he probably could not remember the softness of a tender touch.
3. Jesus said, "I *will*—I will make you clean."

Thought 1. Jesus wills for the untouchable to be cleansed and fully restored, restored within his own heart and restored within society. Jesus wishes to touch every man who has become untouchable.

> **"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).**
>
> **"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Mt.14:14).**
>
> **"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).**
>
> **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them" (Is.63:9).**

4. Jesus spoke the word of cleansing, "Be thou clean." Jesus saved the man spiritually, physically, and socially. The man was fully cleansed. But note how: he was cleansed by the *Word* of Jesus.

Thought 1. The Lord's Word is sufficient, able to save and heal unto the uttermost (Heb.7:25).

> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).**
>
> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**

3 (5:14) **Warning—Believers, Duty**: Jesus charged the newly cleansed man to do two things (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.8:4; note—Mk.1:44 for additional discussion).

1. Jesus demanded: tell no man. The man had been saved from the depths and pit of defilement. Few ever go that deep and become so full of leprosy (sin). He had been saved from so much, and he was now full of joy and rejoicing, bubbling over with happiness. He wanted to run all about telling the world, but there was a danger in this, the danger...
   ⇒ of pride and boasting within himself.
   ⇒ of jealousy and envy's arising within others toward him.
2. Jesus demanded: rush and obey God. The man first needed to worship and offer thanks to God and to learn to obey God's Word before doing anything else (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Leprosy*—Lk.5:14).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them [the church] about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:41-42).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(5:14) **Leprosy**: in the unlikely event a leper was ever cured, there was a detailed list of laws and rituals he had to go through. These rituals gave the priests time to confirm the cure and led the leper to make a thanksgiving offering to God (Lev.14:1-32; cp. 13:38-59). Jesus was charging the man to make his offering to God and to receive the certificate that he was cleansed.

4 (5:15-16) **Jesus Christ, Response—Prayer**: Jesus' impact was enormous. Multitudes thronged to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities.

1. Jesus had both the message of salvation and the power to heal infirmities, but it was "by Him" and Him alone that both came.
2. Jesus knew the source of His message and power: God and prayer. Therefore, He often withdrew to get alone with God and to seek His face and commune with Him.

	E. Jesus Proves His Amazing Power to Forgive Sins, 5:17-26 (Mt.9:1-8; Mk.2:1-12)	21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?	**3 The power necessary to forgive sins: The power of God alone**
1 An investigative committee visited Jesus a. They were representatives from everywhere b. They were to investigate Jesus' claims c. Jesus' power was set to face the opposition	17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.	22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?	**4 The proof that Jesus can forgive sins, that He is the Son of Man**[DS2]
2 The approach necessary for forgiveness of sins a. Must seek help from others b. Must believe in Jesus' power.	18 And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him.	23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?	a. His Word: It works b. His claim: He is God, the Son of Man[DS3]
c. Must persist[DS1]	19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.	24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.	
		25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.	c. His power: He saves & heals d. His impact 1) Upon the man: The man glorified God
		26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.	2) Upon the crowd: They were amazed & glorified God & feared
d. Must seek forgiveness	20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

E. Jesus Proves His Amazing Power to Forgive Sins, 5:17-26

(5:17-26) **Introduction**: this is a critical passage of Scripture. It deals with forgiveness of sins—the most important issue that ever confronts man. Can a man's sins be forgiven, truly forgiven? If so, is Jesus Christ the One who has the power to forgive sins?

1. An investigative committee visited Jesus (v.17).
2. The approach necessary for forgiveness (v.18-20).
3. The power necessary to forgive sins: the power of God alone (v.21).
4. The proof that Jesus can forgive sins, that He is the Son of Man (v.22-26).

1 (5:17) **Religionists—Criticism—Wayside—Commitment, Lack of**: an investigative committee of religionists visited Jesus. Note several facts.

1. The committee was comprised of representatives from all over the country. Every major area was represented.
2. The Pharisees and Scribes were the religious leaders of Israel (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2; DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—Acts 23:8).
3. The committee had come to *sit by* (v.17), to investigate, to observe Jesus, not to participate in the services and ministry. They were "sitting by," not sitting at His feet and learning from Him.
4. Jesus' power was set to face the opposition. The power of God was upon Him, and He continued right on ministering. He did not let those who just *sat by* and were *critical* affect His preaching or ministry. He was immovable in His message and call.

Thought 1. Note three critical points.

1) There are always those who just *sit by*, who are just *spectators*, never really listening or learning, never becoming involved.
2) There are always those who are critical, who set themselves up as knowing best, who are censors and judges of what the preacher or teacher does. They listen and watch to make sure nothing is too different. If it is, they begin to criticize and judge.
3) The preacher or teacher must continue on in his call and ministry. "To his own Master he standeth or falleth" (Ro.14:4).

2 (5:18-20) **Forgiveness—Jesus Christ, Seeking—Faith—Persistence**: the approach necessary for forgiveness was clearly demonstrated. These men took four steps in seeking forgiveness and healing from Jesus. The same four steps are necessary for anyone to receive forgiveness of sin.

1. They *sought help*. The man had sought the help of his friends, and they were all seeking the help of Jesus. The man was unable to help himself, to secure forgiveness and wholeness by himself. He had to have help, the help of Jesus and of friends. The same was true of all the friends of the man. They were unable to provide forgiveness and wholeness to the sick man. They, too, knew that they needed the help of Jesus and of one another.

> **Thought 1.** It is always necessary to seek Jesus' help. And it is often necessary to seek the help of friends as well.

2. They *believed* and had confidence in Jesus' power to forgive sins and to heal. They believed that, if they came, Jesus had the power to help and that He loved and cared enough to help. Therefore, they came to Jesus. And note the inconvenience and difficulty they faced in coming. The man was bedridden. They would have to pick up his bed and carry it through the streets. Also, the crowds would be huge, perhaps making it impossible to get the bed through the throng of people. What belief! What desperation! The very kind of desperation and belief necessary to secure forgiveness and healing.

3. They *persisted* despite enormous difficulty. Just as they had thought, the crowds were huge, much too large to get through to Jesus. But they did not give up. They went around to the side or back of the house and climbed up to the roof with the bed of the man. They removed some of the roof and used ropes to lower the man's bed below, right before the feet of Jesus. Of course sitting there, Jesus observed the whole scene, as surprised as everyone else that men would be so bold and persistent. But as with any of us, the spirit of their bold persistence and the reason for such a spirit made all the difference in the world. They were desperate; their need was great and they were helpless without Jesus' help. Such a spirit touched the Lord's heart and still touches His heart today.

4. They *sought forgiveness*. The man was definitely seeking forgiveness of sins as well as healing of body. The whole scene points to this fact. The man was paralyzed. There was the possibility that he had been injured or become diseased because of some foolish sin in the past. It was also the common belief of that day that suffering was due to sin. The man's mind was upon his sin as the *cause* of his problem; therefore, he wanted Jesus to forgive his sin as well as heal him.

Note three things.

1. Jesus saw "their faith," the faith of the friends as well as of the sick man. The faith of the friends had a large part in the man's sins being forgiven. What a lesson to us, for our families and friends!

> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**
>
> **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).**
>
> **"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I search out" (Job 29:15-16).**
>
> **"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Pr.31:20).**
>
> **"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Lk.10:33-34)**

2. The faith Jesus saw was a faith that believed and persisted against all kinds of obstacles, a faith that really believed and persisted. This is crucial to remember in seeking forgiveness.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken" (Ps.34:19-20).**
>
> **"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).**
>
> **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).**
>
> **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).**
>
> **"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**

3. Jesus Himself forgave the man's sins. This is a critical fact to note. Jesus did not say, "Man, God forgives your sins." He said, "Man, I forgive your sins."

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:19) **House**: many houses of Jesus' day had an outside stairway that climbed up to a second floor. The roof was easily reached from this stairway. The roof was flat and made of tile-like rocks matted together with a straw and clay-like substance. The roofs were sturdy enough for people to sit upon and carry on conversations and other activities (see note—Mt.24:17). These men dug and scooped out an opening through the roof. They were so sure of Jesus' power to help, nothing was going to prevent them from getting to Jesus—an unstoppable faith.

3 (5:21) **Forgiveness—Belief**: the power necessary to forgive sins was clearly stated to be found in God alone. Only God has the power to truly forgive sins. The religionists knew this; but they failed to see that Jesus Christ was One with God, the Son of God Himself—that He was One with God in being and nature, in exaltation and dominion, in love and compassion, in authority and power—all of which necessitated His coming to earth as the Incarnate God in human flesh (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:14; note—Ph.2:7). They were seen standing before Jesus thinking and reasoning, but not speaking aloud. In their minds they were saying He was guilty of blasphemy, but at this point they did not charge Him publicly.

Thought 1. This is the very point over which so many religionists stumble: that Jesus Christ is God incarnate in human flesh, the Son of God who has come to save the world.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

4 (5:22-26) **Jesus Christ, Deity; Power; Impact—Forgiveness**: the proof that Jesus can forgive sins and is the Son of Man was clearly demonstrated. Jesus knew the thoughts of the religionists. He read their minds, giving evidence of His deity.

Thought 1. Jesus knows our thoughts, just what we are thinking, whether thoughts...

- of unbelief or belief
- of selfishness or unselfishness
- of worldliness or godliness
- of impurity or purity
- of deception or truth
- of wrong or right

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

Note how Jesus set out to prove His deity, His right and power to forgive sins.

1. His Word and the fact that it works proves His deity. He posed a test of God's power. He suggested that He merely *speak the Word*, "Rise up and walk." *If His Word worked to heal the man, then His Word to forgive sins must work also.*

2. His claim proved His deity. He is God, the Son of Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). He was not afraid to put Himself to the test. He wanted all men to know and believe. Therefore, that "ye may know that [I] the Son of Man hath power upon earth to forgive sins," I purpose to prove My power in the lives of those who seek forgiveness.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).

3. His power proved His deity. Dramatically, Jesus spoke the Word, and the man arose. He was healed immediately. How? By the Word of the Lord. *God's Word* proved itself. When Jesus spoke the *Word of healing*, the man was healed; when Jesus spoke the *Word of forgiveness*, the man was forgiven.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

4. His impact proved His deity. The man glorified God. The people were amazed, and they glorified God and were stricken with fear (awe and reverence).

Thought 1. The proofs of Jesus' deity should be studied closely by all religionists and skeptics.

Thought 2. Note four critical points.
1) Jesus is still *willing* to speak the Word of forgiveness and healing.
2) Jesus is the Son of Man and *purposes* to forgive the sins of all who are willing (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20).
3) Jesus has both the power and will to speak the Word of forgiveness and healing to those who *seek* it.
4) The impact of Jesus' life upon so many is evidence of His deity. The fact that some are genuinely glorifying God and serving Him in awe and reverence is *strong evidence* that Jesus has the power to forgive sins.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(5:23) **Sins—Forgiven**: the common belief of that day was that suffering was due to sin. Jesus' healing of the man was the proof that the man's sins were truly forgiven and that He had the power to forgive sins. The religionists could not logically deny this (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(5:24) **Son of Man**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20.

	F. Jesus Reveals His Great Mission: The Greatest Mission of All, 5:27-39 (Mt.9:9-17; Mk.2:13-22)	ers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?	tioned Jesus' behavior
		34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?	b. Jesus' answer: His presence brings joy & vitality to life
1 The mission of calling outcasts *DSI* a. He went forth b. He saw c. He called d. The outcast left all & followed Jesus e. The outcast reached his friends	27 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. 28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him. 29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.	35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.	**4 The mission of dying**
2 The mission of calling sinners to repentance a. The religionists questioned Jesus' associations b. Jesus' answer 1) He illustrated His mission 2) He stated His mission	30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? 31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. 32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.	36 And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. 37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved.	**5 The mission of launching a new life & spiritual movement** a. Illustration 1: Not patching the old, but starting anew b. Illustration 2: Not putting His teaching (wine) in old bottles, but in a new bottle
3 The mission of bringing real joy a. The religionists ques-	33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make pray-	39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.	c. Illustration 3: The new is difficult to accept—it takes time

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

F. Jesus Reveals His Great Mission: The Greatest Mission of All, 5:27-39

(5:27-39) **Introduction**: the greatest life ever lived on earth was the life of Jesus Christ. Therefore no mission can ever compare with the mission which He was sent to do. The great mission of Christ was…

- a quickening mission: to make people alive to God.
- an eternal mission: to give people life forever.
- a purposeful mission: to cause people to commit their lives to God unconditionally.

Luke's very purpose in this passage is to reveal the great mission of Christ. With the skillful mind of a man who knew the Lord intimately, he weaves several events together to spell out the great mission of the Lord.

1. The mission of calling outcasts (v.27-29).
2. The mission of calling sinners to repentance (v.30-32).
3. The mission of bringing real joy (v.33-34).
4. The mission of dying (v.35).
5. The mission of launching a new life and spiritual movement (v.36-39).

1 (5:27-29) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Ministers**: there was the mission of calling outcasts, those who are rejected by society. (See notes—Mt.9:9; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.2:14 for additional discussion.)

1. Jesus "went forth." There is deliberate purpose in this statement. Jesus got up and left either the house (Lk.5:19) or the city. He went forth for the specific purpose of seeking the outcast (cp. Lk.19:10; Jn.20:21).
2. Jesus "saw a publican [tax collecter] named Levi [Matthew]." He was an outcast, the most hated of men among the public (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Tax Collector*—Lk.5:27). Yet when Jesus saw him, He "saw a man named Levi [Matthew]," a sinner, a man who was hurting within, a man who needed a cause. (See note—Mt.9:9 for detailed discussion.)
3. Jesus called the outcast. Very simply yet forcibly Jesus said , "Follow me." Note two facts.
   a. Note the great *love* and *compassion* of Jesus for the outcast. The man was despised. By associating with such an outcast, Jesus was exposing Himself to criticism and rejection by the *upper class*, the acceptable and social of society.
   b. Note the great humility of Christ. He stooped down to reach an outcast; but remember, He had come to earth to save sinners, those who were outcasts from heaven.

Thought 1. Jesus' call is issued to all men, for all men are outcasts, the outcasts of heaven. However, there is a condition to becoming an acceptable person to God. A person must humble himself before Jesus, just as Jesus humbled Himself before us.

> **"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3).**
>
> **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).**
>
> **"He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:8. Cp. Ph.2:6-9.)**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).**

Thought 2. The person who is truly an outcast of society, who is rejected and despised by people, can be saved and delivered from emptiness and loneliness. Jesus Christ will save him. In fact, He longs to save and deliver the outcast, the empty and lonely of the earth.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt.11:28-30).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**
>
> **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).**
>
> **"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Ezk.33:11).**
>
> **"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hos.6:1).**

4. The outcast left all and followed Jesus. Matthew was very wealthy. This is the emphasis of Lukes' words, "he left all." (Note also v.29 where Matthew made a "great feast" in his own house. The house itself must have been very large to hold so many people.)

This outcast "left all," responding to Jesus immediately. How could a man such as Matthew give up so much to follow Jesus? Because money cannot buy happiness, peace, security, completeness, satisfaction, fulfillment, confidence, or assurance. Money can only buy things. Matthew had, as so many do, plenty of things: houses, land, clothes, food, furnishings. But he was *empty and restless* in heart, *incomplete and insecure* in spirit, *unfulfilled and dissatisfied* in life. When he confronted Jesus, he saw the possibility that Jesus could meet all his needs, really meet them.

Thought 1. It is hard for rich men to enter heaven, for they are attached to this material world. Matthew was one of the few who was willing to give up all in order to follow Jesus. Thus, the Kingdom of Heaven shall be his.

> **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:23-26; cp. Mt.19:16-26).**
>
> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:35-36).**

5. The outcast reached his friends. This is a beautiful picture of the kind of witness every believer should be. Matthew's heart was filled immediately with the genuine joy for which he had ached. There was so much difference, so much love, joy, and peace; he just could not contain it. It burst forth. He had to tell his friends, but it would take so long to visit each one separately; he had to figure out a way to reach them sooner. How could he do it quicker? Having a feast came to his mind. So he held a feast for his friends to meet Jesus.

Matthew was excited about his faith. He knew the depth of emptiness from which he had come, and he was ever so appreciative and thankful. (Remember: Matthew, the outcast, was the one who wrote the *Gospel of Matthew*.) He wanted his friends to meet Jesus personally and to come to know the salvation given by Christ.

> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:27) **Tax Collector**: a tax collector was bitterly hated by the people. There were three reasons.

1. Tax collectors served the Roman conquerors. Most tax collectors were Jews, but in the people's eyes they had denied their Jewish heritage and betrayed their country. They were thus ostracized, completely cut off from Jewish society and excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges.
2. They were cheats, dishonest and unjust men. Most tax collectors were extremely wealthy. The Roman government compensated tax collectors by allowing them to collect more than the percentage required for taxes. Tax collectors greedily abused their right, adding whatever percent they wished and felt could be collected (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.13:6). They took bribes from the wealthy who wished to avoid taxes, fleeced the average citizen, and swindled the government when they could.
3. They were assuming rights that belonged only to God. God alone was King in the eyes of the Jews. This was a strong conviction of the Jews; therefore, God and the ruler appointed by God were considered to be the head of Jewish government. God was their God, and they were His people. Taxes were to be paid only to Him and His government, which was centered only in the temple of Judaism. To pay taxes to earthly rulers was an abuse and a denial of God's rights. Therefore, tax collectors were excommunicated from Jewish religion and privileges. They were accursed, anathema.

2 (5:30-32) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: there was the mission of calling sinners to repentance. Note two things.

1. The religionists questioned Jesus' association with the outcasts and sinners. They criticized and judged Him.
   a. He was associating with those who were not socially acceptable. Sinners and outcasts had rejected society. They had forsaken the ways of acceptability. Why would Jesus associate with such outcasts and sinners who so clearly rebelled against society and its approved behavior?
   b. He was associating with those who were religiously and ceremonially unclean. Many, if not all, had not sought religious and ceremonial cleansing. They were guilty of breaking every law of religion and decency. Their behavior and uncleanness were bound to rub off, contaminating and misleading anyone associating with them, including Jesus.
2. Jesus answered their question by illustrating and stating His mission.
   a. The sick (sinners) are the ones who need a physician (Him, the Savior). Note: a man may be sick...
      - and not know it; therefore his sickness is never cured.
      - and not call the physician; therefore, his sickness is never cured.
   b. The mission of Jesus was not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

Thought 1. The righteous either do not know or do not accept the fact that they need repentance. Sinners do know, but they may not accept the depth of their need nor turn from their sin in order to be saved by Jesus.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

3 (5:33-34) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Believer, Joy; Life—Fasting**: there was the mission of bringing real joy. The religionists questioned Jesus' loose behavior and the fact that He was teaching His disciples the same loose behavior. What is meant by *loose behavior*? Jesus' disciples were eating and drinking, actually feasting when they should have been fasting. By law religious Jews fasted twice a week, every Monday and Thursday (Lk.18:12). Jesus was not only religious, He was a religious teacher, and even more, He was claiming to be the Messiah Himself. Why was He not fasting? (See note—Mk.2:18-22 for detailed discussion.) Note something important. The religionists fasted as a ritual; their days for fasting were already determined. The ritual or the custom and tradition determined their fast. Their need for God, for a very special sense of God's presence, had nothing to do with fasting. Fasting was purely a matter of ritual and custom.

Jesus' answer was revealing and of utmost importance. He claimed that He was the *Bridegroom*, and as long as He was with them, there was no need for them to fast. Now note what Jesus was saying. (See note—Mt.9:15; Mk.2:19.)

1. His presence brought joy and vitality to life, not ritual and ceremonial demands.
2. There was no need to be fasting for a special sense of God's presence if the Bridegroom, the Son of God, was already present.

3. His mission was that of a Bridegroom, to bring joy and vitality to life.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor.6:10).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Ph.4:4).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted" (Ps.89:16).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Is.61:10).

4 (5:35) **Jesus Christ, Mission; Death**: there was the mission of dying. Note two points.

Jesus said, "the Bridegroom shall be taken away." He meant that He was appointed to die. Dying upon the cross was His primary mission for coming to earth. Note three significant points.

1. His death enables His Spirit to be present with all believers around the world (Jn.14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 13).
2. His death brings sorrow to the heart of any who see it and understand it. However, His death brings joy soon after, for there is the knowledge that Jesus lives forever (Jn.16:16-22; Heb.7:25; cp. Eph.1:19-23).
3. His death and its cleansing power can be *forgotten* (2 Pt.1:9). The Lord's presence can fade from our consciousness. We can become so busy and preoccupied with the affairs of the world that we lose our sensitivity to the Lord's presence. At such times we need to get alone with God. Our concern for God's presence should be so great that neither food nor sleep matter. Nothing matters except regaining the consciousness of God's presence. We need to fast and pray, and pray and fast.

Thought 1. His death caused the first disciples to fast; it ought to cause us to fast...

- when we first learn of His death and what it really means.

"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day" (Lk.24:46).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

- when we are reminded rather forcibly that He died for us. Such times should be heart-rending times, precious times of prayer and fasting.
- when we allow His presence to slip out of our mind for some length of time. We need to get alone and meditate upon His death, allowing nothing to interfere, including food.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Ro.8:26-27).

"The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was entreated of us" (Ezra 8:22-23).

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).

5 (5:36-39) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: there was the mission of a new life and a new spiritual movement. Jesus gave three points to illustrate what He meant.

Illustration 1: a piece of new cloth is not used to patch an old garment, for it fails to match the old garment. Jesus was saying that He was not patching up the old life, but starting a new life and a new movement (cp. v.36. See notes—Mt.9:16; Mk.2:21 for discussion.)

Illustration 2: the new wine is not put into old bottles, for the new wine would burst the old bottles. Jesus was saying that He was not putting His teaching into the old life and movement, but He was launching a new life and movement for God (cp. v.37. See notes—Mk.2:22.)

Illustration 3: the new wine is difficult to accept if one has been drinking old wine. Jesus was saying that His new life and spiritual movement would be difficult to accept; it would take time. Men were slow to give up the old, for they were too content with it (their religious ways and self-righteousness). Therefore, men would often refuse to even consider the new life and movement.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph.4:22-23).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).

	CHAPTER 6	bath.	of the Sabbath
	G. Jesus Teaches that Need Supersedes Religion, 6:1-11 (Mt.12:1-13; Mk. 2:23-28; 3:1-6)	6 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.	**3 Fact 2: Doing good & saving life are more important than religion & ritual** a. The need: A man's right hand shriveled
1 The Sabbath		7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.	b. The opposition by the religionists*DS4*
2 Fact 1: Meeting man's real needs is more important than religion & ritual a. The need: The disciples were hungry, so they plucked corn	And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.	8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.	c. The question & challenge of Jesus 1) He perceived their thoughts
b. The opposition: The religionists became upset because a religious rule was broken*DS1*	2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?	9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?	2) He challenged them to think honestly
c. The answer of Jesus: An illustration 1) David hungered	3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;	10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.	3) He healed the man—doing good
2) David overrode the religious rules to meet a need*DS2*	4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?	11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.	d. The point: To do good and to save life supersedes rituals e. The religionists' insane anger
d. The point: The Son of Man*DS3* is as great as David—He is the Lord	5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sab-		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

G. Jesus Teaches That Need Supersedes Religion, 6:1-11

(6:1-11) **Introduction**: men have the tendency to institutionalize religion, to make it full of form and ritual, rules and regulations, ceremonies and services. Men, religionists and laymen alike, are too often guilty of "having a *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim.3:5). This is the very point Jesus is making in this passage. The power of godliness exists to meet the needs of man. Yet too often, religion is placed before man and his needs. Maintaining the religious organization and form, keeping things the way they have always been, is considered more important than meeting the needs of man.

1. The Sabbath (v.1).
2. Fact 1: meeting man's real needs is more important than religion and ritual (v.1-5).
3. Fact 2: doing good and saving life are more important than religion and ritual (v.6-11).

1 (6:1) **Sabbath**: note that both of these events took place on the Sabbath (v.1, 6). This is the very thrust of Luke: to show that religion and ritual must never be put before the needs of man. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sabbath*—Mt.12:1 for discussion.)

2 (6:1-5) **Necessities—Religion—Rituals—Jesus Christ, Deity**: first, *real needs* are more important than religion and rituals. The disciples had a real need: they were extremely hungry. They had not eaten since the day before (Mt.12:1; Mk.2:23). As they were passing by a corn field, they began to pluck and eat some corn. They were not stealing the corn, for a hungry traveller was permitted by law to eat a few ears of corn when passing by a field (Dt.23:25). The crime was that the disciples *worked* by plucking the ears of corn *on the Sabbath day*.

This was a serious offense to the orthodox Jew. Just how serious can be seen in the strict demands governing the Sabbath. Law after law was written to govern all activity on the Sabbath, laws which prohibited a person from contemplating any kind of work or activity. A good example of the legal restriction and the people's loyalty to it is seen in the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion. They would not even walk to His tomb to prepare the body for burial until the Sabbath was over (Mk.16:1f; Mt.28:1f).

It was a serious matter to break the Sabbath law. A person was condemned, and if the offence were serious enough, the person was to die.

This may seem harsh to some, but when dealing with the Jewish nation, one must remember that it was their religion that held them together as a nation through centuries and centuries of exile. Their religion (in particular their beliefs about

God's call to their nation), the temple, and the Sabbath became the *binding force* that kept Jews together and maintained their distinctiveness as a people. It protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other people through intermarriage. No matter where they were, they met and associated together and held on to their beliefs. A picture of this can be seen in the experience of Nehemiah when he led some Jews back to Jerusalem (Neh.13:15-22; cp. Jer.17:19-27; Ezk.46:1-7).

All the above explains to some degree why the religionists opposed Jesus with such hostility. Their problem was that they had allowed religion and ritual, ceremony and liturgy, position and security, recognition and livelihood to become more important than the basic essentials of human life: personal need and compassion, and the true worship and mercy of God. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10. This is an important note for this point.)

Note several things.

1. Jesus used David's experience to illustrate His point. David had eaten the showbread in the tabernacle when he was hungry (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.6:4; Mk.2:25-27).

2. Jesus declared that "[He] the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath." This was His very point. He was as great as David, in fact, greater; for He was the Son of Man. Therefore He was the Lord over the Sabbath (see notes and thoughts—Mt.12:1-8; Mk.2:23-28 for detailed discussion).

> **"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).**
>
> **"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).**
>
> **"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).**
>
> **"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).**
>
> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph.1:22).**
>
> **"[Jesus Christ] who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).**

Thought 1. Christ shows that human needs are far more important than religious rituals and rules. However, two things must always be kept in mind.

1) The need must be a *real need* before religious rituals and rules are to be superseded. We are not to abuse, neglect, or ignore religious worship and ceremonies. Sometimes, however, a real need does arise that has to be taken care of immediately.
2) Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath (Sunday); therefore, He should be the One who says when a need should supersede a religious ceremony. We must be living closely enough to Him in fellowship and worship, sacrifice and ministry to sense what should be done.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:2) **Scribes—Scribal Law—Pharisees**: these Pharisees were probably Scribes. The Scribes were a profession of men sometimes called lawyers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.22:35). They were some of the most devoted and committed men to religion in all of history and were of the sect known as the Pharisees. However, every Pharisee was not a Scribe. A Scribe was more of a scholar, more highly trained than the average Pharisee (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Pharisees*—Acts 23:8). They had two primary functions.

1. The Scribes copied the written law, the Old Testament Scriptures. In their copying function, they were strict copiers, meticulously keeping count of every letter in every word. This exactness was necessary, for God Himself had given the written law to the Jewish nation. Therefore, the law was not only the very Word of God, it was the greatest thing in the life of the Jewish nation. It was considered the most precious possession in all the world; consequently, the Jewish nation was committed to the preservation of the law (Neh.8:1-8). A young Jew could enter no greater profession than the profession of Scribes.

2. The Scribes studied, classified, and taught the moral law. This function brought about the Oral or Scribal Law that was so common in Jesus' day. It was the law of rules and regulations. There were, in fact, so many regulations that over fifty large volumes were required when they were finally put into writing. The great tragedy was that through the centuries, the Jews began to place the Oral law over the written law (see note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20).

The Scribes felt that the law was God's final word. Everything God wanted man to do could be deduced from it; therefore, they drew out of the law every possible rule they could and insisted that life was to be lived in conformity to these rules. Rules were to be a way of life, the preoccupation of a man's thoughts. At first these rules and regulations were taught by word of mouth; however, in the third century after Christ, they were put into certain writings.

The Halachoth: rules that were to govern the ritual of worship.

The Talmud: made up of two parts.

⇒ The Mishnah: sixty-three discussions of various subjects of the law.

⇒ Germara: the sacred legends of the people.

Midrashim: the commentaries on the writings.

Hagada: thoughts on the commentaries.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:4) **Showbread**: the word means *the bread of the face* or *the bread of the Presence*. It symbolized the *Presence of God* who is the Bread of Life. The showbread was twelve loaves of bread that were brought to the house of God as a symbolic offering to God. It was a thanksgiving offering expressing appreciation and praise to God for food. The loaves were to be taken to the Holy Place by the Priest and placed on the table before the Lord. The loaves symbolized an everlasting covenant between God and His people: He would always see to it that His people had whatever food was necessary to sustain them (see outline—Mt.6:25-34). The loaves were to be changed every week. The old loaves became food for the priests and were to be eaten by them alone.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(6:5) **Son of Man**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20.

3 (6:6-11) **Life, Saving—Needs—Jesus Christ, Deity; Power—Rituals**: second, doing good and saving life are more important than religious rituals.

1. The need was a man whose right hand was shriveled. The only thing we know about the man with the withered hand is just that: he had a withered hand. The gospels say nothing else about him. However, there is a dramatic background given by one of the books which was never accepted into the New Testament: *The Gospel According to the Hebrews*. This gospel says that the man was a carpenter who made his living with his hands. It adds that the man pleaded with Jesus to heal him that he might not have to beg for food in shame.
2. The religionists "watched" (pareterounto) Jesus. The meaning is that they watched closely just as an animal does its prey. Note their purpose was to accuse Him. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10. This is an important note for understanding why the religionists conflicted so much with Jesus.)
3. Jesus knew their thoughts, so He challenged them to think and contemplate the matter and to be honest in their conclusion. "Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?" Note several facts.
   a. He knew their thoughts. This was evidence of His deity.
   b. Jesus was claiming to be the *Lord of good and the Lord of salvation*, the One who does good and the One who saves life.
   c. Jesus' love reached out even to those who opposed Him so violently, at least for a while, as long as there was some hope to reach them. He appealed to them to be open and honest, to think and reason, and to be willing to confess the truth. What He was doing was good and did save life. He was the Lord of good and the Lord of salvation.
4. Jesus' point was clear: to do good and to save life always supersedes religion and rituals. Picture the scene. Jesus stood there looking around upon the religionists; there was stone silence while He scanned His audience. He was awaiting their answer to His question (v.9). He longed for them to answer honestly, to confess Him as the Lord of good and the Lord of salvation, but there was only stone silence. All of a sudden with a thunderous voice He commanded: "Stretch forth thy hand. And he [the man] did so: and his hand was restored whole."

Thought 1. The man's life had to be saved; his hand had to be restored. The man might never stand before the Lord again. Now was the day of salvation, not tomorrow.

> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**

Thought 2. Doing good and saving life never abuses the Sabbath or Sunday. In fact, there is no better day to help and minister than on the Lord's day.

Thought 3. If we do not help people—no matter the day, even on the Sabbath—then we are *withholding good and doing evil to our neighbor*.

> **"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:36-39).**
>
> **"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother**

have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before men" (1 Jn.3:16-19).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

5. The religionists became insanely mad. They were filled with madness (eplesthesan anoias) which means insane rage. According to Mark, they immediately stormed out of the synagogue and joined forces with the Herodians in plotting how to kill Jesus (see notes and thoughts—Mk.3:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(6:7) **Israel, History—Law—Legalism—Scribes—Pharisees**: in understanding the Scribes and Pharisees it is helpful to understand that the Jews were above all else *a people of God's Law*. Their nation was based on the Ten Commandments and the first five books of the Old Testament, known as the Law or Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy). This fact alone, that the nation was based upon God's Law, makes Israel unique among surviving nations of the world.

There are several significant stages in Israel's history that show just how dominating a force the Law was in the nation's survival.

1. The Jews were a people created by God in one man, Abraham (Gen.12:1-3). Abraham believed he was called by God to be the father of a great nation, and he passed the belief down to his son, Isaac.
2. The Jewish population grew enormously during the four-hundred years of slavery in Egypt, originating from the twelve sons of Jacob. They had been led to Egypt by Joseph to save the family during a life-threatening famine. Again, the significant fact was that the fathers passed on to their children the faith of Abraham: that they were the people of God, chosen to become the greatest of all nations.
3. The nation itself was officially formed at Mt. Sinai when God gave the Law to Moses. The nation was appointed for a spiritual purpose: to be the guardian of God's law. This event was extremely significant, for Israel was being appointed as the messenger of God to the rest of the world, as the people who were to bear testimony to the only living and true God and to His Law. They were to be God's missionary force to the world.
4. The Jewish people had been conquered and scattered all over the world time after time. In Old Testament history they had been conquered and scattered by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians; yet they had survived attempt after attempt to annihilate them as a people. The one thing that bound the people together, enabling them to survive was the Law of God and their belief and practice of it (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10; 12:1-8).
5. A small remnant of the Jewish people had been allowed to return to rebuild the capital, Jerusalem, and to start over again under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra.

It was at this point in Israel's history that the birth of the Scribes took place (about B.C. 450). In a most dramatic moment in the nation's history, Ezra the Scribe took the Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and read it aloud to the handful of people who had returned. He then led the people to rededicate themselves to being the people of God's Law (Neh.8:1-8). The rededication was strong and meaningful. It had to be, for the nation had almost been wiped out, and there were but a few who had returned to begin the nation anew.

Therefore, the law became the greatest thing in the people's lives; and the most honored profession became the Scribe who was made responsible to study, teach, and preserve the law (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2). Through the years the Scribes took the law of God and attempted to define every key phrase and word of the law. By so doing, they ended up with thousands and thousands of rules and regulations to govern the lives of the people. The people would thereby become distinct from all other people and be protected from intermarriage and from being swallowed up by the cultures of other nations. These rules and regulations were called the Scribal Law. Interestingly, when the Scribal Law was finally completed, it compiled more than fifty volumes.

The Pharisees were born as a group several hundred years later (about B.C. 175). Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria marched against Jerusalem and captured the nation and made a deliberate attempt to destroy the Jewish people. To prevent the annihilation of their life and nation as a people, a group of men dedicated themselves at all cost to keep every detail of the law (Scribal Law). The practice of the Scribal Law by these men soon became a profession, for working to keep thousands and thousands of laws just left no time for anything else. Very simply stated, the practice of the Scribal Law required more time than a man had; therefore, the profession of Pharisees was born—born to practice and preserve the law. A Pharisee genuinely believed that by obeying the law and imposing it upon the people, he was saving his people and their nation. It was the law that made the Jewish people, their religion, and their nation different from all other people. Therefore, the Pharisee had a consuming devotion to see that the law was taught and practiced among the people.

These two things, *extreme legalism and extreme devotion*, were the two major traits of the Pharisees. But the same two traits lying within a self-centered heart can lead to terrible abuse.

1. A man can become a stern legalist, laying burden after burden upon men. Such legalism knows little of the mercy and forgiveness of God.
2. A man can become monastic, separate from the people.
3. A man can become *super-religious*, or *super-spiritual*, with a *holier than thou* attitude and aire.
4. A man can become prideful because he belongs to a certain profession and holds a particular place or position or title or because he is more disciplined in keeping the rules. Thus, he feels more elevated than others, more honored, more religious, and more acceptable to God.
5. A man can become hypocritical. There is just no way to keep thousands and thousands of rules and regulations. Human nature militates against and prevents perfect obedience.
6. A man can become showy and ostentatious. Strict discipline and personal achievement put a desire within a person to show his achievements and to seek recognition.
7. A man can become hypocritical, publicly acting and preaching one thing, but privately practicing another.

	H. Jesus Chooses His Men: Who Is Chosen & Why, 6:12-19 (Mk.3:13-19)		
1 He chose them after prayerful consideration—after praying all night	12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.	James the son of Alphaeus,and Simon called Zelotes, 16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor. 17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; 18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. 19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.	**5 He chose them to minister with Him** a. They ministered to two distinct groups 1) To followers 2) To the multitude b. They had a threefold ministry 1) To preach 2) To heal 3) To lead people to touch Jesus
2 He chose them from among His disciples	13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;		
3 He chose them to be apostles			
4 He chose diverse personalities	14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew. 15 Matthew and Thomas,		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

H. Jesus Chooses His Men: Who Is Chosen and Why, 6:12-19

(6:12-19) **Introduction**: Jesus needs people. He needs men, women, boys, and girls who will carry His message of salvation to the world. This passage is a picture of how Jesus goes about choosing people to serve Him.

1. He chose them after prayerful consideration—after praying all night (v.12).
2. He chose them from among His disciples (v.13).
3. He chose them to be apostles (v.13).
4. He chose diverse personalities (v.14-16).
5. He chose them to minister with Him (v.17-19).

1 (6:12) **Prayer—Call**: Jesus chose His men after prayerful consideration. He had continued all night in prayer, discussing and sharing with God. It was a momentous decision. Think about it. The destiny of the world and the fate of mankind was to rest upon the shoulders of these men. They were to carry the message of salvation to the world. If they failed, the world would be lost and man would be eternally doomed. Jesus needed to know exactly who to choose. He needed to talk the matter over with His Father. He needed to be spiritually renewed; He needed His spirit and mind quick and sharp and full of God's presence as He made the *critical choices*. So He prayed, but He not *only* prayed, He wrestled with God *all night* in prayer. Note that He got all *alone* on top of a mountain where He would not be disturbed.

> **Thought 1.** In all honesty, how many minutes do we spend in prayer a day? Some say they pray all day as they go about their affairs. Praying as we walk throughout the day is good and commendable. We should "pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17). Christ did. But praying throughout the day by flickering our minds over to God for a moment here and there is not *concentrated prayer*, not the kind of prayer that really moves and causes things to happen. Thinking and talking to God here and there is *fellowship prayer*. Fellowship prayer is easy. It is very common to share with God as we walk through the day. But what is needed and what the Bible means primarily by prayer is *concentrated prayer*, a time set aside when we get all alone with God and share specific matters with Him. Christ sets a dynamic example of *concentrated prayer* in this passage. (See notes—Mt.6:9-13.)
>
> **"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).**
>
> **"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray" (Mk.6:46).**
>
> **"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Lk.5:16).**
>
> **"And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?" (Lk.9:18).**
>
> **"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed" (Lk.22:41).**

2 (6:13) **Disciple—Call**: Jesus chose His men from among His disciples. There were a large number of people following Jesus as disciples. A disciple was a learner. But a disciple in that day was much more than what we mean by a student who just studies a subject taught by a teacher. A disciple was a person who *attached* himself to his teacher and who followed his teacher wherever he went, studying and learning all he could from the teacher's life as well as from his word. (See note—Mt.28:19-20 for detailed discussion and application.)

Note that Jesus called His disciples to Him; He called all those who had attached themselves to Him. (It would be interesting to know who all these were.) Out of these disciples, Jesus chose twelve to serve as His apostles and to join Him in His great mission and ministry. They were to serve with Him in a very, very special way (cp. v.17-19. See outline—Lk.5:27-39.)

> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**

3 (6:13) **Apostle—Ministry—Believers—Ambassador**: Jesus chose His men to be apostles (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Apostle*—Mt.10:2). Note three things.

1. The word "apostle" (apostolos) means to send out. An apostle is a man chosen directly by the Lord Himself or by the Holy Spirit (cp. Mt.10:1-2; Mk.3:13-14; Lk.6:13; Acts 9:6, 15; 13:2; 22:10, 14-15; Ro.1:1). He was a man who had either seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus.
2. Jesus called Himself an apostle (apesteilos, Jn.17:3), and He is called the *Apostle* and High Priest of our profession (Heb.3:1).
3. Others were also called apostles (Acts 14:4, 14, 17; 1 Th.2:6; 2 Cor.8:23; Ph.2:25; Gal.1:19; Ro.16:7). However, there is a distinct difference between all these and the twelve whom Christ chose. The first twelve were...
   - chosen by the Lord Himself while on earth.
   - chosen to *be with Him* during His earthly ministry (Mk.3:14).
   - chosen to be trained by Him alone, personally.
   - chosen to be the eyewitnesses of His resurrection (Acts 1:22).
   - chosen to be the ones who were to carry forth His message which had come from His very own mouth.

There is a sense in which the gift of apostleship is still given and used in the ministry today (see DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Apostle*—Mt.10:2).

Thought 1. The believer is the ambassador for Christ, one who goes forth representing Christ Himself both by life and word. The believer is to *reflect* the very life of Christ.

> **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).**

Thought 2. The Lord does pick *a few* from among His followers (disciples) to serve Him in very special ways. Every church has to have its leaders; and every area, state, country, and generation has to have its leaders. God must have those who will go beyond in sacrificing and giving, serving and ministering in every place and generation.

> **"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn.1:6).**
>
> **"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer.3:15).**
>
> **"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:4).**
>
> **"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:17).**
>
> **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).**
>
> **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pt.5:2).**
>
> **"Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me" (Is.48:16).**

4 (6:14-16) **Apostles**: Jesus chose diverse personalities. There were at least three businessmen: Peter, James, and John. All three were fishermen with rather large businesses (Mk.1:19-20; Lk.5:2-3). One apostle was perhaps wealthy: Matthew, the tax collector. His house must have been an estate, for it was large enough to handle a huge crowd for a large feast (Lk.5:27-29). One was a political nationalist, an insurrectionist, Simon the Zealot. The Zealots were pledged to overthrow the Roman government and to assassinate as many Roman officials and Jewish cohorts as possible (Lk.6:15; Acts 1:13). One was evidently deeply religious: Nathanael (Jn.1:48). So far as is known, there was no outstanding official or famous citizen among the apostles.

Their personalities were a strange mixture. Matthew, being a tax collector and ostracized by the Jewish community, was bound to be a hard-crusted, non-religious individual (Mt.9:9). The fishermen James and John were of a rough breed with thundering personalities (Mk.3:17). Simon the Zealot was possessed with a fanatical, nationalistic spirit (Lk.6:15; Acts 1:13). Peter was apparently a rough fisherman with a loud, rough-hewn personality (Mk.14:71). The power of Christ

to give purpose and meaning to life and to bring peace among men is clearly seen in His ability to bring so diverse a group together under one banner. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4-*15*—Mk.3:16-19 for a discussion on each of the apostles.)

> **"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:27-29).**

5 (6:17-19) **Mission—Call—Ministry**: Jesus chose His men to carry out His mission with Him. Note that the twelve were now *with Him in a very special relationship*. Jesus "came down with them, and stood in the plain." Standing there, He and the twelve were faced with a multitude of people. The twelve were now to learn what their mission was to be.

1. Their mission was to learn to minister to two distinct groups: "the company of His disciples" and the multitude of people.
2. Their mission was to learn to carry out a threefold ministry.
   a. The ministry of preaching to those who "came to hear Jesus" (v.17).

      Thought 1. The minister and teacher of God is to preach and teach. He is to share with all those who come to hear Jesus.

      > **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).**
      >
      > **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**

   b. The ministry of healing (v.17-18).

      Thought 1. The minister and teacher of God is to minister to the diseased and brokenhearted of his community and world. In the name and power of Jesus, he is to heal the sick and mend the brokenhearted.

      > **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
      >
      > **"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" (Ps.147:3).**
      >
      > **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

   c. The ministry of leading people to *touch Jesus* in order to receive His virtue (v.19). The Greek word "virtue" (dunamis) means power. The people were *touching Jesus* in order to receive His power.

      Thought 1. The servant of God is to be an instrument of Jesus' power. Jesus' power is to flow through His servant and flow outward to men.

      > **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
      >
      > **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
      >
      > **"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).**
      >
      > **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**

	I. Jesus Teaches the Perils of the Material World, 6:20-26 (Mt.5:3-12)	your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. 23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.	reproached 2) The attitude to have while being persecuted: Rejoicing 3) Reward: To be great
1 The promise to those who reject materialism a. The poor: Shall inherit the Kingdom of God b. The hungry: Shall be filled c. The sorrowful: Shall laugh d. The persecuted for Jesus' sake 1) The persecuted described: The hated, the ostracized, & the	20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. 22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out	24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. 25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. 26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.	**2 The judgment of those who follow materialism** a. The rich: Shall want b. The full: Shall hunger c. The merry: Shall weep d. The prideful & compromising: Shall have earthly approval only

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

I. Jesus Teaches the Perils of the Material World, 6:20-26

(6:20-26) **Introduction**: this is a shocking passage to the world, for Jesus switches the world's values completely around. He rejects entirely the *materialism* (things) of the world and warns the worldly and materialistic that severe judgment is coming.

1. The promise to those who reject materialism (v.20-23).
2. The judgment to those who follow materialism (v.24-26).

1 (6:20-23) **Materialism—Worldliness—Righteousness—Persecution**: the promise to those who reject materialism.

1. Blessed are the poor. This does not mean that a man must be poverty-stricken and financially poor. Hunger, nakedness, and slums are not pleasing to God, especially in a world of plenty. Jesus is not talking about material poverty. He means what he adds in Matthew: "poor in spirit" (cp. Mt.5:3). "Poor in spirit" means several things.
   a. To acknowledge one's utter helplessness before God, one's spiritual poverty, one's spiritual need; acknowledging that one is solely dependent upon God to meet his need.
   b. To acknowledge one's utter lack in facing life and eternity apart from God; to acknowledge that the real blessings of life and eternity come only from a right relationship with God (see note—Eph.1:3; cp. Jn.10:10; Gal.5:22-23).
   c. To acknowledge one's utter lack of superiority before all others and one's spiritual deadness before God; to acknowledge that no matter what one has achieved in this world (fame, fortune, power), he is no better, no richer, no more superior than the next person. His attitude toward others is not proud and haughty, not superior and overbearing. To be "poor in spirit" means acknowledging that every human being is a real person just like everyone else—a person who has a significant contribution to make to society and to the world. The person who is "poor in spirit" approaches life in humility and appreciation, not as though life owes him, but as though he owes life. He has been given the privilege of living; thus, he journeys through life with a humble attitude, that is, with an attitude of being poor in spirit and contributing all he can out of a spirit of appreciation.

Two critical steps are taken by the person who truly acknowledges his spiritual poverty.

   a. He turns his primary attention away from the things of this world, knowing things can never make him rich in spirit.
   b. He turns his primary attention to God and His kingdom, knowing that God alone can make him rich in spirit (see note—Eph.1:3).

The opposite of being "poor in spirit" is having a spirit that is full of self. There is a world of difference between these two spirits. There is the difference of thinking one is righteous and acknowledging one has the need for righteousness. There is the difference of *having self-righteousness* and of having *another's righteousness*. Man must have *another's righteousness*. Self-righteousness goes no farther than self, that is, no farther than death. *Another's righteousness*, that is, Christ's righteousness, lives forever (2 Cor.5:21; Ph.3:9. See note—Ro.3:21-22; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.2:15-16. See outline and notes—Ro.10:4.)

The promise to the *poor* is phenomenal. Note the exact words: "yours is the kingdom of heaven." The promise is not "yours shall be," but "yours is." The poor in spirit receive the Kingdom of Heaven *now* (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

2. Blessed are the hungry. This is spiritual hunger, not physical hunger. Again, being physically hungry is not a blessing. It is often sad and tragic. Jesus is saying, "Blessed are they who hunger spiritually, who hunger after righteousness." It means to have a starving spirit, a spirit that craves righteousness.

In the Bible righteousness means two simple but profound things. It means both *to be right and to do right*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Righteousness*—Mt.5:6 for more discussion.)

a. There are those who stress *being righteous and neglect doing righteousness*. This leads to two serious errors.
   1) False security. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he has *believed in* Jesus Christ. But he neglects doing good and living as he should. He neglects obeying God and serving man.
   2) Loose living. It allows one to go out and do pretty much as he desires. He feels secure and comfortable in his *faith in Christ*. He knows that what he does may affect his fellowship with God and other believers, but he thinks his behavior will not affect his salvation. He thinks that no matter what he does he is still acceptable to God.

      The problem with this stress is that it is a false righteousness. Righteousness in the Bible means *being righteous* and *doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing about being righteous without living righteously.

b. There are those who stress *doing righteousness and neglect being righteous*. This also leads to two serious errors.
   1) Self-righteousness and legalism. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he does good. He works and behaves morally and keeps certain rules and regulations. He does the things a Christian should do by obeying the main laws of God. But he neglects the basic law: the law of love and acceptance—that God loves him and accepts him not because he does good but because he loves and trusts the righteousness of Christ (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6).
   2) Being judgmental and censorious. A person who stresses that he is righteous (acceptable to God) because he keeps certain laws often judges and censors others. He feels that rules and regulations can be kept, for *He* keeps them. Therefore, anyone who fails to keep them is judged, criticized, and censored.

      The problem with this stress is that it, too, is a false righteousness. Again, righteousness in the Bible is both *being righteous and doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing of being acceptable to God without *being made righteous in Christ Jesus* (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mt.5:6; Ro.5:1 for more discussion. Cp. 2 Cor.5:21.)

      Note that Jesus does not say, "Blessed are the righteous," for no one is righteous (Ro.3:10). He says, "Blessed are they who *hunger and thirst* after righteousness." Man is not righteous, not perfectly righteous. His chance to be righteous is gone. He has already come short and missed the mark. He is already imperfect. Man has but one hope: that God will love him so much that He will somehow *count* him righteous. That is just what God does. God takes a man's "hunger and thirst after righteousness" and counts that hunger and thirst as righteousness (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.4:22).

      The promise to those who hunger after righteousness is fulfilling. They will be filled with abundant life: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal.5:22-23).

3. Blessed are the sorrowful, the persons who weep and mourn. The idea is a broken heart, a desperate, helpless weeping. It is weeping over sin; it is a broken heart over evil and suffering; it is a brokenness of self that comes from seeing Jesus on the cross and realizing that one's own sins put Him there (cp. Jas.4:9).

Who are they who mourn? Who are they so full of grief and sorrow that they cry and weep and utter groanings deep from within? There are three persons who mourn and utter such groanings.

a. The person who is *desperately sorry* for his sin and unworthiness before God. He has such a sense of sin that his heart is just broken (Lk.18:13).
b. The person who really *feels* the desperate plight and terrible suffering of others. The tragedies, the problems, the sinful behavior of others; the state, the condition, the lostness of the world—all weigh ever so heavily upon the heart of the mourner.
c. The person who *experiences* personal tragedy and intense trauma.

The promise to the one who weeps is that he shall laugh (gelasete). The word means *loud laughter* that arises from a deep-seated joy and comfort. The laughter comes from two things.

a. It comes from seeing the end of sin and shame, sorrow and suffering, tragedy and trauma.
b. It comes from being comforted (paraclesia, see note—2 Cor.1:3). Note two glorious truths.
   1) There is a present comfort.
      ⇒ A settled peace: a relief, a solace, a consolation within.
      ⇒ An assurance of forgiveness and acceptance by God.
      ⇒ A fullness of joy: a sense of God's presence, care and guidance (Jn.14:26); a sense of His sovereignty, of His working all things out for good to those who love Him (Ro.8:28; cp. Jn.10:10; 15:11; 2 Cor.6:10; Ps.16:11).
   2) There is an eternal comfort.
      ⇒ A passing from death to life (Jn.3:16; Jn.5:24f).
      ⇒ A wiping away of all tears (Is.25:8; Rev.7:17; 21:4).

4. Blessed are the persecuted, the persons who are persecuted for Jesus' sake. The persecuted are those who endure suffering *for Christ*. Jesus spelled out what He meant by persecution. He means being hated, ostracized, reproached, and having one's name spoken against.

Note the attitude a person is to have while being persecuted. The person is to "rejoice" and "leap for joy." How is such possible? By keeping one's eyes on the reward. Note the words, "Rejoice and leap for joy; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven."

Believers are forewarned: they shall suffer persecution (Jn.15:20; 16:4; Ph.1:29; 2 Tim.3:12; 1 Jn.3:13; 1 Pt.4:12f).

a. Believers suffer persecution because they *are not of this world*. They are called out of the world. They are *in the world*, but they are not *of the world*. They are separated from the behavior of the world; therefore, the world reacts against them (Jn.15:19).
b. Believers suffer persecution because they *strip away the world's cloak of sin*. They live and demonstrate a life of righteousness. Such exposes the sins of people (Jn.15:21, 24; cp. 15:18; 2 Tim.3:12).
c. Believers suffer persecution because the world does not know God or Christ. They want no God, no Lord other than themselves and their own imaginations. They want to do just what they want, to fulfill their own desires and not what another Lord wishes and demands (Jn.15:21; 16:3).
d. Believers suffer persecution because the world is deceived in its concept and belief of God. The world conceives God to be the Person who fulfills their earthly desires and lusts (Jn.16:2-3). Man's idea of God is that of a *Supreme Grandfather*. He protects, provides, and gives, no matter one's behavior, just so the behavior is not too far out. God (the Supreme Grandfather) will accept and work all things out in the final analysis. But the true believer teaches against this. God is love, but He is also just and demands righteousness. The world rebels against this concept of God (Jn.16:2-3).

The promise to the persecuted is twofold. Their reward is great in heaven, and they are following in the footsteps (testimony) of the great prophets of the past.

1. The persecuted receive a great reward now.
   a. They experience a special honor (Acts 5:41).
   b. They experience a special consolation (2 Cor.1:5).
   c. They are given a very special closeness, a glow of the Lord's presence (see note—1 Pt.4:14).
   d. They become a greater witness for Christ (2 Cor.1:4-6).
2. The persecuted will receive the Kingdom of Heaven eternally (Heb.11:35f; 1 Pt.4:12-13; see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

2 (6:24-26) **Judgment—Materialism**: the judgment to those who follow materialism.

1. The warning is strong to the rich. Who are the rich? Realistically, in comparison to what the vast majority of the world has, a rich person is anyone who has anything to put back beyond meeting the true needs of his own family. This is exactly what Christ and the Bible say time and again (cp. also Mk.12:41-44; Lk.21:1-4; Acts 4:34-35).

Why are the rich warned? Because wealth pulls a person away from the Kingdom of Heaven. It is difficult for a rich person to enter heaven. Christ made this statement because of the things that *pulled* the rich young ruler away from heaven. There is a lure, an attraction, a force, a power, a pull that reaches out and draws any of us who look at or possess wealth. There are pulls so forceful that they will enslave and doom any rich person who fails to turn and embrace God.

a. *Wealth creates the big "I."* The wealthy are usually esteemed, honored, and envied. Wealth brings position, power, and recognition. It boosts *ego*, making a person self-sufficient and independent in this world. As a result there is a tendency for the rich man to feel that he is truly independent and self-sufficient, that he needs nothing. And in such an atmosphere and world of thought, God is forgotten. The rich person forgets there are things that money cannot buy and events from which money cannot save. Peace, love, joy—all that really matter within the spirit of man—can never be bought. Neither can money save one from disaster, disease, accident, and death.
b. *Wealth tends to make one hoard.* The Bible lays down the principle of handling money for all men, even for the poor:

> **"Let him labor...that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**
> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.19:19; 22:39).**

The world reels in desperate need. People are starving, sick, unhoused, and unclothed by the millions; and teeming millions are spiritually lost and without God in this world and doomed to die without ever knowing Him. When any of us sit still and objectively look at the world in its desperate plight, how can we keep from asking: "How can any man hoard and not help—even to the last available penny? Why would any man keep more than what he needs for himself and his family?"

As God looks at the rich, He is bound to ask the same questions. In fact, His questions are bound to be more pointed and forceful. This is exactly what Christ said to the rich young ruler:

> **"Go and sell that thou hast; and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**

c. *Riches tend to make a man selfish.* For some unexplainable reason, the more we get, the more we want. When we taste the things of this world and become comfortable, we tend to fear loosing our possessions. We struggle to keep what we have and to get more. True, many are willing to make contributions, but only a certain amount, an amount that will not lower their overall estate or standing or level of comfort and possessions. There are few who give all they are and have to Christ to meet the needs of the world.

As Jesus said, "It is difficult, very difficult for the rich [meaning those who have anything in comparison with most of the world] to enter heaven" (cp. Lk.18:24). If we do not have compassion and take care of our brothers (fellowman) when they are in desperate need, how can we expect God to have compassion and take care of us when we face the desperate need for heaven? It is foolish for us to think that a loving and just God will meet our need for eternal life when we would not meet the need of our fellowman for earthly life. The rich have the means to help and to save human life, *if they would.*

d. *Wealth attaches one to the world.* Wealth enables one to buy things that...

- make him comfortable
- please his taste
- expand his experience
- stir his ego
- challenge his mental pursuit
- stimulate his flesh
- stretch his self-image

If a man centers his life upon the things of the world, his attention is on the world not on God. He tends to become wrapped up in securing more and in protecting what he has. Too often, he gives little if any time and thought to heavenly matters. Wealth and the things it can provide usually consume the rich.

The judgment of the rich is their wealth on earth. The word received (apechete) means a receipt in full. Their only "consolation" (paraklesin, help, aid, encouragement) is to be on this earth—the wealth they have. There will be no consolation after this life—no help, no aid, no encouragement, no cheer. They are *paid in full*. They choose this life, so all the good they shall receive is the good they now experience.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Dt.8:13-14).

"The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath" (Job 20:28).

"Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay" (Job 27:16).

"Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10).

"Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps.62:10).

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Pr.23:5).

"For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" (Pr.27:24).

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent" (Pr.28:20).

"Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that be after me" (Eccl.2:18).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

2. The warning is strong to the full. The full are the opposite of those who hunger for righteousness. The full are those who are filled with all that the world has to offer; in essence they are full of themselves, their own desires, urges, and cravings. They have no hunger for righteousness at all. Scripture identifies the full as those who...

- fill their bellies with the husks of the world (Lk.15:16).
- serve their own bellies and not the Lord Jesus Christ (Ro.16:18).
- indulge in the meats (things, sins) of the world (1 Cor.6:13; cp. 6:9-13).
- make their god their bellies (Ph.3:19).
- "[are] filled with all unrighteousness, [such as] fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Ro.1:29-32).

The judgment of the full shall be hunger. This means they...

- shall leave all that filled them behind when they die (Lk.12:20; 16:25).
- shall have no desires filled after this life.
- shall have no delights fulfilled throughout eternity.
- shall hunger for good (righteousness) and for the good things throughout eternity.

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"They are enclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly" (Ps.17:10)

"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Ezk.16:49).

3. The warning is strong to the merry, to those who laugh now. This means three things.

Laughing now refers to those who have no sense of sin, no sorrow or regret over evil and suffering, no brokenness over the cross and their own sin. Their joy is carnal and sensual.

Laughing now refers to those who are laughing it up *in the world* with all its comfort and ease, pleasures and stimulations, recreations and pastimes. Their joy is the indulgence and entertaining of their flesh.

Laughing now refers to those who pay little or no attention to the reality of the world, a world suffering under the weight of evil and disaster, greed and selfishness, sin and death. Their joy is found in denying and ignoring the truth of the world or in giving a pittance of time or money to help in order to ease their consciences.

The warning and judgment to the merry is mourning and weeping. They are doomed because they refused to face the reality of a world lost in sin and evil, a world that needed their attention and help. They refused to help the needy, those who suffered and wept so much in this world. Therefore, they shall be left alone in the next world to mourn and weep over their great loss.

"That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment" (Job 20:5).

"Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness" (Pr.14:13).

"For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity" (Eccl.7:6).

"And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease" (Is.16:10).

"Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:8-10).

4. The warning is strong to the prideful and compromising. These are the opposite of those who are persecuted for Christ's sake. The worldly speak well of those who live worldly...

- who live as they live.
- who speak as they speak.
- who compromise.
- who seek their company and approval.
- who never point out the truth of sin and death, judgment and hell.

Worldly men want attention and esteem, position and place, honor and praise, recognition and applause. Men honor such ambitions and rewards. Therefore, they speak well of men who attain such. But note what Jesus said. He said that *false prophets* were those of whom the world spoke well, and this was their reward, all they would ever receive. They coveted worldly recognition and honor and they received it, but at the expense of heavenly recognition and honor.

Thought 1. We are not to be as false prophets, slapping men on the back, acknowledging and compromising with their worldliness. If we do, the world will speak well of us, but we shall lose our reward. What the believer must do is tell the truth to all men: all men need a Savior and their eternal fate depends upon their coming to Him for salvation, seeking His righteousness.

"Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man" (Job 32:21).

"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Pr.20:19).

"He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him" (Pr.24:24).

"A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin" (Pr.26:28).

"A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet" (Pr.29:5).

"The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things" (Ps.12:3).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Tim.4:3).

"Whose mouths [false teachers] must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, *for filthy lucre's* [gain] *sake*" (Tit.1:11).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Pt.2:1-2).

	J. Jesus Teaches the New Principles of Life, 6:27-38 (Mt.5:39, 43-48; 7:12)	
1 The principles of life	27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,	35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
a. Governing relationships		
1) Love & do good		
2) Bless & pray	28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.	
3) Offer the other cheek	29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.	
b. Governing property		
1) Deprive not		36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.
2) Give	30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.	37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:
3) Do not demand material goods		
c. Governing behavior[DSI]	31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.	38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.
2 The argument: A disciple's behavior must surpass a sinner's	32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.	
a. In love		
b. In doing good	33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.	
	34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.	
c. In lending		
3 The reward for living right		
a. Shall be great		
b. Shall be the children of the Most High		
c. Shall be acting as God's children		
4 The promise: Reciprocal behavior—you will receive what you give		
a. In relationships		
b. In property		
c. The principle: A person receives what he gives		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

J. Jesus Teaches the New Principles of Life, 6:27-38

(6:27-38) **Introduction**: the principles spelled out by Jesus are shocking. They go against every grain of society and every fiber of a man's being. Man rebels by nature against what Jesus is saying; however the new principles must be heeded, for they are the salvation of society and the hope of man for life.

1. The principles of life (v.27-31).
2. The argument: a disciple's behavior must surpass a sinner's (v.32-34).
3. The reward for living right (v.35-36).
4. The promise: reciprocal behavior—you will receive what you give (v.37-38).

1 (6:27-31) **Life, Principles of—Believers, Behavior of**: there are the new principles of life. Two things should be noted immediately. Jesus was speaking to his disciples (v.20) and to those who would hear (v.27). He knew that all would not hear. Even if they were disciples, some just closed their ears if they did not like what they heard. And what Jesus was about to preach was a complete switch from the way men and society lived. He was about to say some things men had never heard or thought about. He knew some were going to shut their ears, so He warned them and encouraged them to guard against not listening.

1. There are the new principles governing human relationships. Jesus touched on five specific behaviors.
   a. Love: "Love your enemies." Believers are to *love all men, even enemies*. They are to respect and honor all men (1 Pt.2:17). Every human being has something that is commendable, even if it is nothing but the fact that he is a fellow human being with a soul to be reached for God. Note two facts.

      First, loving one's enemies is against human nature. The behavior of human nature is to react: to hate, strike back, and wish hurt. At best, human nature treats enemies with coldness and distance. The root of human reaction against enemies is self and bitterness. (Self-preservation is not evil of itself. See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Love*—Mt.5:44. The section on agape love points out that love is not complacent acceptance of wickedness and license.)

      Second, the one thing that a believer can have for enemies *is mercy and compassion*. Those who are enemies may choose to remain antagonistic, but the believer can still forgive in mercy and compassion. In fact, if the believer does not have compassion for those who hate him, he has gained nothing of the spirit of Christ (v.36).
   b. Do good: "Do good to them which hate you." Imagine the impact of these words to the world of Jesus' day. They were an enslaved people conquered and hated by the Romans, yet Jesus was saying, "Do good to them." (See note, *Love—Enemies*—Mt.5:44 for more discussion.)

Note that *doing good* goes beyond words; it actually does things for the person who hates. It reaches out to him through his family and friends, employment and business. It searches for ways to do good to him, realizing that he needs to be reached for God. If no immediate way is found, then the Christian continues to bless him, ever waiting for the day when the hater will face one of the crises that comes to every human being. And then the believer goes and does good, ministering as Christ Himself ministered.

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:20).

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Th.5:15).

"If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him" (Ex.23:5).

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Pr.25:21).

c. Bless people: "Bless them that curse you." People do curse, and sometimes they curse other people. When someone curses a believer, the believer is to bless his curser, not rail back. He is to speak softly, to use kind and reconciling words.

"Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not" (Ro.12:14).

"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Pt.3:9).

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov.15:1).

d. Pray for others: "Pray for them which despitefully use you." Note this refers not only to those who speak despitefully but those who *use us despitefully*. It is an attempt to shame and to hurt both our name and body. Someone tries to shame, dishonor, disgrace and reproach us. And they go even farther; they misuse, mistreat, abuse, attack, and persecute us. What are we to do? Christ says, "Pray for them. When they despitefully use you, pray for them." (a) Pray for God to forgive the persecutor. (b) Pray for peace between one's self and the persecutor. (c) Pray for the persecutor's salvation and correction.

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (Lk.23:34).

"And he [Stephen] kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:60).

Prayer for the persecutor will greatly benefit the believer. It will keep the believer from becoming bitter, hostile, and reactionary.

e. Offer the other cheek: "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other." The word for cheek (siagon) really means the jaw or jawbone. It is a strong blow, a punch and not just a slap of contempt. Of course, there is contempt and bitterness, but there is also physical injury. Christ is saying that the believer is not to strike back, not to retaliate against...

- bitter insults or contempt.
- bodily threats or injury.

When suffering *for the gospel's sake*, for his personal testimony for Christ, the believer is to respond to physical abuse just as his Lord did. He is to demonstrate *moral strength through a quiet and meek spirit*, trusting God to touch the heart of his persecutors. (See notes—Mt.5:38-39 for more discussion.)

"And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head" (Mt.27:30).

"And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?" (Jn.18:22).

"They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; they have gathered themselves together against me" (Job 16:10).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim.2:25).

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Ro.12:17).

"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:18).

"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee" (Pr.20:22).

"Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work" (Pr.24:29).

"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).

2. There are the new principles governing property. Jesus touched upon two specific behaviors.
   a. Deprive not: "Him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also." The Jews wore both an inner and an outer garment. If a man took the outer garment, the believer was to offer his inner garment as well. Jewish law allowed the inner garment to be taken as a debt or pledge, but never the outer garment. A man might have several underclothings, but only one outer garment (cp. Ex.22:26-27).

      Giving one's cloak is difficult. It means the believer does not defend, stand up, or dispute the taking of his property. He forgives, and he gives more to the person who takes. He even gives his coat (tunic) if necessary. A believer does not get tied up and consumed with his rights and privileges in or out of court. He has time only to go about his duty. He is tied up and consumed with living—living to the fullest for Christ and reaching out to a world lost and consumed with *disputes and needing the peace which only God can bring*. (See note and thoughts—Mt.5:39-41 for additional discussion.)
   b. Give: "Give to every man that asketh of thee." The believer is to help those who have need, and he is to readily help. Note that Christ allows no excuse. The picture is that the believer *gives and does not turn away* when a person asks. Note, however, the Bible does not say to give without discretion.

      "A good man showeth favor, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion" (Ps.112:5).

      Thought 1. There are two significant attitudes to control the believer's giving.
      1) The believer is to live in readiness—a readiness to give and to lend (cp. 2 Cor.8:11-15, esp. 11). He does not live for this earth and world. He lives for God and for heaven. His citizenship is in heaven, from whence he looks for the Savior (Ph.3:20). Thus, his attachment to earthly things is only for meeting the necessities of life and for helping others. He exists to help and to give.

         "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

         "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).

         "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

         "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [give]" (1 Tim.6:17-18).

         "But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).

         "Now therefore perform the doing of it [giving]; that as there was a readiness to will [to give], so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack" (2 Cor.8:11-15).

      2) The believer is to work for two reasons: (1) to meet his own necessities; and (2) to have enough to help those in need.

         "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

         "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

   c. Demand not: "Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." Often a person fails to pay back what he borrowed. He takes and keeps what he borrowed, whether tools, clothing, food, or money. The believer is not to demand them back, not if the person *needs* them and is going to be deprived and hurt if they are taken back. The believer has to consider two facts: first, the person's need; second, if the person has no need, the sin of allowing license and irresponsibility versus alienating and turning the person away from one's testimony of Christ. The believer must not allow license and irresponsibility, but he must be careful not to lose his chance of winning the person to Christ. No item, no amount of money is worth his soul.

      "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Mt.5:42).

3. There is the new principle which governs all behavior, the *Golden Rule* itself: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them." (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:31.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:31) **Golden Rule—Righteousness—Justice**: the golden rule is probably the most well-known thing Jesus ever said. It is the summit of ethics, of behavior, of righteousness, of godliness. It is a very practical statement of God's love; that is, God has done to us just as He wants us to do to Him. God has treated us just as He wants us to treat Him (and everyone else).

The golden rule reveals the heart of God. It shows us exactly how God's heart longs for us to live and act. It is a simple one-sentence statement revealing what love really is and what life in heaven (the perfect world) is to be like. It tells believers that, as citizens of both heaven and earth, they are to live as the golden rule dictates while still on the earth.

There are four significant facts that set the golden rule apart from all other teaching.

1. The golden rule is a simple one-sentence statement that embraces all human behavior. The fact that all law and all love can be stated in one simple sentence is amazing. The simple statement of the golden rule includes all "the law and the prophets" (Mt.7:12).
2. The golden rule *demands true law and justice*. Note the wording; it is not negative and passive, yet it tells man how not to behave. It restrains man. For example, the golden rule is teaching a man not to lie, steal, cheat, or injure; and it is teaching much more.
3. The golden rule is concerned with true love, that is, with positive, active behavior.
   a. It is more than not doing wrong (lying, stealing, cheating).
   b. It is more than just doing good (helping, caring, giving).
   c. It is *looking, searching, seeking for ways to do the good* that you want others to do to you; and then doing that good to others.
4. The golden rule teaches the whole law, for the whole law is contained in the words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39-40). Every human being would like to have all others treat him perfectly: to love and care for him to the ultimate degree and to express that love and care. The believer is to so love and care while still on earth. He is to give earth a taste of heaven before all things end. Men, being treated so supremely and getting a taste of heaven, might then turn to God.

2 (6:32-34) **World, Behavior of—Self-Denial**: Jesus presented a logical argument for the believer to live as God says. The argument is strong: a believer's behavior must surpass a sinner's behavior.

⇒ Sinners love those who love them.
⇒ Sinners do good to those who do good to them.
⇒ Sinners lend to secure an interest or favor or some gain.

Note three points.

1. The shocking truth: believers who do not live as Christ says do no more than sinners.
2. The world sees virtue and goodness as love; they see doing good and lending as being neighborly. And it is good to love, to do good, and to lend.
3. But loving, doing good, and lending are not enough. It does not get a person into heaven. It is not what Christ did. Christ denied Himself in order to win the world. He loved His enemies and did good to those who hated Him. It might be said that He even loaned His life to the world.

> **"Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).**
> **"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
> **"When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Ro.5:10).**

The believer is to do the very same as Christ: deny and sacrifice himself to win the world and offer them the privilege of being saved to the utmost. It takes more than the virtue and goodness of love and doing good and lending among men to become a follower of Christ. It takes the denial and sacrifice of oneself for the sake of reaching the unlovely for Christ, those who are...

- enemies
- haters
- cursers
- borrowers
- persecutors
- thieves
- despiteful
- needful
- selfish

3 (6:35-36) **Reward**: the reward for living as Jesus said is challenging. The obedient believer shall receive a threefold reward.

1. He shall receive a *great reward*. All that the believer suffers and loses on earth will be restored. But note: what he lost will not only be restored, he will *receive well beyond* what he has lost. He will receive an *enormous reward* for having obeyed the Lord and for having sacrificed in order to meet the needs of a dying world. What will the *great reward* be? It will be at least twofold: eternal life and inheriting all that God the Father has.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,**

to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt.25:34. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.)

Simply stated, the believer shall receive both *eternal life* and *an inheritance* for having obeyed Christ and having served so sacrificially while on earth. The believer shall have part in the glorious work of God that will be performed in the new heavens and earth, a work that will go on from glory to glory.

2. He shall be the child of the Highest, of God Himself.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with out spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

3. He shall be acting as God's child. What a privilege! The privilege of actually behaving as God behaves! The privilege of demonstrating and showing mercy! Acting as God acts, being merciful as God is merciful will do a great thing for us. It will stir great assurance and confidence within.

"Abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).

4 (6:37-38) **Reward—Justice**: Jesus made a phenomenal promise to the disciple who lives as He said—the promise of reciprocal behavior, of receiving back just what he gave.

1. Personal relationships are involved in reciprocal behavior. Three specific behaviors are covered: judging, condemning, and forgiving others. Jesus was saying two things.
   a. If we judge and condemn and are unforgiving of others, then both men and God will treat us the same. We shall be judged, condemned, and unforgiven both on earth and in heaven.
   b. If we do not judge and condemn men, but rather forgive them, then God and most men will not judge and condemn us; they will also be forgiving.
2. Property matters are involved in reciprocal behavior. The believer is to give and to possess a spirit of giving and not to be selfish and hoarding. If he gives, he shall receive back much more. In fact, his cup shall be *running over*. God will pour all the good things of this earth into his life (bosom).
3. The principle is clear and challenging: a person receives what he gives. This is definitely true of God and usually true of men. What a man puts into life is what he gets out of life.

"Is it [your purpose] not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward [rear guard]" (Is.58:7-8).

	K. Jesus Teaches His Rules for Discipleship: The Need to Watch, 6:39-45 (Mt.7:3-5, 17-18; 10:25; 12:35	that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.	c. The criticizer is a hypocrite d. Judging oneself enables one to see clearly & to see how to help others.
1 Watch blindness: One's leaders & how one leads a. If both are in darkness b. Both stumble & fall	39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?	43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.	**4 Watch the fruit that a man brings forth** a. Every tree is known by its fruit
2 Watch the Master (Lord) a. The disciple must submit b. He shall be as his master	40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.	44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.	b. Every tree reproduces after its nature or kind
3 Watch hypocrisy & criticism of others a. Both have a problem b. The criticizer has the biggest problem	41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam	45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.	c. Every man reproduces what is in his heart

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

K. Jesus Teaches His Rules for Discipleship: The Need to Watch, 6:39-45

(6:39-45) **Introduction**: man is to watch how he lives. Both the quality and fate of his life depend upon it.

⇒ God cares about the quality of a man's life. He wants every man to have the fullest life that he possibly can.

⇒ God cares about the destiny of a man, where a man will spend eternity. He wants every man to receive eternal life.

There are four rules, four warnings that must be watched if we are to live life to the fullest and be assured of eternal life.

1. Watch blindness: one's leaders and how one leads (v.39).
2. Watch the Master (the Lord Himself) (v.40).
3. Watch hypocrisy and the criticism of others (v.41-42).
4. Watch the fruit that a man brings forth (v.43-45).

1 (6:39) **Spiritual Blindness—Darkness**: the first rule is to watch blindness; watch one's leaders and how one leads. "Can the blind lead the blind?" Note several things.

1. Note who the blind are. They are the leaders: the preachers, teachers, parents—anyone who has influence or responsibility for anyone else. In fact, any person can be blind and lead someone else down the same path of blindness. But observe a significant fact. Jesus also says that the blind are those who follow: the pupil, learner, listener, seeker, child—anyone who looks up to someone else for guidance.
2. Note why people are blind. There are several clear reasons.
   a. A person can be born blind. He can be handicapped, never having had the opportunity to see the *truth* of things, never having been exposed to the light.
   b. A person can be blind because of some injury. He used to be able to see and had every opportunity to see, but now he is blind, blind because...
      - he injured himself by some careless act. (He is guilty of blinding himself to the Light.)
      - he was blinded by someone else, either deliberately or carelessly. (Others led him astray, led him off into the darkness.)
      - he was blinded by nature. (Circumstances, heritage, location kept him from ever having the opportunity to escape the darkness.)
   c. A person can be blind because he wants and chooses to be in the dark. The dark is his choice; he finds the dark is enjoyable and comfortable; therefore, he refuses to come out into the light and to see the truth of things.
   d. A person can be blind because he closes his eyes or turns his head and looks away. He just refuses to see the light, the truth.

Jesus warned against being blind. He said blindness leads to two tragic results.

1. Both walk in darkness, both the leader and the follower. Being a leader does not guarantee that one walks in the light. A leader can be blind, and if the leader is blind, then the follower will remain blind. The leader must see and have his sight if the follower is to ever see. (Note the awesome responsibility upon leaders.)
2. Both stumble and fall "into the ditch." Being a leader does not guarantee that one will not fall. The blind person will stumble and fall no matter who he is, leader or not. And note, a leader will especially stumble about and fall if he is on strange or unfamiliar terrain. The truth of Christ is totally unknown terrain to the blind teacher, no matter his profession.

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19-20).

"Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (1 Tim.1:7).

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim.6:3-5).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:3-4).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:5).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" (Mt.6:23).

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel [the truth] of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:3-4).

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:17-18).

2 (6:40) **Self-Denial—Dedication**: the second rule is to watch the life of the Master, of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. "The disciple is not above his Lord: but...shall be as his Master." Note several points.

1. The word "perfect" (katertismenos) means to complete, render fit, mend. It is a common word often used for mending, repairing, or restoring broken things such as nets (Mt.4:21) or men (Gal.6:1).

2. The point is forceful: "the disciple is not above his Master" (see note, pt.1—Mt.10:24-25). The disciple is not better than his Lord; therefore, he cannot expect to be treated better, nor can he expect to receive more in this world than his Lord. The disciple cannot expect to be better by having more honor, praise, recognition, or esteem. He cannot expect to have more comfort, rest, or pleasure. The Lord suffered, humbled, and denied Himself for the sake of the world and its needs. The disciple, as a follower of the Lord, does the same; he denies himself in order to reach the world for his Lord (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:5-8).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

3. The goal of the disciple is to "be as his Master." The disciple seeks to be like his Master: conformed, mended, repaired, restored (perfected) into His very image.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffeings, being made conformable unto his death" (Ph.3:10).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he" (Is.43:10).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor.3:18).

3 (6:41-42) **Criticism—Hypocrisy**: the third rule is to watch hypocrisy and criticism of others. Note a crucial fact: Jesus was speaking to everyone seated before Him. No matter how moral, decent, strong, religious, or free of visible sin, He was speaking to everyone seated in the audience. No one was exempt. Everyone was to watch out for hypocrisy and criticism of others. Why? Because whatever is in a person's eye, even if it is only a speck, is serious. Even a speck causes the eye to water, squint, blink, and close. The speck hinders a person's sight (life, walk), holding him back from full sight and service. Now note four points about the parable.

1. Both persons, the one being criticized and the criticizer, do have a problem. Both have a need to clean the dirt out of their eyes. Neither one is free of dirt. Not a single person serves in perfect obedience and ministry to the Lord. There is at least a speck in everyone's eye.

2. The criticizer has the biggest problem. This is usually overlooked. Criticism of others is a beam. If one has only a speck in his eye, when he begins to criticize others, he immediately catches a beam in his own eye. *Criticism is the tree that strikes the eye and blinds one* to his own need, his need for continued confession and repentance. The criticizer becomes blinded to his constant need for the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

> **"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Pt.1:9).**

3. The criticizer is a hypocrite (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.23:13). He is but a man who is like all other men, full of ever so many faults and coming ever so short, yet he finds fault with others. He criticizes, grumbles, gripes, condemns, judges, and censors others while he too is guilty of so much in so many other areas. And note: his greatest fault is that he sets himself up as the *Judge*, as the one who has the right to judge men.

4. The disciple must examine himself first. Judging himself first will enable him to *see clearly* just how to help others. Rigid examination is required. Simple honesty and thought say that a man must clean the dirt out of his own eye before he can see clearly enough to help others clean their eyesight.

> **"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Mt.7:1).**
>
> **"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).**
>
> **"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).**
>
> **"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).**
>
> **"There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (Jas.4:12).**

4 (6:43-45) **Fruit-Bearing—Words—Tongue**: watch the fruit that a man brings forth.

1. Every tree is known by its fruit, its nature. A good man is not judged by a bad piece of fruit here and there but by the good fruit he bears. Every tree produces some bad fruit, yet the tree is not cast away. A tree is not rejected unless it *leans toward* bad fruit. When testing and examining men, we must observe not single acts here and there; but the tenor, the lean, the whole behavior of their lives. How important! (See note—Mt.7:17 for detailed discussion.)

2. Every tree reproduces after its nature, after its kind. How can we tell if a man is false? There is one revealing mark: the fruit he gathers. A man is known by the fruit he feeds upon and the fruit he feeds to others (see outlines and notes—Jn.15:1-8). If he feeds himself on thorns and thistles and not on grapes and figs, that is one way to tell. If he feeds thorns and thistles to others instead of grapes and figs, that is another way to tell.

Thorns and thistles are false food, worldliness (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.13:7, 22). Grapes and figs are true food. There is only one true food for the soul of man: the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. (See note—Jn.6:1-71; outlines and notes—Jn.6:30-36; 6:41-51. Cp. all outlines and notes 6:1-71; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn.17:17; cp. 5:24; 1 Pt.2:2-3.) A man must feed on and feed others the truth of the Lord and His Word. Any other source of food for the human soul is false food: it is thorn and thistle (worldliness). If eaten or served to others, it will choke the life out of the soul (Mt.13:7; cp. 1 Jn.2:15-16; 2 Cor.6:17-18; Ro.12:1-2).

3. Every man reproduces what is in his heart. Note that Jesus is dealing with a man's mouth, the *words* a man speaks. A man speaks what is in his heart. His words expose his heart, the kind of man he is. The idea is that words come out of an overflowing heart: "Out of the abundance [overflow] of the heart the mouth speaketh." A man's words expose five things about him.

- ⇒ A man's words expose his true nature: what he is really like beneath the surface.
- ⇒ A man's words expose what he is down deep within his heart: his motives, desires, ambitions, or the lack of initiative.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his true character: good or bad, kind or cruel.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his mind, what he thinks: pure or impure thoughts, dirty or clean thoughts.
- ⇒ A man's words expose his spirit, what he believes and pursues: the legitimate or illegitimate, the intelligent or ignorant, the true or false, the beneficial or wasteful.

> **"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Mt.7:17).**
>
> **"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works" (Jas.2:17-18).**
>
> **"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pt.2:12).**
>
> **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:19-23).**

	L. Jesus Teaches Two Foundations of Life: Genuine vs. Counterfeit Discipleship, 6:46-49 (Mt.7:24-27)	built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.	1) He builds a house 2) He digs deep 3) He lays a rock foundation c. Result: It stands
1 The foundation of discipleship is obedience	46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?	49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that	**3 The false disciple: Lays no foundation** a. He hears, but does not obey
2 The true disciple: Lays a foundation a. He comes & hears & does	47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:	without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.	b. He is like a builder 1) Builds a house 2) Does not dig 3) Lays no foundation
b. He is like a builder	48 He is like a man which		c. Result: A great fall

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

L. Jesus Teaches Two Foundations of Life: Genuine vs. Counterfeit Discipleship, 6:46-49

(6:46-49) **Introduction—Life—Foundation—Profession, False vs. True**: Jesus Christ was a carpenter by trade and profession. He knew houses; He knew the building trade.

Several important matters about building a house need to be noted here.

1. Hearing instructions. This is critical. Knowing how to build is critical.
   a. One must hear and follow (obey) the instructions.
   b. One must hear and build upon what he hears for future building. Builders must always be "laying up on store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come...." (1 Tim.6:19).
2. Selecting the foundation. This, too, is critical. Selecting the site and material determine the future of the house.
   a. One must build upon a solid foundation. There is only one foundation upon which to build: the rock (1 Cor.3:11).
   b. One must make his call and choice to build sure (2 Pt.1:10).
   c. One must know that building upon rock takes time and skill.
3. Counting the cost. This also is critical. The fact is brought out by Christ in another passage. Beginning and not finishing the house brings mockery and shame (Lk.14:28-30).

Several introductory applications are clearly seen in this picture of house building.

1. Every person has a house, a life to build. How he builds his life determines his destiny, not just for this life, but for eternity. How he builds his life makes all the difference between...
   - success and failure
   - life and death
   - reward and loss
   - acceptance and rejection
   - standing and falling
2. There is only One foundation for every life: Jesus Christ (1 Cor.3:11). He is the Rock upon which both individuals and churches are to build (Mt.16:18).
3. Everyone either builds upon this world or upon Christ, heaven itself. Jesus teaches that there are two kinds of builders.
   a. A wise builder: hears and obeys (v.47-48).
   b. A foolish builder: hears and does not obey (v.49).

1. The foundation of discipleship is obedience (v.46).
2. The true disciple: lays a foundation (v.47-48).
3. The false disciple: lays no foundation (v.49).

1 (6:46) **Profession—Foundation—Life**: the foundation of discipleship is *obedience, doing the things which Jesus says*. There is no substitute. If a person wishes to be a follower of Jesus Christ, that person has to do what Jesus says.

1. Both builders in this passage call Jesus "Lord." Both acknowledge Him as Lord. Both pray and call Him "Lord, Lord," and both witness before others that He is Lord. Both are known as followers of Jesus.
2. Jesus questions disobedience and disloyalty. He rebukes and warns anyone who calls Him Lord and does not do what He says. As Lord He is due allegiance and expects loyalty from all, especially those who call Him Lord.
3. A profession of words is not enough. Even repeating one's profession, "Lord, Lord," is not enough. One can cry before the world and still be questioned and warned by Christ: "Why do you not do the things which I say?"
4. A person is cheating himself to profess and not obey. Profession without obedience gives a false security; it makes one feel like he is acceptable to God when he is not. Christ says he is not, for the only foundation to discipleship, that is, the only way to be accepted by God, is to do the things which Christ says.

2 (6:47-48) **Foundation—Disciple—Trials**: the true disciple *lays a foundation*. Note three points.

1. The true disciple comes to Christ, hears Christ and does what Christ says. All three steps are essential.
2. The true disciple is like a builder.
   a. The disciple builds a house. Every person has a house to build, a life to build. Once in the world, we cannot escape the fact. We are building our lives, and how we build our lives determines our eternal destiny.

      God's own Son instructs a man how to build. A man hears and follows (obeys) the instructions or hears and rejects (disobeys) the instructions and builds his own way. The instructions, the words of Christ, are the materials which determine the structure and fate of our lives. Our lives and our destiny depend upon how we respond to the sayings of Christ.
   b. The disciple digs deep to lay the foundation (footing). This is critical to note. The ground is not soil, it is rock. Great effort and energy are demanded. The most expensive and costly thing to a builder is *hitting rock*, yet rock is by far the best foundation.
      ⇒ This builder chooses the rock for his foundation. He did not just hit it while digging for his footing; he knew the rock was there and chose it as the right foundation for his house. He deliberately chose *the most sure and secure* foundation available.
      ⇒ This builder *dug deep*. He took no chances. He wanted to be absolutely sure and secure, as sure and secure as possible. So he *dug* as deep as possible.
      ⇒ This builder was willing to put both the *time and effort and cost* into digging rock. It was difficult, exhausting, and expensive; yet he did it. Why? Because it was *his house* and he wanted to be absolutely sure and secure.
   c. He lays the foundation upon the rock. Christ is the only foundation upon which we can build and structure our lives. "Other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11; cp. Eph.2:20; 1 Pt.2:4-5).

Thought 1. The Lord is not a lifeless rock, but "a living stone" (1 Pt.2:4). When we come to Him "as a living stone," we are "built up a spiritual house" (1 Pt.2:5).

> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:2-5).**

3. The true disciple stands. The house (his life) he built stands against the storms of life and eternity. Now note: he is not exempt from the storms of life. Just because he built upon a rock does not mean storms will not come. In fact, it is because storms do come that he built upon the rock. This man (the true disciple) knows that it rains "on the just and on the unjust" (Mt.5:45). All kinds of storms will come, the storms of...

- sickness
- sin
- temptation
- suffering
- disappointment
- tension
- death
- accidents
- complaints
- mistreatments
- abuse
- hospitalization

Thought 1. A man must build upon Jesus Christ. There is no other foundation that can withstand the coming storms of trouble, problems, afflictions, evil, and death.

> **"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?" (Mt.21:42).**
>
> **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).**
>
> **"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph.2:20).**
>
> **"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded" (1 Pt.2:6).**
>
> **"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner" (Acts 4:11).**
>
> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**
>
> **"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).**

Thought 2. When the storms come, no man falls if he has built his life upon Christ.

1) God accepts us in Christ; He adopts us as a child of His.

> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph.1:5-6).

2) God promises to provide the necessities of life.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33; cp. Mt.6:25-34).

3) God promises to work out all things (all storms) for good to those who build wisely.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

4) God blesses those who "hear the Word of God, and keep it" (Lk.11:28).
5) Christ promises joy to those who hear and receive the things He said.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11; cp. Jn.13:17).

3 (6:49) **Foundation—Disciple**: the false disciple *lays no foundation*. Note three points.

1. The false disciple hears Christ but *does not do* what Christ says.
   ⇒ He ignores what Christ says.
   ⇒ He applies himself elsewhere.
   ⇒ He is too busy.
   ⇒ He does not think about the consequences.
2. The false disciple is like a builder.
   a. He does build a house, but note a very critical point. He hears the instructions of the Master Builder (through church, parents, radio, book, friends, television). He has been told how to build, and he knows where to build; therefore, he is expected to build according to instructions. In fact, it is shocking if he does not build a solid house (note the question and shock of Christ in v.46).
   b. He does not dig. How foolish! Here is the depth of man's foolishness well illustrated. Why does he not dig?
      ⇒ The rock is too time-consuming and demanding.
      ⇒ He fails to look ahead, to consider the future.
      ⇒ He wants to be doing something else.
   c. He lays no foundation, no footing. What a tragedy! He knew better, but he ignored the Master Builder's instructions. The false disciple heard what the prophets and righteous men of old desired to hear (Mt.13:17; 1 Pt.1:10). What a privilege he had! And how he abused that privilege! Week after week, day after day, year after year he heard; yet, he never followed the instructions on how to build his life.
3. The false disciple *falls*. The house (his life) he built collapses against the storms of life and eternity.
   a. "The storm did burst against it." Floods of trials do come. They cannot be stopped; the house without a foundation cannot stand. Note: "Immediately it fell; and the *ruin of that house was great*."
   b. Every man's work shall be made manifest. Our work is to be tested in this life through many, many trials, and in the next life by Christ. Great will be the fall of a life if it is not built upon Christ. The man who built his house upon sand *has to face* Christ in that day (1 Cor.3:13).

Thought 1. The person who builds upon sand clings to a *false trust*. His faith and trust are in the wrong thing.

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch" (Pr.11:28).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).

"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:10).

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jer.17:5).

"Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it" (Ezk.13:11).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezk.33:31).

Thought 2. The person who builds upon the sands of this world of sin shall fall.

"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness" (Pr.11:5).

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD" (Jer.6:15).

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:13-15).

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Th.5:2-3; cp. 2 Pt.3:4, 9-13).

"There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise" (Ps.36:12).

"Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy" (Pr.6:15).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

	CHAPTER 7	them. And when he was now	**in Jesus Christ**
	M. Jesus Finds Great Faith in a Soldier: Great Faith, What It Is, 7:1-10 (Mt.8:5-13)	not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:	a. In Jesus as Sovereign Lord
1 **Jesus returned to Capernaum**	Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.	7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.	b. In Jesus' supreme power & Word
2 **Great faith cares deeply for people**[DS1]	2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.	8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.	
3 **Great faith feels unworthy in approaching Jesus Christ**	3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.	9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.	6 **Great faith stirs the great power of Jesus Christ** a. Jesus marvelled b. Jesus commended the soldier
4 **Great faith seeks God**	4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:	10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.	c. Jesus healed the servant
	5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.		
5 **Great faith is centered**	6 Then Jesus went with		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

M. Jesus Finds Great Faith in a Soldier: Great Faith, What It Is, 7:1-10

(7:1-10) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ meets the need of everyone—Gentile or Jew, rich or poor, leader or follower, ruler or slave. He bridges the gaps, prejudices, and divisions between men. The one essential for securing His help is faith. A person must have faith in Christ and His power. The fact is clearly demonstrated in what happened between this soldier and Jesus. Note that Jesus termed this man's faith "great faith."

1. Jesus returned to Capernaum (v.1).
2. Great faith cares deeply for people (v.2).
3. Great faith feels unworthy in approaching Jesus Christ (v.3).
4. Great faith seeks God (v.4-5).
5. Great faith is centered in Jesus Christ (v.6-8).
6. Great faith stirs the great power of Jesus Christ (v.9-10).

1 (7:1) **Jesus Christ, Headquarters**: Jesus returned to Capernaum. Capernaum was His headquarters where He now lived (see note—Lk.4:31).

2 (7:2) **Care**: great faith cares deeply for people. The soldier was a man who cared deeply for people. Note the word "dear" (entimos) meaning esteemed, honored, precious, prized. In the society of that day, a slave was nothing, only a tool or a thing to be used as the owner wished. He had no rights whatsoever, not even the right to live. An owner could mistreat and kill a slave without having to give an account. But this soldier loved his slave. This reveals a deep concern and care for people. It would have been much less bother to dispose of the slave or to ignore him and just let him die, but not this soldier. He cared. Note how he *personally* looked after the slave, a person who meant nothing to the rest of society. But his arms and love were wide open to do all he could to help this person who was helpless. This alone, helping a person who meant nothing to society, was bound to affect Christ dramatically.

> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
>
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).**
>
> **"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).**
>
> **"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).**
>
> **"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:2) **Centurion**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 23:23.

3 (7:3) **Rejection—Unworthiness**: great faith feels unworthy in approaching Jesus. The soldier was a man who had heard about Jesus and what he had heard made him feel unworthy. Note several things.

1. Luke's account differs from Matthew's. Luke says the centurion sent some religious leaders to approach Jesus, whereas Matthew says that the centurion approached Jesus. What needs to be remembered is that in a dictatorial society, whatever a leader commands others to do is counted as his act, as he himself having done it. The leader's representatives act for him; thus, he is said to have done it.
2. The centurion was in a place where he could hear about Jesus. He was where he could hear the message of hope, and when the news came, he did not close his mind or ignore it. He responded.
3. The centurion, however, felt unworthy to approach Jesus himself. Why?
   ⇒ He was a soidier, trained to take life and probably guilty of having taken life. What he had heard about Christ was the message of love and brotherhood.
   ⇒ He was a sinner, a terrible sinner, a Roman heathen, *totally unworthy* and rejected in the eyes of most. He felt that Jesus, too, would count him unworthy and reject him.
4. The centurion requested help from others. He asked them to intercede for him. Note: he did not allow his sense of unworthiness and rejection to defeat him; neither was he too proud to ask for help, despite his superior position.

Thought 1. A man must expose himself to the gospel, be where the gospel is preached, and humble himself before the Lord if he wishes the blessings of God.

> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly" (Ro.12:3).**
>
> **"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).**
>
> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off" (Ps.138:6).**
>
> **"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**

4 (7:4-5) **Seeking God—Jew—Gentile—Rejected—Prejudice**: great faith seeks God. The soldier was a man who sought God.

1. He was not a superficial religionist. He had heard about the God of Israel and accepted Him, rejecting the gods of Rome. This he did despite the hostility and rejection of the Jews. He was so drawn to God that he evidently was going to let nothing stop him from discovering the truth.
2. He was a man of faith (v.9), a man who loved God. The very reason he would love the Jewish nation (a people who despised him) and build a synagogue was because of his love for God. His faith and love had to be genuine. It was most unusual for a Gentile, especially a Gentile official, to care for the Jews. Anti-semitism was the common thing. The Jew and Gentile had no dealings with one another. (See notes—Mt.15:26-27; Mk.7:25; DEEPER STUDY # 1—7:27.) Note how far he went to serve God: he *loved* those who had formerly rejected and despised him, and he did what he could to edify and enhance the worship of God's people by building a synagogue. His love and faith were so strong and evident that those who had despised him now felt close to him—close enough to intercede for him.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"They should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**

5 (7:6-8) **Faith**: great faith is centered in Jesus Christ. The centurion was a man of faith. The centurion illustrated perfectly what faith is (Heb.11:6).

1. It is believing that "Christ is": that He is sovereign Lord (Heb.11:6). All power is subject to Him.
2. It is believing that "Christ is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6). He will use His power in behalf of those who do seek Him.

Note that the centurion had diligently sought Jesus, believing Jesus could meet his need. Many believers diligently seek the Lord, but the centurion's faith was so much greater than most believers. Why? Because he believed that *the Word of Christ was all that was needed*. Jesus did not have to be present for the need to be met. As a centurion, he had authority over men. All he had to do was issue an order and it was carried out, whether he was present or not. He was a sovereign commander. He was saying, "How much more are you, O' Lord. But speak the word only, and my need shall be met." What a forceful and powerful lesson on faith for all!

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Ps.118:8).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

6 (7:9-10) **Faith—Jesus Christ, Power of**: great faith stirs the great power of Jesus. The centurion was a man who stirred the great power of Jesus.

1. Jesus marvelled. Only twice is Jesus said to have marvelled at people: at the centurion, and at the people in Nazareth because of their unbelief (Mk.6:6). What an impact this man made upon Jesus!

2. Jesus embraced and commended the soldier. He embraced him for his faith, not for who he was or for what he had done as a soldier. *Believing*, that is, true faith, is a rare thing. Not many believe; yet belief in Christ is one of the greatest qualities of human life—a quality ignored, neglected, and in some cases denied.

He commended him before others. There are times when recognition and commendation are to be given, but again, note for what. It is for spiritual graces, for spiritual strength. However, caution should always be exercised lest the temptation of pride and self-importance set in.

3. Jesus healed the servant, and His power to meet the centurion's request proved His Messiahship—that He was truly the Son of God.

Thought 1. Jesus Christ has the power to meet our needs; however, there is one prerequisite: faith. We must believe that Jesus Christ *can* meet our needs.

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:22-24).

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (Jn.11:22).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

	N. Jesus Raises a Widow's Son: Great Compassion & Power, 7:11-17	14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.	**3 The great power of Jesus** a. To bypass traditional beliefs b. To stop the death processional c. To raise the dead
1 Jesus entered Nain—many were present to witness the conquest of death	11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.	15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.	
2 The great compassion of Jesus: He was touched a. By death, a dead man b. By a broken heart c. By a loving, caring, beloved woman d. The Lord saw: Had compassion[psi] & spoke, giving assurance	12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not	16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. 17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.	**4 The great fear of the people** a. They glorified God b. They believed Him to be a prophet c. They acknowledged God's dealing with them again d. They bore witness

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

N. Jesus Raises a Widow's Son: Great Compassion and Power, 7:11-17

(7:11-17) **Introduction—Resurrection, The**: the most phenomenal event in all history is the resurrection of the dead. It may be the fact of Jesus Himself being resurrected or the promise of believers' being raised someday or of Jesus raising the dead—some men just have enormous difficulty believing such claims. Luke knew this, so he wanted to help unbelieving minds. In this event Luke shared the great compassion and power of Jesus to raise the dead.

1. Jesus entered Nain—many were present to witness the conquest of death (v.11).
2. The great compassion of Jesus: He was touched (v.12-13).
3. The great power of Jesus (v.14-15).
4. The great fear of the people (v.16-17).

1 (7:11) **Jesus Christ, Following—Seeking, Reasons**: Jesus entered Nain. This is the only time this city is named in the Bible. It was only about six miles from Nazareth and a day's journey from Capernaum. Note two facts.

1. It is the same area where Elisha raised the son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4:18-37). Therefore, it became an area where the great compassion and power of God had been manifested.

2. Many were present to witness the great conquest of death. There were many of His disciples present, and there were multitudes of other people, those who did not believe. The unbelievers were following Him for any number of reasons:

⇒ curiosity
⇒ neighborly fellowship
⇒ a belief in His ethics
⇒ a need for help
⇒ admiration
⇒ a desire for something to do
⇒ being impressed with His teaching
⇒ thinking Him to be a great prophet

2 (7:12-13) **Compassion**: the great compassion of Jesus is seen in that He was touched. Note four points.

1. Jesus was touched by death. Apparently, the sight of death always touched Him. The fact that men die is what brought Him to earth. Probably the whole scene of sin and death flashed across His mind—the scene of...

⇒ man's sin and death (Ro.5:12; 6:23; Heb.9:27).
⇒ the great cost of sin and death, that is, His own death in bearing the sins and death of the world (1 Pt.2:24; 1 Jn.2:1-2).

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).

2. Jesus was touched by a broken heart, the broken heart of the mother. Note her situation. She was a widow, apparently somewhat up in years with only one child, a grown son. He had just died, and now she was all alone in the world—a world that was harsh and rough on women, offering them little chance for earning a living and little help on a permanent basis. Hereafter, the woman would be without any permanent companion, provider, or protector; and there was no one to carry on the family line. The family name would die out with her death. She was brokenhearted, full of hurt and pain, without understanding and hope. When Jesus saw all this, He was touched and moved with compassion.

3. Jesus was touched by a loving and caring woman, a woman who was much beloved. Note that "many people of the city was with her." This indicates that she had been a woman who *loved and cared* for others throughout the years. Therefore, others loved and cared for her. She was a beloved person. Jesus is always touched and moved to help those who have helped others (Lk.6:38).

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt.5:7).

Now note a fact: in this particular need, no one asked Jesus for help. He initiated the help Himself, acted purely out of His own compassion. Why did He not always do this? The woman seemed to be the difference. Her life was apparently so filled with love and care for others that she just stood out as a glorious example of what love for God is all about (Mt.22:38-39; Jn.13:34-35; 1 Jn.4:7).

4. The Lord saw and, having compassion, assured the woman. Note three striking facts.
   a. It was "the Lord" who saw her. This is the first time Luke uses the title "the Lord" by itself, and it is striking. The point Luke is making is that "the Lord," the Sovereign Power of the universe, saw this woman who was utterly heartbroken. "The Lord" of all power actually saw her.
   b. It was "the Lord" who had compassion upon her. The fact is shocking, for the sovereign power of the universe actually felt compassion for a simple woman. He was not just the sovereign power of a vast universe who was *way off in outer space someplace*, unattached and disinterested in this earth and its inhabitants. Contrariwise, He was vitally interested, interested enough to be looking and seeing; and He was concerned about what He saw, full of compassion for the heartbroken (see note—Lk.7:13).
   c. It was "the Lord" who spoke and gave assurance. Again, the fact was shocking, for the sovereign power of the universe actually spoke and gave assurance to a simple woman. Luke is definitely stressing the staggering thought: "the Lord," the sovereign majesty of the universe, *speaks* to men; and *His Word* gives great assurance. The Lord is vitally interested in the affairs of men, even in the plight of a simple woman.

"Who shall separate us from the love [compassion] of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again" (Ps.78:39).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (Lam.3:22).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:13) **Compassion** (esplagchnisthe): to be moved inwardly, to yearn with tender mercy, affection, pity, empathy, compassion. It is the very seat of a man's affections. It is the deepest movement of emotions possible; being moved within the deepest part of one's being.

3 (7:14-15) **Jesus Christ, Power—Resurrection, The**: the great power of Jesus. Three surprising acts are seen here.

1. The power of Jesus to bypass traditional beliefs. The people of that day believed that a person became polluted by touching a corpse. The person became ceremonially unclean, unacceptable to God. By touching the bier or body, Jesus was showing that He possessed the right and power to override religious laws and beliefs. He was the Sovereign Power even over religious beliefs and over death and life.
2. The power of Jesus to stop the death processional. Note the pallbearers stopped; they "stood still." They obeyed His touch.

Thought 1. Willingness and obedience on the part of the pallbearers and the mother were essential for Jesus to raise the dead son. We, too, must be willing and obedient if we wish to be raised from the dead.

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:11; cp. Ph.3:7-11).

3. The power of Jesus to raise the dead. It was the command, the simple yet powerful *Word* of Jesus, that raised the dead.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in

the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:24-29).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor.15:25-26).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Th.4:16-18).

"Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev.1:17-18).

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it" (Is.25:8).

4 (7:16-17) **Jesus Christ, Response—God, Fear of**: the great fear of the people. The word "fear" (phobos) means a fear of reverence and of awe. Seeing the dead man sit up and speak struck the fear of God in their hearts.

1. They glorified God (edoxazon ton theon). The tense is imperfect active, "they *began* to glorify God" and *continued* to glorify God.
2. They believed Jesus to be a *great* prophet.
3. They acknowledged that God was dealing with them. There was a widespread revival going on throughout all Israel. The message of John the Baptist had been heard by multitudes, and Jesus was affecting the lives of scores of people. The people felt that God was now visiting and dealing with Israel once again.
4. They bore witness everywhere.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit [witness]; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col.1:12).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

"Ye that fear the LORD, praise him" (Ps.22:23).

"And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long" (Ps.35:28).

"O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise" (Ps.51:15).

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Ps.100:4).

	O. Jesus Answers The Question of John the Baptist: Is Jesus the Messiah? 7:18-28 (Mt.11:1-15)	is preached. 23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me. 24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? 25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. 26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. 27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. 28 For I say unto you, among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.	of the Messiah d. He promised both the blessing & judgment of the Messiah
1 John, in prison, heard of Jesus' loving works a. John was puzzled: Pictured a stern Messiah b. John sent two disciples to question Jesus' Messiahship	18 And the disciples of John showed him of all these things. 19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? 20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?		**3 The forerunner, John himself, proved Jesus was the Messiah** a. His conviction & staunchness b. His self-denial & discipline c. His prophetic mission d. His identity as the true forerunner
2 The ministry & message of Jesus proved He was the Messiah a. He demonstrated the power & works of the Messiah b. He fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah*DSI* c. He preached the gospel	21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. 22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel		**4 The Kingdom of God proved Jesus was the Messiah**

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

O. Jesus Answers the Question of John the Baptist: Is Jesus the Messiah? 7:18-28

(7:18-28) **Introduction—Messiah**: some question the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. It may be out of rebellion or in moments of weakness and despair, but the questions arise. John the Baptist had a moment of wondering. What we need to remember is that *honest* questions never disappoint God; only rebellion is judged by Him. God will meet and answer any honest question posed by a hurting or needful person. This passage gives Jesus' answer to John's question; this is the final proof of Jesus' Messiahship.

1. John, in prison, heard of Jesus' loving works (v.18-20).
2. The ministry and message of Jesus proved He was the Messiah (v.21-23).
3. The forerunner, John himself, proved Jesus was the Messiah (v.24-27).
4. The Kingdom of God proved Jesus was the Messiah (v.28).

1 (7:18-20) **Messiah, Misconceptions of—John the Baptist**: John was in prison (cp. Lk.3:19-20; 9:9). His disciples brought him word about Jesus' loving works. Apparently his disciples were allowed to visit him. He was anxious to hear about Jesus and the Messianic movement, so they related the wonderful miracles and teachings of Jesus. However, their report included nothing about eliminating the injustices of men nor freeing men from the tyranny and rule of others; nothing about fulfilling the hope of men for the great Messiah who was to take over the world and rule in righteousness, executing judgment upon all men and nations. In fact, the very opposite seemed to be taking place; for when the people were aroused to exalt Jesus as their King, He withdrew and discouraged their actions (Lk.5:16).

What John heard puzzled him, for Jesus seemed to be fulfilling only half of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, the half dealing with ministry. The prophecies dealing with righteousness and judgment were not being fulfilled (see notes—Mt.11:1-6; 11:2-3).

John needed assurance, so he sent two disciples to question Jesus' Messiahship: "Art thou He that should come: or look we for another?"

2 (7:21-23) **Messiah—Messiahship—Jesus Christ, Deity**: the ministry and message of Jesus proved He was the Messiah. Jesus gave four assurances to John, assurances that proved His Messiahship beyond question.

1. Jesus demonstrated the power and works of the Messiah (v.21). Note what happened when John's disciples approached Jesus and told Him that John needed assurance. Jesus turned and gave the two disciples an example of what His ministry was. They had only heard about His ministry; now they were to see for themselves. He cured many and gave sight to many. Apparently, He ministered for about an hour (v.21).

The point was this. Jesus was telling John not only to hear what He claimed (the claims of Messiahship) but also to look at what He was doing and judge Him by what He did for people. He did not just profess to be the Messiah, He was proving it. He was proving it by ministering to people in *the power of God*. In particular, He demonstrated two glorious truths.

a. He demonstrated that God truly exists and that He is sovereign. He is above and beyond nature, and He has the power to override the laws of nature by miraculously healing the sick.

b. He demonstrated that God loves and cares for man and has planned a way for man to be saved and delivered forever.

2. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah. After ministering to the people, Jesus turned to the two disciples of John and told them to go tell John what they had *seen* and *heard*. Note two things.

a. John was questioning Jesus' Messiahship. The reports he had heard said nothing about Jesus' mobilizing the people into a great army. Jesus was not plotting the strategy to free Israel from Roman domination and to set up the Kingdom of God. John had heard nothing about the Day of the Lord, about the Messianic fire of judgment, about cities' falling and sinners' being judged. And his time was running out. He would be tried and executed soon. The answer Jesus sent back to John was a totally new concept of Messiahship. It is God's idea of Messiahship, radically different from man's idea. It was a demonstration and proclamation of salvation, of God's care and love for persons. (See notes—Lk.3:24-31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45 for discussion. Also see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—22:42.)

b. Jesus was saying that His power and concern (love) were the power and concern *predicted* for the Messiah, and both were unlimited (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.7:22. See note, pt.2—Mt.11:4-6 for detailed discussion.)

3. Jesus preached the gospel of the Messiah. The "poor" represented those who were "poor in spirit," those who had need and acknowledged their need. God's heart and compassion reached out to any who came and brought their need to Him. It was these, the poor in spirit, to whom He preached the good news. (See note, pt.4—Mt.11:4-6 for more discussion.)

4. Jesus promised both the blessing and judgment of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.11:6). Note the two facets of what Jesus promised—the two areas of work predicted about the Messiah.

a. The area of blessing, of the Spirit, of salvation, of God's care and love for people. This is the area Christ covered here. Today is the day of blessing.

> **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Mt.11:4-5).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).**
>
> **"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:14-15).**

b. The area of fire, of wrath, of judgment. The Messiah is to fulfill the judgment of God when He returns (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—22:42 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:22) **Messiah, False Concepts**: Jesus was referring to Scripture in this verse. He was telling John that His actions were prophesied by the prophets (Is.35:5-6; 61:1-2; cp. Ps.72:2; 146:8; Zech.11:11). Note, however, that Jesus stressed the personal ministry and not the political. He omitted the phrases of Is.61:1 that could be interpreted that He was to be a political leader: "proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons." He needed to get John's attention away from the wrong concept of the Messiah. He was reaching out in the power of the Spirit to individuals, saving and restoring them, not reaching out to mobilize people for the deliverance of Israel from the Roman enslavement.

3 (7:24-27) **Messiah—John the Baptist**: the forerunner, John himself, proved Jesus was the Messiah (see outline and notes—Mt.11:7-15 for detailed discussion). As soon as John's disciples were gone, Jesus turned His attention to the crowd. This was necessary, for the people had heard all that had happened. Some thought John had wavered in his faith. If the people were allowed to think this, they would soon question if John were really the prophet who was to pave the way for the Messiah. Then following upon the heels of this question would be the questioning of Jesus' being the true Messiah. If this kind of talk and questioning got started, it would affect not only the crowd, but those who had already believed. It would be devastating to the Lord's mission. Note something in all this: how fickle people really are and how easily people forget a prophet's real calling and strength and pick up the news of his weak moment.

What Jesus did was reprimand the crowd. He vindicated John and his mission. He reminded the forgetful and fickle that John was the forerunner, and He claimed that He was the true Messiah.

1. John was a man of conviction and staunchness. He was not like a reed shaken by the wind.

⇒ John's conviction that he was the forerunner proves Jesus is the Messiah.

⇒ John's conviction that the Messiah was coming proves Jesus is the Messiah.

⇒ John's conviction that He (Jesus) was the Lamb of God proves Jesus is the Messiah.
⇒ John's staunchness in standing up to the religionists proves Jesus is the Messiah.
⇒ John's staunchness in standing up to Herod proves Jesus is the Messiah.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Th.5:21).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb.10:23).

2. John was a man of self-denial and sacrifice. He was not a man clothed in soft, extravagant, fashionable clothing. He denied himself and sacrificed the things of the world in order to carry out the work of God.

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

3. John was a prophet, a man sent on a prophetic mission. He proclaimed the Word of God, and his proclamation could not be denied. But John was more than a prophet.
   a. He was the subject of prophecy as well as the messenger of it.
   b. He was the herald who brought the message to the world that *the Lord had come*. In this John excelled over all other prophets. They only *foresaw* the Messiah's coming, but John *saw* Him come.
4. John was the true forerunner. Note two critical points.
   a. Jesus was saying that John was definitely the forerunner of the Messiah, the messenger predicted by the Scripture.
   b. Jesus was *claiming* to be the Messiah before whom John ran and prepared the way.

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Is.40:3).

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.3:1).

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Mt.3:1-3).

"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" (Lk.1:17).

"And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways" (Lk.1:76).

4 (7:28) **Kingdom of God**: the Kingdom of God proved Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus' invasion into human history divided time and the ages. The period of history before Jesus came into the world is known as the age of promise. But since Jesus' coming, men are living in the time and age of God's kingdom. John lived in the age of promise, whereas the followers of Jesus live in the Kingdom of God. Therefore, the least in the Kingdom is greater than the greatest of prophets who lived in the age of promise. *Jesus Christ is the reason*: knowing Him personally makes all the difference in the privileges of a person. The citizen of God's kingdom knows the presence of Christ within his body in the Person of the Holy Spirit, and he knows the *active* rule and reign of God in life (1 Cor.6:19-20; cp. Jn.14:16-18, 20, 23). However, those who lived in the age of promise only had the hope of the promise (Ro.8:16-17; Gal.4:4-6). (See note—Mt.11:11 for more discussion.)

"Whom [the prophets] having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pt.1:8-12; cp. v.13-16).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:2-4).

	P. Jesus Reveals God's Verdict Upon this Generation & Age, 7:29-35 (Mt.11:16-27)	32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.	**2 An age of childishness**
1 Reactions to John a. The people & tax collectors who were baptized: Vindicated John b. The religionists who were not baptized: Rejected God's purpose c. Jesus warned His generation & age	29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. 31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?	33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. 34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners! 35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.	**3 An age of escapism: Seeking to escape responsibility** a. Accused John of conservatism: Too denying b. Accused Jesus of license: Too loose **4 An age with only a few wise toward God**

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

P. Jesus Reveals God's Verdict Upon This Generation and Age, 7:29-35

(7:29-35) **Introduction**: Jesus gave the verdict upon His generation. In so doing He gave a glimpse of God's verdict upon every generation of men. (See outline and notes—Mt.11:16-27 for more discussion.)

1. Reactions to John (v.29-31).
2. A generation and age of childishness (v.32).
3. A generation and age of escapism (v.33-34).
4. A generation and age with only a few wise toward God (v.35).

1 (7:29-31) **John the Baptist—Religionists**: the reaction of the people to John was twofold. The common people and tax collectors accepted John and his ministry, but the religionists rejected him. Note several things.

1. The tax collectors were set apart from the people themselves. This was because they were so despised and ostracized. They were actually treated in a class all by themselves, a class of betrayers (usually wealthy) who had forsaken the common people. The tax collectors, of course, felt the sting of rejection; and in some cases sensed their sin and the need for repentance. These responded to John.
2. It was "the people that *heard him [Jesus]*" who repented:
   ⇒ the people who wanted forgiveness of sin, sensing the need for repentance.
   ⇒ the people who believed his message that the Messiah was coming.
3. The people who repented "justified God." By repenting and being baptized, they vindicated John's ministry. They proclaimed that God is just and righteous and that they owed their lives to Him. They accepted God, repenting and changing their lives. Their repentance proved that both God and John were just and true.
4. The religionists (Pharisees and lawyers) rejected the counsel of God. The evidence was clearly seen in what they failed to do: they did not repent and were not baptized by John. Being the religious leaders, they were the very ones who should have responded, but they did not. And what a surprise! The Pharisees were the practitioners of religion, a whole sect of men who had given their lives to live out the law—even to the most minute detail (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8). The lawyers (Scribes) were those who gave their lives to study and learn the law to the fullest extent possible (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.22:35).
5. Jesus warned His generation. It was a religious generation...
   - that should have known and been prepared for the prophet of God and his message.
   - that had God's Word, yet ignored it.
   - that had the worship of God and the ordinances of God, yet neglected them.
   - to whom God sent His prophet, yet they rejected him.
   - to whom God sent His Son, yet they rejected Him.
   - that was smug in its own adequacy and sufficiency.

2 (7:32) **World—Generation—Perverse**: a generation of childishness. Note three things.

1. When looking at His own generation, Jesus asked: "Whereunto [to what] shall I liken this generation?" The most adequate illustration which came to His mind was that of children (see note—Mt.11:16-19). He was saying that His own generation was a *childish generation*. By childish He meant *perverse*. His generation was perverse. They turned away from that which was right and good to that which was corruptible; they acted contrary to the evidence; they were opposed to that which was right, reasonable, and acceptable; and they were obstinate in their opposition. They were mindless and contrary. They did not want the truth, so they made excuses for not receiving the truth.
2. The illustration Jesus used is clearly understood. Children are playing in the market place. A few begin to play wedding music on their pipes and cry out to others, "Let's play wedding." The others shout back, "No. We don't want to

dance around today." So the first group, still wanting to play, begins to play funeral music and shout back, "Well, let's play funeral." "No. We don't want to play funeral either. We don't feel like acting sad."

3. Every generation is alike in that it has its privileges. The privileges are used by some and ignored and abused by others. Since the coming of Christ, God's very own Son, the greatest privilege in all the world has been the privilege of knowing Him personally and of being brought into a right relationship with God. As with all privileges, some have come to know Him personally, but the vast majority have ignored and abused Him.

> **"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).**
>
> **"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).**
>
> **"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able" (1 Cor.3:1-2).**
>
> **"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor.13:11).**
>
> **"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Heb.5:12).**

3 (7:33-34) **Escapism—License vs. Liberty**: a generation of escapism, of always seeking an excuse to escape *personal* responsibility. The generation was contrary, mindless, playful; they were faultfinders who could not be pleased. The people found fault with whatever was suggested. They just could not accept anything that put restrictions upon their loose play. They found fault with a separatist approach to the gospel, and they also find fault with a sociable approach to the gospel.

1. They accused John of being too conservative and too self-denying. John came neither eating nor drinking; he was a separatist. He was from the desert; and he lived a strict, austere, highly disciplined life. He did not associate with people; he did not make friends. He just isolated himself, cut himself off from everyone and withdrew from society. His message was a gospel of repentance and of separation from the things of the world. Therefore, he was accused of having a "devil," of being mad and insane for choosing to live that way.
2. They accused Jesus of license, of being too loose. Jesus was the very opposite of John. He lived and preached a gospel of liberty, eating and drinking with people. He was with them in their social moments; and He moved among all sorts of people—mixing, being friendly and open and accessible to all, no matter how terrible they were thought to be. Therefore, He was accused of being a sinner Himself: a glutton, a winebibber, and an immoral friend of sinners.

God clearly used both approaches to righteousness (cp. 1 Cor.12:6-7). Jesus did not condemn John's approach, and John did not condemn Jesus' approach. They supported each other, but the majority of people rejected any attempt to restrict their *own play*. They wished to continue doing their own thing: seeking pleasure, intellectual pursuit, secular interest, religious commitment. Most were willing to go only so far in restricting their own desires, wills, and way. Few were willing to deny self completely (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

> **"So I spake unto you; and ye would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD" (Dt.1:43).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not" (Is.30:15).**
>
> **"But these [unbelievers], as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way" (2 Pt.2:12-15).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).**

4 (7:35) **Wise, The—Liberty vs. Ascetic**: a generation with only a few wise toward God. Note what Jesus said: "Wisdom is justified of all her children."

1. Wisdom does have children, wise children.
2. Wise children will justify (declare wisdom) what is wise and right.
3. Therefore, the wise will declare that both John and Jesus were right. The way they lived and preached, the ascetic vs. the social, are both right. They were both of God, one the forerunner and the other the Messiah, the Son of God. (See note, pt.2—Mt.11:16-19 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.11:19 for a different understanding of this verse.)
4. The wise (children of wisdom) are the non-critical, the saved who know that God sent both John the ascetic and Jesus the Messiah. Very simply, the wise are the few who accept the ministry of both John and Jesus, both of whom fulfilled the *prophetic Word of God*.

> **"But of him [God] are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30; cp.1 Cor.1:24).**
>
> **"In whom [Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col.2:3; cp. Is.11:2).**
>
> **"And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:28; cp. Hos.14:9).**

	Q. Jesus Contrasts the Attitudes of the Repentant & Self-Righteous, 7:36-50	nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?	both debtors c. A piercing question: Who appreciated & loved the most?
1 Simon, a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dinner & Jesus accepted	36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.	43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.	d. A begrudging answer
2 The attitude of the repentant: A woman prostitute a. She sensed a desperate need	37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,	44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.	**5 The need of the self-righteous: To really see Jesus, who the repentant say He is** a. He is the One who deserves more than common courtesies 1) Common vs. worshipful respect
b. She approached the Lord despite all c. She surrendered to the Lord in utter humility d. She loved much, giving her most precious possession	38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.	45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet.	2) Common vs. humble greeting
3 The attitude of the self-righteous a. He was a considerate man, but self-righteous b. He considered himself better than others c. He sensed no need for forgiveness	39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.	46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.	3) Common vs. sacrificial gift
4 The two attitudes illustrated: The parable of two debtors a. One debtor owed much; the other little	40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.	47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. 48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. 49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?	b. He is the One who has the power to forgive sins c. He is the One whom people need to ask about
b. A free forgiveness of	42 And when they had	50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.	d. He is the One who saves the repentant

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

Q. Jesus Contrasts the Attitudes of the Repentant and Self-Righteous, 7:36-50

(7:36-50) **Introduction**: the present passage contrasts the attitudes of the sinful (repentant) and the self-righteous. It needs to be studied carefully, for self-righteousness is a serious sin. It is both common and damning.

1. Simon, a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dinner and Jesus accepted (v.36).
2. The attitude of the repentant: a woman prostitute (v.37-38).
3. The attitude of the self-righteous (v.39).
4. The two attitudes illustrated: the parable of two debtors (v.40-43).
5. The need of the self-righteous: to really see Jesus, who the repentant say He is (v.44-50).

1 (7:36) **Jesus Christ, Seeking Man**: Simon, a Pharisee, invited Jesus to dinner. Note several things.

1. Simon invited Jesus to his house, but he did not extend to Jesus the common courtesies (v.44-46). He was rude to the Lord. He was not even sure Jesus was a prophet, much less the Messiah (v.39). Why then did he invite Jesus to his house? We do not know; nothing is said as to why. The best speculation is that Simon enjoyed the company of celebrities, and he had heard so much about Jesus that he wanted to meet and talk with Him on an informal and friendly basis.
2. Jesus ate with both sinners and religionists (Pharisees) (Lk.5:29-30). No one was excluded from His attention or love, even when they lacked the common everyday courtesies and respect (v.44-46). He sought every man.
3. The house of Simon was a house of the rich. The rich always had an open courtyard, usually in the center of the house. Sometimes the host would allow the public to stand around in the courtyard and listen to the discussions, in particular when a rabbi or some celebrity was the chief guest.

2 (7:37-38) **Repentance—Salvation—Humility—Jesus Christ, Seeking**: the attitude of the repentant. The woman was a sinner, a prostitute. She demonstrated what a sinner has to do in coming to Jesus.

1. She sensed a desperate need. She was either convicted of her sin while hearing Jesus or else she had heard Him before and came under heavy conviction. His plea for men and women to repent and prepare for the Kingdom of God pierced her heart. She knew she was a sinner: unclean, lost, condemned. The guilt and weight of her sin was more than she could bear. She ached for forgiveness and cleansing, for freedom and liberty.
2. She approached the Lord despite all. She knew that the public scorned and gossiped about her, and the so-called decent people wanted nothing to do with her. What would Jesus do—He who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest...." (Mt.11:28-30)? She knew that if she were recognized, the Pharisee might throw her out of the house. He knew about her (v.39). She thought about the situation, and her thinking turned into hope, and her hope into belief. Surely He who offered such an invitation would receive her. Before anyone could stop her, she rushed to Jesus and stood behind Him at His feet. (Remember, in the East people reclined to eat. They rested on their left arm facing each other around the table with their body and feet extending out away from the table.)
3. She surrendered to the Lord in utter humility. Standing there, she was overcome with conviction and emotion. She fell at Jesus' feet weeping—so broken that tears just flowed from her eyes. She unwound her hair and wiped and kissed Jesus' feet. Seldom has such love and devotion been shown Jesus.

Now note: there was only one thing that could make a prostitute enter a Pharisee's home—desperation. She was gripped with a sense of lostness, of helplessness, of urgency. The loosening of her hair to wipe Jesus' feet was forbidden of women in public. She must have been so desperate she was totally oblivious to the onlookers. The point is this: she was surrendering her heart and life to the Lord, begging Him to forgive her. She was so broken she was unable to speak, but Jesus knew her heart. Words were not necessary (v.47-48).

4. She loved much, giving her most precious possession. Perfume was highly valued by women of that day (see note—Mt.26:8-9). Apparently, by describing the perfume as he does, Luke is stressing the expense of the perfume and the great sacrifice she was making. It was probably the most costly possession she had, so she was giving it to her Lord. However, there is something more important here. Note what she did with the perfume. She anointed her Lord; anointed His feet in a supreme act of humility and love and surrender (see note—Lk.7:44-50).

Thought 1. The person who comes to Christ must come with a broken and contrite heart.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**
>
> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**

3 (7:39) **Self-righteousness**: the attitude of the self-righteous. The behavior of the self-righteous man revealed several things.

1. The man was considerate, but self-righteous. Note, he only thought these things; he would not say them publicly lest he embarrass his guests. (How like the self-righteous!)
2. The man considered himself better. He felt he was better than the sinful woman, so he would never allow her to touch him. He would keep his distance, ignore, and have nothing to do with her. But note something else. He considered his judgment and knowledge, opinions and behavior to be better than others. He expected others (Jesus) to judge and act as he did. He thought that if Jesus only knew who the lady was, then He would reject her.

Thought 1. Many do live self-righteously. They feel that they live and act better than others. They feel and act superior because they have a...

- a better house
- a better child
- a better position
- a better job
- a better profession
- a better heritage
- more ability
- better skills
- a better education
- a better income
- more success
- a better life
- a better religion
- a better discipline
- more recognition

3. The man sensed no need for forgiveness and repentance. He thought of himself as *good enough* in two areas.
   a. He was *good enough in religion*. Note he was a Pharisee, a man who had given his life to practice religion. If anyone were ever *good enough*, he should have been (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8).
   b. He was *good enough* in behavior. He was well behaved, decent and moral, just and equitable, respected and highly esteemed. He was not immoral; in fact, he would have nothing to do with immorality. He had not and never would commit a sin that would be publicly condemned. Therefore, he felt as though he had done nothing for which he needed forgiveness.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor.10:12).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).

4 (7:40-43) **Jesus Christ, Deity; Knowledge**: the two attitudes illustrated. Jesus told a parable about two debtors. Note several things that say much to the self-righteous.

1. Jesus *announced* that He had something to say, something critically important. Undivided attention was needed. Every self-righteous person needs to listen and listen closely.

2. Jesus was a prophet and more—He was the Son of God; therefore, He not only knew the people who were sitting around Him, He knew their every thought. Note that from this point on, Jesus was answering the *thoughts* of Simon. Simon had never said a word about Jesus' not knowing who the woman was nor about his own question about Jesus' being a prophet. Simon had only been thinking these thoughts "within himself" (v.39).

Thought 1. Jesus is the Son of God; therefore, what a man thinks pales into insignificance when facing the One who knows all thoughts, including what one really thinks and feels *within*. Jesus knows the truth of every thought and feeling within a man. If a person is self-righteous, Jesus knows it. If a person is repentant, truly repentant, Jesus knows it. No one hides anything, no feeling, no thought from Him.

3. The meaning of the parable is strikingly clear. A glance at the verses and points in the outline show this. Note how clearly the parable illustrates the grace of God in freely forgiving sin (salvation) (cp. Eph.1:7; 2:8-9; 1 Jn.1:9; 2:1-2).

5 (7:44-50) **Self-Righteousness**: the need of the self-righteous—to really see Jesus, who the repentant say He is. Note what Jesus asked Simon, "Seest thou this woman, this repentant?" The repentant had much to teach the self-righteous about Jesus. The repentant *really sees* Jesus, who He really is.

1. Jesus was the One who deserved more than common courtesies. The host usually showed respect by providing water for the guests to wash their dusty, sandaled feet. The kiss was the accepted greeting among friends, and oil was usually given for honored guests to refresh themselves after travelling under the hot sun. It was expensive, so it was usually reserved for honored guests.
   a. Jesus deserved *more than common respect* (water); He deserved a worshipful respect. He was seen as Lord and was respected as Lord by the repentant. He was the One who alone could meet the needs of the human heart; therefore, He was the One who was to be worshipped. The self-righteous needed to learn this.
   b. Jesus deserved *more than a common greeting*; He deserved a humble, brokenhearted greeting. He was approached with a sense of unworthiness and humility. The repentant saw the worthiness of Jesus and grasped something of His awesome person as the Son of God and as the sovereign Lord of the universe; therefore, He was the One to whom all men owed their allegiance, the One who alone had the power to forgive and accept men. The repentant saw Jesus as the One who alone could help her, the One who alone had the power to help, so the repentant approached Jesus and greeted Him with a deep sense of humility and unworthiness. The self-righteous needed to learn this.
   c. Jesus deserved *more than a common gift*; He deserved a sacrificial gift. He was seen as the hope and Savior of one's life, so the repentant gave Jesus her life, all she was and had. The repentant surrendered her life and gave the most precious gift she had to anoint her Lord. The self-righteous needed to learn this.
2. Jesus was the One who had the power to forgive sins. Three simple facts are imporant here.
   a. The woman's sins were many. Jesus did not overlook her sins, nor the seriousness of them. After all it was her sins and the sins of others that brought about *His humiliation*, His having to come to this sinful world and to die for the sins of men. However, He forgave her sins despite their awfulness. Every sinner should note this carefully.
   b. Self-righteousness sensed the need for *little* forgiveness; therefore, the self-righteous loved little. The self-righteous had only a formal, distant relationship with God. His relationship was cold, having only a small sense of sin and sensing only a little need for forgiveness. It was enough to have Jesus present at his table (the table was about the only place many acknowledged His presence).

Thought 1. The self-righteous approach to God...
- has only a little sense of sin; therefore senses only a little need for forgiveness.
- is blinded to man's *state of sin*, to man's true being, that of being short of God's glory (Ro.3:23).
- has little sense of the need for special mercy and grace, is blinded to God's Sovereign Majesty and Person.

- has only a formal, distant relationship with God, has little personal relationship with God.
- gives little honor to God, makes little sacrifice for God.

c. Jesus forgave sin. He had the power to forgive the sins of this repentant.

Thought 1. The fact of forgiveness, the very knowledge that millions have been truly forgiven, is proof that Christ is the Son of God, the One to whom men are to go for forgiveness.

3. Jesus was the One whom people needed to ask about.

Thought 1. The very fact that Jesus claimed the right and power to forgive sins should cause every man to sit up, take notice and ask, "Who is this?"

> **"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).**
>
> **"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).**
>
> **"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Ps.103:3).**
>
> **"But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (Ps.130:4).**
>
> **"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Is.43:25).**
>
> **"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" (Is.44:22).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (Jer.33:8).**

4. Jesus was the One who did save the repentant. The woman believed Christ to be the Savior, the One who could forgive her sins. Therefore, Christ saved her.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**

	CHAPTER 8	with him,	try of discipleship
	R. Jesus & the Women Who Supported Him, 8:1-3	2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom	3 They supported a ministry of salvation a. Mary Magdalene: A dark past DS3
1 They supported a ministry of preaching DS1,2 a. It reached out b. It was true to the gospel: The K. of God	And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were	went seven devils. 3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.	b. Joanna: A lady of the King's court DS4 c. Susanna: DS5 An unnoticed follower d. Many others: Unknown DS6
2 They supported a ministry of discipleship			

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

R. Jesus and the Women Who Supported Him, 8:1-3

(8:1-3) **Introduction**: this is an interesting passage. It shows that Jesus received financial support for His ministry. There were some women, apparently well-off financially, who supported Him.

1. They supported a ministry of preaching (v.1).
2. They supported a ministry of discipleship (v.1).
3. They supported a ministry of salvation (v.2-3).

1 (8:1) **Preaching**: the women supported a preaching ministry. Preaching was Jesus' business; it was what He came to do, His primary call and mission. Note the word "afterward" (en toi kathexes). The word means one after the other, an orderly, successive step. The suggestion is that right after the banquet at Simon's home, Jesus got up and went about His primary task, that of preaching and proclaiming the gospel. He did not linger in fellowship or in any other pursuits, no matter their legitimacy or enjoyment. He was faithful and consistent in preaching and proclaiming the gospel. The point is this: the women supported a solid preaching ministry. They supported the Lord because He *preached* and was faithful to His call to preach. Note two facts in particular.

1. They supported a ministry that reached out. Jesus "went throughout every city and village preaching." He had an ache, a compassion for all, not willing that any should perish. He sought everyone *within His reach*. Note that He did not seek the limelight of the cities. He went out into the villages of the countryside as well. He had been sent to preach, and He preached anywhere and everywhere He could reach. The whole thrust of His being was to reach people for God, to reach everyone He could. This was the kind of ministry the women supported.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk.4:18-19).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Lk.4:43).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).**
>
> **"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**

2. They supported a ministry that was *true* to the gospel, a ministry that proclaimed the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Note that Jesus did not preach religion and ritual, ceremony and ordinance, laws and rules, works and deeds, mind and spirit, soul and body, thinking and reasoning. He touched on all these, but they were not His prime message. His message was the *good news*.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).**

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (Jn.13:33-34).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:1) **Preach—Preaching** (kerusso): to proclaim, to publish, to be a herald, to preach the gospel as a herald.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(8:1) **Showing the Glad Tidings—Preaching** (euaggelizomenos): to preach glad tidings, to announce glad tidings, to declare good news, to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Note the Greek word, how it resembles the word *evangelism*. The English word *evangelism* comes from it. By the very nature of his work, the preacher is an evangelist. He is a herald who comes in the name of the King, representing the King (cp. 2 Cor.5:20). He proclaims *only* the message of the King; he has no message of his own. If and when he begins to proclaim his own message, he is no longer the representative or the spokesman of the King.

2 (8:1) **Discipleship—Stewardship**: they supported a ministry of discipleship. This was a critically important ministry, one which Christ stressed in His own life and practice. Making disciples of others was what He was doing with the twelve, and it was soon to be the *Great Commission* to all His followers. The support of the women in this ministry was critical, for it is doubtful that the disciples could have given their *full time* to Jesus without financial support. (See note—Mt.28:19-20 for detailed discussion.)

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing [making disciples of] them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

3 (8:2-3) **Devotion—Stewardship**: they supported Jesus out of devotion. They were grateful for what He had done for them. Note that each one of them had been *reached and healed* by Jesus. They had received a very special touch from Him, and as a result they "ministered unto Him of their substance" (means, finances, property). Note the women who did minister (see DEEPER STUDY # 3-6—Lk.8:2-3).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(8:2) **Mary Magdalene**: she was delivered from seven demons (Lk.8:2); was one of Jesus' primary financial supporters (Lk.8:3); was among the women who courageously stood at the cross (Mt.27:55-56); and was one to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection (Mt.28:1; Mk.16:1; Lk.24:10; cp. Jn.20:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(8:3) **Joanna**: her husband, Herod's steward, was the court official who looked after the king's estate and financial interests. Such was the task of the *steward*. The very nature of his job shows that he had to be a most-trusted official (cp. Lk.24:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(8:3) **Susanna**: there is no other reference to Susanna. She represents the prominent disciple who is known by everyone but serves in a capacity that few ever notice. But note: she was such a devoted servant in giving, her name is known.

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(8:3) **Many others**: these represent the unknown and quiet, but all-important, followers of the Lord. They serve completely in the background, never up front; therefore, they are totally unknown. But note: they are faithful and do serve, consistently and faithfully.

	S. Jesus Teaches The Sure Fate of the Word: How People Receive the Word, 8:4-15 (Mt.13:1-23; Mk.4:1-20)	10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.	a. To reveal the truth to open hearts b. To conceal the truth from closed minds
1 Crowds thronged Jesus—came from every city	4 And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:	11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.	**4 The interpretation** a. The seed is the Word of God
2 The parable: A sower sowed seed a. Some fell by the wayside 1) Were trampled 2) Were devoured	5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.	12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.	b. Some are by the wayside 1) They do hear 2) The devil snatches the Word away
b. Some fell upon rock 1) Were withered & scorched 2) Had no moisture or depth	6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.	13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.	c. Some are on rock 1) They do hear 2) They have no root: When tempted, they fall away
c. Some fell among thorns: Were choked	7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.	14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.	d. Some are among thorns 1) They do hear 2) They are choked with materialism & pleasure
d. Some fell on good ground: Were fruitful	8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.	15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.	e. Some are on rich soil 1) They keep the Word 2) They have honest & good hearts 3) They bear fruit
3 The reason why Jesus spoke in parables	9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

S. Jesus Teaches the Sure Fate of the Word: How People Receive the Word, 8:4-15

(8:4-15) **Introduction—Revival—Crowds—Worship—Church Attendance—Decision—Word of God**: the whole country was in a state of revival. It began with John the Baptist and continued with Jesus the Messiah. Multitudes of people were flocking to Jesus and being challenged to repent and follow God. The whole nation was charged with expectation, for the carpenter from Nazareth was not only claiming to be the Messiah, He was backing up His claims with a phenomenal demonstration of power—the power of God. But as Scripture says, "the Lord knew what was in man" (Jn.2:25). He knew that many were not really sincere. They did not have what it takes. They lacked...

- a real spirit of repentance
- a changed life
- an honest commitment
- a genuine faith
- a willingness to sacrifice
- a consistent obedience

Jesus knew that many were following Him not because they wanted to know God, not because they were genuine and sincere, but because of...

- family and friends
- the fellowship
- the social identification
- good feelings
- needs' being met

The insincerity of so many, of course, cut the heart of Jesus; but He still wanted to warn and reach as many as possible. This is what the parable of the seed is all about. Jesus wanted people to know that *hearing* the Word of God was not enough. There are many ways to hear the Word of God, but only one way bears fruit. Only one reception makes us acceptable to God. If we receive the Word of God any other way, then it becomes fruitless and does no good. It is snatched away or scorched or choked out. Only one reception will bear fruit.

Note how the parable speaks to every person. It is a *warning* to all hearers of the Word, especially to those who are not genuine followers of Christ. It gives great *assurance* to those who do hear: they shall definitely bear fruit. It is great encouragement to the preacher and teacher and to the lay witness. The seed they sow shall bear *some* fruit. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:1-9; Mk.4:1-20 for more discussion.)

1. Crowds thronged Jesus, coming from every city (v.4).
2. The parable: a sower sowed seed (v.5-8).
3. The reason Jesus spoke in parables (v.9-10).
4. The interpretation (v.11-15).

1 (8:4) **Multitudes—Jesus Christ, Multitudes Follow—Revival**: the crowds thronged Jesus, coming from every city. Note the words "much people" and "every city." Thousands were now flocking to Jesus from everywhere. One can estimate the numbers on the basis of His having fed five thousand men on one occasion. This does not count the women and children, each of which would outnumber the men by far. We are probably safe to say, as we can in every generation, that more women followed Jesus than men; and families were larger than the average of four persons per family today. Apparently the crowd was well over twenty thousand.

2 (8:5-8) **Sower, Parable of—Word of God**: the parable was taken from an everyday happening. It concerned a sower, a farmer, who went out to sow seed. Note: he did go out and he did sow.

> **Thought 1.** How many *do not* go out? Of those who do, how many really sow the seed of the Word? It is so easy for the minister and believer...
> - to sit in the comfort of the home or office and rest and work administratively instead of going out and sowing.
> - to visit and care for the flock in their needs instead of going out into the fields to sow.

In sharing the parable, Jesus said four things happened to the seed when it was sown.

1. Some seed fell by the wayside, off to the side, out of the field upon the walking paths and roads. The paths and roads, of course, were trodden down and the soil was hard; therefore, the seed just lay on top and the birds came and devoured it.
2. Some seed fell upon a rock, that is, a large layer of rock lying right under the surface. This seed, of course, grew quickly because of the water's lying upon the rock right after a rain. But it soon withered away because the water was soon evaporated, leaving nothing but dry soil. The sun scorched the young plant.
3. Some seed fell among thorns. The seed sprouted, but the plants were soon choked to death by thorns.
4. Other seed fell on good ground. The seed sprang up and was very fruitful, bearing an hundredfold.

Now note what Jesus did. Immediately upon finishing the parable, He cried (ephonei) with a loud shout: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." He warned: "Hear!"

3 (8:9-10) **Parables**: the reason why Jesus spoke in parables. Later, when Jesus and the disciples were all alone, the disciples asked Him to explain the parable. But Jesus used the occasion, first, to explain why He was now beginning to teach by parables. Up until now He had been teaching by direct statement and clear illustration, using few parables. But from now on, there was to be a difference. His primary method would be the parable. Why? Jesus gave two reasons.

1. Jesus wanted the *open hearts*, the persons who were really seeking God, to learn all they could about the *mysteries* of the Kingdom of God. Parables required much thought in order to grasp their meaning. A person who really sought after God would seek, strive, think, and ask until he could find the meaning to the parable. And then he would chew upon the meaning, drawing all the meaning he could out of the parable so that he could learn everything possible about God.

> **Thought 1.** What Christ said about seeking the truth is especially true of those who already know God personally. However, it is also true of the crowd, of any who are genuine in their search for God but have not yet found Him. Christ longs to reach any who are truly seeking Him. The parable is an excellent method to arouse interest and curiosity among men. Of course, if a man is genuinely sincere in knowing *the Truth*, he will search out the meaning (Truth), no matter how much time and effort are required.

2. Jesus wanted the truth concealed from closed minds. Closed minds are hardened and unwilling to consider the *mysteries* of the Kingdom of God. Sitting there in the audience, they heard and understood the words and the pictures which the words painted. But there was only a little interest in searching into the hidden meaning (mysteries) of the parable. The time and effort required were not worth it. The closed minded and carnal were just not that interested. Jesus and His message were interesting, for He was a very capable preacher, full of charisma and practical help for living. However, as far as committing one's life totally to His cause and commandments, as far as denying self completely and sacrificing all one is and has, it was not worth it, not to the carnal. Therefore, the carnal were not willing to take the time or effort required to search out the meaning of the parable. Jesus actually said that He wanted the meaning hidden from the closed minded.

Note something else as well. The closed-minded, hardhearted, and carnal often *react* to the truth when the truth points a finger at them and their wrong. (See outline and notes—Mt.13:10-17 for a full outline on why Jesus spoke in parables.)

4 (8:11-15) **Word of God—Witnessing—Profession—Worldliness—Conversion, Dramatic**: the interpretation of the parable was given by Jesus. The sower is the Lord Jesus Christ or a servant of His. The servants of the Lord, ministers or laymen, are "laborers together with God" (1 Cor.3:9). The seed is the Word of God or the Word of the kingdom. It is called (1) the "incorruptible seed" (1 Pt.1:23), and (2) "the gospel which...bringeth forth fruit" (Col.1:5-6).

The ground upon which the seed is sown is the heart of the hearer. Jesus said two significant things about the ground. (1) There are different ways to hear and receive the Word (seed). And (2) He warns all hearers (all types of ground): the fate of the Word, how well it grows, depends upon the hearer.

> **Thought 1.** The success of the seed depends upon one thing alone; the condition of the soil (heart) to receive the seed (Word). If the ground (heart) is soft and rich, being full of the right minerals (spiritual qualities) and cleared of all junk and brush, ploughed and turned over, then it is ready to receive the seed.

1. The seed by the wayside. The person by the wayside does hear the Word of God. He is present, but he is off to the side, out of the way, not involved. He lets his mind wander and thinks little and involves himself even less. He respects Christ and the preacher and would not miss a service, but he is on the outer circle, paying little attention to the warnings and promises of the Word.

Note what happens. Before the person believes, the devil comes and snatches the Word away. It is taken from the person; the person never applies the Word to his life, never really lives sacrificially for Christ. (Cp. Judas Iscariot and cp. Herod who enjoyed listening to John the Baptist, Mk.6:20.)

> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"Who [the hardhearted] being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph.4:19).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).**
>
> **"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).**

2. The seed on the rock. This person hears the Word, and becomes excited over it. He receives the Word, professes belief in Christ, and makes a profession of faith before the world. But he fails to count the cost, to consider the commitment, the self-denial, the sacrifice, the study, the learning, the hours and effort required. He does not apply himself to *learn Christ*; therefore, he does not become rooted and grounded in the Word. He is only a superficial believer.

Note what happens. When trials and temptations come, he falls away. His profession is scorched and consumed, burned up by the heat of the trial and temptation. (Cp. John Mark who at first failed to endure, Acts 13:13; Demas, Phile.1:24; and the men who discovered that following Christ just cost too much, Lk.9:57-62.)

> **"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).**
>
> **"But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Lk.6:49).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).**
>
> **"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [the world], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).**
>
> **"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).**
>
> **"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pt.2:20-22).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hath left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev.2:4-5)**

3. The seed among thorns. This is a person who receives the Word and *honestly tries* (professes) to live for Christ. Christ and His followers and the church and its activities appeal to him. So he joins right in, even professing Christ as he walks about his daily affairs. But there is one problem: the thorns or worldliness. He is unwilling to cut completely loose from the world: "[to] come out from among them and [to] be separate" (2 Cor.6:17-18). He lives a double life, trying to live for Christ and yet still live out in the world. He keeps right on growing in the midst of the thorns, giving his mind and attention to the *cares* and *riches* and *pleasures* of this world.

Note what happens. He bears fruit. Fruit does appear, but it never ripens; it is never able to be plucked. The thorns choke the life out of it. It never lives to be used. (Cp. the Rich Young Ruler, Lk.18:18f; Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1f.)

Thought 1. Note the three areas that choke the life out of men.

1) The cares of this life.

> **"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Mt.6:25).**

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Mt.6:31).

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps.127:2).

2) The riches of this life.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:23).

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Dt.8:13-14).

"The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his [God's] wrath" (Job 20:28).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10).

"Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Pr.23:5).

"Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me" (Eccl.2:18).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

3) The pleasures of this life.

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves....lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim.3:1-2, 4).

"For we ourselves [believers] also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit.3:3).

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas.5:5).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party, revel, carouse] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments" (Is.47:8-9).

4. The seed on good ground. These are they who have an honest and good heart. Therefore, when they hear the Word, they keep it. Note several things.

a. Their hearts are "honest" (kalei). The word means fair, noble, and just. It has the idea of holding fast. These people are honest and fair; they are noble people in listening and considering the Word. They honestly seek to learn and know the truth, spiritually as well as physically.

> **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).**
>
> **"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).**
>
> **"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th.2:13).**

b. Their hearts are "good" (agathei), meaning devoted, committed, given over to the truth. Once the truth is known, they hold fast to it.

> **"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Ro.6:17).**
>
> **"O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Dt.5:29).**
>
> **"This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Dt.26:16).**
>
> **"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh.1:8).**
>
> **"My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise" (Ps.57:7).**
>
> **"And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart" (Jer.24:7).**
>
> **"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezk.36:26; cp. Ezk.11:19).**

c. They keep the Word. They do not let the devil snatch it, nor the trials and temptations of life scorch it, nor the cares and riches and pleasures of this life choke it.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).**
>
> **"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word" (Jn.17:6).**
>
> **"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).**
>
> **"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Rev.3:8).**

d. They bear fruit with *patience*. They endure and study, grow and serve more and more. They constantly water and pluck the weeds and thorns, and they continue to do so until the fruit is fully grown and plucked and *taken home* to the Master of the house.

> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:24).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).**
>
> **"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).**
>
> **"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).**
>
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).**
>
> **"Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing" (Ps.92:13-14).**

	T. Jesus Teaches Three Fundamental Principles of Life, 8:16-18 (Mt.5:15-16; 10:26-27; 13:12; Mk.4:21-23; cp. Lk.11:33-36)	enter in may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. 18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.	**2 Secrecy is impossible: All things shall be found out** **3 Truth is very narrow** a. A person must watch how he hears b. The reason: Truth shall be rewarded; but the "seemingly" true shall be stripped away
1 A candle (life) is for the purpose of giving light[DSI] a. It is not covered, not hid b. It is made conspicuous	16 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which		

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

T. Jesus Teaches Three Fundamental Principles of Life, 8:16-18

(8:16-18) **Introduction**: Christ gives three fundamental principles of life, principles that speak clearly to all believers, both layman and preacher.

1. A candle or life is for the purpose of giving light (v.16).
2. Secrecy is impossible: all things shall be found out (v.17).
3. Truth is very narrow (v.18).

1 (8:16) **Light—Purpose—Life**: a candle, a life, is for the purpose of giving light. Note five simple facts about its purpose.

1. The candle is a given candle. It is not purchased or earned. God gives the candle to every man. This is the key. The candle is a gift from God. A man has it, but a man has to use it for it to be of any benefit. The candle is a man's life, the life which he is given when he is born into the world.

2. The candle is to be lit. The candle just exists until it is lit; it is not fulfilling its primary function. Its function is to give light, but it may be used for other things, useful things such as...
   - decorations to beautify (a life that beautifies).
   - wax to plug holes and fill gaps (a life that plugs and fills the gaps of society).
   - a stick-like object to push or pull (a life that pushes and pulls as it is needed).
   - an ornament to attract attention (a life that entices, centers on self).

Note a significant fact: in most of these cases the candle or life of a person is helpful and useful; but the candle has yet to fulfill its *primary* function, the very purpose for which it was made and formed. The candle has to be lit before it can give light. The man himself is the one who has to take the initiative to have his candle lit. He has to come to Christ, the Light of the World, and receive the quickening spark of His Light. A man has to reach out for the light that is Jesus Christ. Christ is the Light, but man has to put the candle of his life up to the light of Christ in order to be lit, ignited, and quickened (Jn.1:9; Jn.8:12; 11:9-10; 12:36, 46; Eph.5:8).

3. The candle is not to be hid. Once the candle has been lit *no man* covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed. Such is ludicrous, foolish, unreasonable. All the energy and effort as well as the purpose for lighting the candle are wasted if it is slid under a bed or covered. The candle and light are useless, of no purpose.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:7-8).**

4. The candle is to be conspicuous, placed high upon a candlestick. Every genuine believer has had his candle ignited; he has touched Christ, the Light of the World, and Christ has given him light. Therefore, the believer burns and shows forth light. The only question is, how brightly does he shine? His light may be bright or dim, strong or weak, flickering or flaming, blinking or flooding, smoking or clear. Christ says it is foolish to have light and it not be turned on, conspicuously giving off light.

> **"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death" (Ph.1:20).**
>
> **"Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Pt.4:16).**
>
> **"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).**

"Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments" (Ps.119:6).

"For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Is.50:7).

"And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed" (Joel 2:26).

5. The candle is to be seen by all who enter. Note a critical point. This is the very purpose of *the lighted candle, to provide light*. And light does numerous things (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Light, Purpose*—Lk.8:16).

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:14-16).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph.5:18-19).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence" (Is.62:6).

"The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God" (Jer.51:10).

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Ps.66:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:16) **Light—Purpose**: Christ said, "I am the Light of the world" (Jn.8:12; 9:5). Here He says the disciple is to be like Himself—"the light of the world." Therefore, the disciple is to undergo a radical transformation. He is to *become like Christ* more and more and *to reflect the light* of Christ (2 Cor.3:18; 4:6-7). Light is and does several things.

1. Light is clear and pure. It is clean, that is, good, right, and true (Eph.5:8f).
2. Light penetrates. It cuts through and eliminates darkness.
3. Light enlightens. It enlarges one's vision and knowledge of an area.
4. Light reveals. It opens up the truth of an area, a whole new world, and it clears the way so that a person can see the truth and the life (Jn.14:6).
5. Light guides (Jn.12:36, 46). It directs the way to go and leads along the right path.
6. Light strips away (Jn.3:19-20). It unclothes the darkness that blackens life.
7. Light routes the chaos (cp. Gen.1:2-3). It brings peace to the disturbance caused by walking in pitch darkness.
8. Light discriminates between the right way and the wrong way (see note—Eph.5:10; cp. 5:8-10).
9. Light warns. It warns of dangers that lie ahead in one's path.

2 (8:17) **Sin, Secret—Judgment**: secrecy is impossible. All things shall be found out. Three things are said in this verse.

1. Men try to hide things. They try to keep some things secret.
   a. Men try to hide sin and shame. They sin in the dark and behind closed doors, when out and away from home and friends, and by keeping secret books or bank accounts.
   b. Men try to hide possessions lest they have to give or spend more.
   c. Men try to hide abilities and talents, lest they have to serve and use them. They prefer the ease and comfort of complacency and plenty instead of the rigors and sacrifice required to meet the needs of a suffering world.
   d. Men try to hide the Light and the Truth they have come to know. They are lazy, complacent, embarrassed, apprehensive and fearful; or else they lack the vision, willingness, commitment, initiative, and endurance to set the Light and Truth out before men. They just keep quiet within their own world, unwilling to sacrifice and deny themselves in order *to go* and share with those in darkness and ignorance.
2. Men think they will never be found out. They think their secrets will be hid forever and never discovered...
   - not by mom or dad
   - not by friend or acquaintance
   - not by preacher or God
   - not by wife or children
   - not by society or organization

Men feel they are safe with the secret. They feel bad consequences will never happen to them: suffering and punishment, bad and evil will never fall upon them. They will be able to keep the secret hid forever and escape punishment.

3. Christ said nothing—not a single thing—will be hid forever. Every secret thing will be revealed and opened up. The thing hidden is seen, if not by men then by God, and it will be revealed. God will reveal the truth in the day of judgment if not before. The deceptions, the cloaks, the disguises, the secrets, the hidden things of all men shall be stripped away and unveiled; then all shall see, for it shall be manifested for all to see (Ro.2:2, 6, 11, 16).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).

"Behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num.32:23).

"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Job 10:14).

"For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?" (Job 14:16).

"The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him" (Job 20:27).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl.12:14).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer.23:24).

"And the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them" (Ezk.11:5).

"And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face" (Hos.7:2).

"For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" (Amos 5:12).

3 (8:18) **Truth—Seeking**: truth is narrow, very narrow. This verse is a severe warning. It is referring back to the seed or the Word of God and the hearers. Very simply, Christ warns that we must hear and use what we hear if we want to be given things from God. If we hear and do not use what we hear, then what we have shall be taken away.

Note two points.

1. We must take heed *how* we hear. We can hear but hear wrongly. We can think and guess and suppose we know what we hear, but it is false and counterfeit and shall be stripped away. Note that we must "take heed," discern what we hear. We must make sure we have the truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:32; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:6.)
2. The *reason* we need to watch how we hear is strikingly clear: the truth shall be rewarded, but the *seemingly true* shall be stripped away. If we use what we hear, we shall be given more; if we do not use what we have, even what we do possess will be taken away.

Seekers and achievers do receive and get more. The non-dreamer and complacent receive little and get less. This is a law of every realm.

1. It is the law of nature. The early get and survive. The early bird gets the worm; the late get little and suffer.
2. It is the law of man. Men reward energy and effort, production and results. They threaten and often take away from the lazy and inactive. Those who labor and practice and are diligent and persistent will always see and hear and get. They are in a position to get more and more and to be given more and more. But the lazy and non-worker, the neglectful and unfaithful will always lose.

All through life a man either gains or loses. He seldom, if ever, stands still. It all depends on the dreams, the effort, and the energy he is willing to exert.

3. It is the law of God.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk.16:10).

"And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers" (Dt.30:9).

Thought 1. This verse is both a great encouragement and a realistic threat.

1) It is a great encouragement to the...

- faithful
- diligent
- stedfast
- toiling
- persevering
- consistent
- enduring
- hardworking
- hardpracticing
- beginner and finisher
- initiator and finalizer
- hardstudying

2) It is a realistic and understandable threat to the…

- lazy
- idle
- complacent
- inconsistent
- close-minded
- close-eyed
- close-eared
- self-satisfied
- sluggish
- slothful
- shiftless
- purposeless
- late sleeper
- late starter
- time waster
- misguided

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:11-12).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Ro.12:11; cp. Mt.25:24-27).

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" (2 Th.3:10-12).

"Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee" (Dt.28:47-48).

"He [the wicked man] wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand" (Job 15:23).

"Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids" (Pr.6:4).

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" (Pr.6:6-11).

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame" (Pr.10:5).

"The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat" (Pr.13:4).

"The way of the slothful man is as a hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain" (Pr.15:19).

"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Pr.18:9).

"Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger" (Pr.19:15).

"A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again" (Pr.19:24).

"The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing" (Pr.20:4).

"Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty: Open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread" (Pr.20:13).

"The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not" (Pr.21:25-26).

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets" (Pr.22:13).

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (Pr.23:21).

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man" (Pr.24:30-34).

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets. As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed. The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth. The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason" (Pr.26:13-16).

"By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through" (Eccl.10:18).

	U. Jesus Teaches the Basis of True Kinship, 8:19-21 (Mt.12:46-50; Mk.3:31-35)	20 And it was told him by certain which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.	**2 True kinship is not based upon human relationships**
1 Jesus' family sought Him	19 Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.	21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.	**3 True kinship is based upon the Word of God: Hearing & doing it**

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

U. Jesus Teaches the Basis of True Kinship, 8:19-21

(8:19-21) **Introduction**: the immediate family is generally looked upon as the closest bond on earth. Sometimes it is; sometimes it is not. It should always be very, very close. However, Christ teaches there is a closer tie than the family, the tie that binds Him and His followers together. This is the lesson of this passage, a lesson that teaches a phenomenal truth. (See outline and notes—Mt.12:46-50; Mk.3:31-35 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus' family sought Him (v.19).
2. True kinship is not based upon human relationships (v.20).
3. True kinship is based upon the Word of God: hearing and doing it (v.21).

1 (8:19) **Jesus Christ, Family—Accusations, Insane**: Jesus' family sought Him. It is interesting to observe what they were *not* doing.

1. They were not making a social call. It was not a friendly visit, not family members visiting family members. Jesus was preaching and holding a service, yet His family interrupted Him right in the middle of the service. However, Jesus did not stop preaching; He continued right on. In fact, He used the occasion to teach a great spiritual truth.
2. They were not visiting Jesus to hear Him preach nor to learn from Him. This is known from the fact that His brothers did not believe in Him and the fact that the family did not enter the service. Note also that the family was late for the service; they arrived while He was already preaching and conducting the service.
3. They did not make their way through the crowd to Him. Instead they sent word by someone else for Him to come outside to them (Mt.12:47; Mk.3:31). Apparently, they were too embarrassed for one of them to try to reach Him.

Why was Jesus' family seeking Him? Several facts need to be considered in answering the question.

1. At first, some of the family supported Jesus and followed His leadership. They went with Him and His disciples on one of His very first evangelistic tours to Capernaum and remained with Him for a long time, apparently helping out in both practical and ministerial duties (Jn.2:12).
2. Second, the family witnessed two *unbelievable events* at the beginning of Jesus' ministry when He visited their hometown, Nazareth. They heard Jesus, one of their very own, claim to be the Messiah, the very One who was the fulfillment of the Holy Scripture. Imagine the shock of hearing one's own brother claiming to be Messiah, the Savior of the world. Then they witnessed their own hometown neighbors reject and attempt to kill Jesus. They actually saw their closest neighbors and dearest friends become insanely violent against their brother. Again, imagine the shock and the fear for Jesus' welfare, and the embarrassment as they walked among their friends throughout the coming days and weeks. It would be very difficult to live and face one's neighbors and townfolk after such an incident (Lk.4:16-31).
3. Third, the family was under constant pressure from friends to bring Jesus home—friends who counted themselves dear enough to advise the family. The friends thought Jesus was *mad* and *insane* by going about making the claims He was making, claims which included being the Son of God. Apparently, the family at some point gave permission for some friends to go bring Jesus home (Mk.3:21).
4. Fourth, Jesus' brothers did not support nor believe in Him. In fact, their disbelief eventually declined into ridicule. This is seen happening about six months before the crucifixion (Jn.7:5). As a point of interest, the brothers never did believe in Him until after the resurrection.

What seems to have been happening was that Mary and the family were coming to take Jesus home. The brothers had become convinced that Jesus was either insane or else caught up in the frenzy and honor of the people, and Mary feared for His life and welfare. Acting out of a mother's love and concern, she wanted to be a responsible mother and bring Him home to help Him all she could. (See notes—Mt.12:46-50; Mk.3:31-35.)

2 (8:20) **Brotherhood—Family**: true kinship is not based upon human relationships. Picture the scene. Jesus was standing before the crowd preaching, and all of a sudden He was interrupted, being told that His mother and brothers were outside *desiring to see Him*. Of course, Jesus knew why they had come, and in this event He saw a unique opportunity to teach a profound truth, the truth that *true kinship* is not based upon human relationships.

> **Thought 1.** A true family, a true kinship does not exist just because some people have common blood, genes, and traits. This is clearly seen in the pages of family histories every day. Too many families are in turmoil, divided and being torn apart. Too many families are in constant conflict ranging from mild verbal attacks to murderous assaults. There is...
>
> - parent against child
> - child against parent
> - brother against brother
> - sister against sister
> - relative against relative
> - husband against wife

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

3 (8:21) **Brotherhood—Word of God—Believers**: true kinship is based upon the Word of God—hearing it and doing it. The emphasis, of course, is upon doing the Word of God. The person who is closest to God is the person who obeys God, who takes His Word seriously. Any honest person knows that the child who obeys is the child closest to his parent's heart.

The deepest relationships in life are not determined by blood, but by hearts and minds being meshed together. The deepest relationships are founded upon common purposes and cares and behavior. However, the Christian believer has something even beyond this: he has the very *Word of God Himself.* When the believer hears and does the Word, that is, the will of God, five things happen.

1. God takes the believer's heart and life and welds it together with the hearts and lives of other believers—spiritually and supernaturally. They become the adopted children of God; therefore, the persons who hear the Word of God and do it are spiritually bound together in the family of God.

a. Adoption by redemption.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:18-19).

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Is.43:1).

b. Adoption by separation.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb.2:11).

"For thou art a holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Dt.14:2).

2. Believers become a people who search God's Word out, absorb it into their lives and do it. His Word becomes their life and behavior. Believers obey the three basic commandments.

a. The commandment of God.

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

b. The commandment of Christ.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

c. The greatest commandment.

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:36-40).

3. Believers live obediently in a very special relationship to God and Christ.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: is so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

4. Believers act together and live together in *fellowship* within the church and society. They are knitted together by God's Word and God's true family. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Fellowship*—Acts 2:42 for more discussion.)

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Ro.12:5).

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor.10:17).

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor.12:12-13).

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor.12:27).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13).

5. Believers become God's new community, new society, new race, new nation of people. They become His church, His new creation—spiritually and supernaturally born again—who comprise the true family of God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 8—Mt.21:43; note—Mk.3:34-35; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4—Eph.2:14-15; 2:15; 4:17-19; cp. 1 Pt.2:9-10; Rev.21:1f for discussion.)

"For through him we both [Jew and Gentile] have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:18-22).

	V. Jesus Calms a Storm: Jesus' Deity & Sovereignty, 8:22-25 (Mt.8:23-27; Mk.4:35-41)		**3 Jesus' confidence in His men** **4 Jesus' power & sovereignty: He was definitely God** a. The disciples despaired b. Jesus calmed the storm
1 Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee **2 Jesus' humanity: He was definitely a man** a. He needed & requested the help of men b. He became tired & slept	22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. 23 But as they sailed he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake;	and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. 24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.	**5 Jesus' faith in God** a. He questioned the disciples' faith b. He stirred the disciples to question who He was

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

V. Jesus Calms a Storm: Jesus' Deity and Sovereignty, 8:22-25

(8:22-25) **Introduction**: this event is a clear demonstration of the deity and sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. It shows clearly the sovereign power of Christ to calm the storms that arise in man's life.

1. Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee (v.22).
2. Jesus' humanity: He was definitely a man (v.22-23).
3. Jesus' confidence in His men (v.23).
4. Jesus' power and sovereignty: He was definitely God (v.24).
5. Jesus' faith in God (v.25).

1 (8:22) **The Sea of Galilee**: Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee (see note—Mk.1:16).

2 (8:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Humanity—God, Power of—Jesus Christ, Incarnation**: two pictures of Jesus' humanity are clearly seen in these verses.

First, Jesus needed and requested the help of the disciples. He wanted to cross the lake. He could have walked around the lake; it was only a mile's journey, but He wanted to go by boat in order to get away from the crowd. They had been pressing in upon Him most of the day now, demanding and needing help. The *pressure and physical strain* had gotten to Jesus, wearing Him down. He needed time away from the crowds. If He walked, they would follow Him, so He requested the seamanship skills of the disciples to cross the lake. He could get alone off to the side someplace on the boat, away even from the disciples.

Second, Jesus was tired and needed sleep. He was fully man, flesh and blood; therefore, He sometimes suffered exhaustion just as any hardworking man does.

Now note: when studying the deity of Jesus, it helps to see His humanity, the fact that He was fully man. Seeing Jesus as Man helps tremendously in understanding God, for Jesus' humanity (being fully Man) highlights God more. It highlights and sets off His deity in at least two ways.

1. Christ's humanity, His having to suffer through life as a man, shows us the great love of God. In Christ, God identifies with man, and He identifies fully in every way and in everything. He knows how we feel and suffer because He was fully man. He knows all the trials and experiences and day-to-day routines of life; therefore, He is able to save us from the depths to the uttermost.

> **"For verily he took not on him that nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb.2:16-18).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

2. Christ's humanity shows us the great power of God.
   a. It shows God's power to actually become a man, to bring about the Incarnation. Standing before us as flesh and blood, Jesus Christ is a powerful demonstration of God's great sovereignty. God is sovereign; He can do anything, even become a Man. By partaking of flesh and blood, Jesus Christ shows the enormous power (Sovereignty) of God.

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel" (Is.7:14).

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

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt.1:18-23).

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:29-32).

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:1-4).

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin the flesh" (Ro.8:3).

"But [Christ] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:7).

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14).

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 Jn.4:2).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

b. Christ's humanity shows God's power to control physical events. When Jesus the carpenter calms a storm and multiplies food, the power and sovereignty of God are stressed—stressed much more than when some mystical force or freak accident happens to intervene in physical events. When Jesus Christ stands and works a miracle before men's very eyes, *God's power is clearly seen*. It is visible and there is no question about it. The presence and power, the very Being and Sovereignty of God, are acting for all to see; and *only a hard and foolish heart would deny it*.

3 (8:23) **Ministers, Call—Believers—Trust**: Jesus demonstrated a very striking point. He had confidence in His men. He entrusted His life to them, which means He laid the completion of His mission into their hands. Note the enormous confidence He had in His men. He slept soundly, remaining off to the side even through the most fierce storm. The boat was filling with water. Note two things.

1. He was definitely trusting His men and their ability. He was entrusting His life and mission into their hands.
2. He was present, but not actively engaged in this particular task. The disciples had the natural skill to handle this work, so they were expected to do it themselves. And note: the task was difficult, demanding all the seamen's skills they had.

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not" (2 Cor.4:1).

4 (8:24) **Jesus Christ, Power; Deity; Sovereignty**: Jesus' power and sovereignty are clearly seen in this event. He was definitely God, just as He was definitely man (cp. v.22).

1. The disciples came to Him crying out, "Master, Master, we perish."
   a. They had no problem realizing and acknowledging their need.

b. They believed and were sure that He could save them.
c. It was their cry—a desperate, fervent cry—that awakened Him and brought about the calm. He awakened to their need, and the danger and fear were relieved. The calm and stillness came because they cried in all earnestness.

2. Jesus rebuked the wind and raging water by simply speaking. It was His Word that removed the threat and that brought calm both within nature and within their fearful hearts (cp. Ps.89:9; Ph.4:6-7).

3. Jesus' mastery over the sea was absolute, clearly showing (revealing) that He was the Sovereign Lord of the universe. Moreover, Jesus' mastery over the fear of the human heart was absolute, clearly showing that He was the loving God so desperately needed by man.

Thought 1. Christ can calm the storms that so often confront man, the storms of...

- suffering
- loss
- lust
- anger
- bankruptcy
- hatred
- trouble
- grief
- temptation
- passion
- trial
- persecution

Thought 2. Bringing calm to the storms of life involves doing as the disciples did: coming to Christ.
1) Acknowledging that one is perishing.
2) Believing that Jesus can save.
3) Crying out for Jesus to save.

Thought 3. God's Word is the Source and Power that brings calmness to the storms of life.

> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
>
> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).**
>
> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**
>
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).**
>
> **"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

5 (8:25) **Faith—Jesus Christ, Deity**: Jesus' faith in God is demonstrated in this verse. Look carefully at Jesus' question, "Where is *your* faith?" He was contrasting His confidence with their confidence. He was trusting God (as Man); why were they not trusting God? Note three points.

1. Jesus was stressing the absolute necessity for His people to have faith in God. He demonstrated faith perfectly by sleeping in the midst of a storm. His life was in the hands of God; He had put it there. Therefore, His destiny was under God's control and at God's disposal. This was the lesson Christ wanted to teach His disciples.

2. Jesus was rebuking the disciples, their fear and lack of faith. They should not have been terrified and distrusting. They should have labored on against the storm knowing that He was nearby and would never have let them perish. They should have known that their lives and destiny were in His hands and under His love and care and power.

Note a crucial lesson. The faith of the disciples was to be used. Their faith was not to be dormant, lying within their hearts doing nothing. Faith existed for the purpose of struggling against the storm. They were to exercise their faith when the storm came.

Thought 1. The lesson is clear. The very time for us to use our faith is when the storms of life come. It is against the storms that our faith is to be aroused and exercised.

> **"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain [trial], Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).**
>
> **"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph.6:16).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:5-6).**
>
> **"Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chron.20:20).**

3. The disciples feared as those who stand in the presence of God Himself. They did not, of course, fully understand the Person of Christ. But they knew they stood in the presence of One who aroused the same fearful reverence due God. This is seen in three responses.

a. They were "afraid," stricken with awe and reverence.
b. They "wondered," that is, marvelled, at His enormous power and sovereignty.
c. They asked, "Who is this?" This was just the question Jesus wanted them to ask. They needed to be thinking about who He was.

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).

"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation" (Lk.1:50).

"But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:35).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).

"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth (Josh.24:14).

"What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose" (Ps.25:12).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him" (Ps.33:8).

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil" (Pr.3:7).

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl.12:13).

"Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread" (Is.8:13).

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Is.50:10).

	W. Jesus Casts out Demons in Gadara: Power to Free Men from Evil Spirits, 8:26-39 (Mt.8:28-34; Mk.5:1-20)	them. And he suffered them.	j. Were subject to the Lord's command & power[DSI]
1 The character of evil spirits	26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.	33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.	**2 The reaction of a covetous people**
a. Possessed a man b. Caused a man to lose his sense of shame & conscience c. Caused alienation d. Stripped a man of his necessities e. Became enraged against the Lord 1) Knew Him 2) Opposed Him 3) Feared Him	27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.	34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country. 35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 36 They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.	a. Saw a great deliverance & good done: Feared the strange, what they could not understand b. Feared the great loss of property
f. Seized a man g. Hated restraint, cp. v.31	29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.	37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.	1) Rejected Jesus 2) Feared Him & feared more loss
h. Were numerous, formidable	30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.	38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,	**3 The spirit of a delivered man** a. He desired discipleship
i. Desired a body to inhabit for the purpose of working evil	31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. 32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into	39 Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.	b. He was commissioned as a disciple—to his own hometown

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

W. Jesus Casts Out Demons in Gadara: Power to Free Men from Evil Spirits, 8:26-39

(8:26-39) **Evil Spirits—Unclean Spirits—Devils** (daimonia): evil spirits are demons. There is only one devil (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Satan, Diabolos*—Rev.12:9). However, there are many evil or unclean spirits or demons, and the New Testament has much to say about them.

The characteristics of demons other than the ones given in the outline above are said to be as follows:

1. They are spirits (Mt.12:43-45).
2. They are Satan's emissaries (Mt.12:26-27).
3. They know their fate is to be eternal doom (Mt.8:29; Lk.8:31).
4. They affect man's health (Mt.12:22; 17:15-18; Lk.13:16). Apparently, demon-possession is to be distinguished from mental illness.
5. They seduce men to a false religion of asceticism (1 Tim.4:1-3).
6. They seduce men to depart from the faith (1 Tim.4:1).
7. They are cast out of people (exorcism) in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 16:18).
8. They shall participate in the apocalyptic judgment which is coming upon the earth (Rev.9:1-11, 20).

Evil spirits are enemies of Christ and of man. As such, they oppress, possess, and obsess people. (1) They delude the world and blind people to Christ (Eph.2:2). (2) They attack theology (1 Tim.4:1-3). (3) They attack society (Rev.9:3, 20-21). (4) They attack individuals (Lk.8:29). (5) They influence people to commit the sins of demon-worship, idolatry, sorcery, fornication, theft, murder, and much more (Rev.9:20-21).

The believer's defense is the Lord. The believer must pray and fast and take on the armor of God in order to stand against their power (Mt.17:21; Eph.6:12f).

This passage is excellent for studying the character of evil spirits and the Lord's power to deliver men from evil spirits.
1. The character of evil spirits (v.26-33).
2. The reaction of a covetous people (v.34-37).
3. The spirit of a delivered man (v.38-39).

1 (8:26-33) **Evil Spirits—Demons—Devils**: the character of evil spirits. At least ten traits of evil spirits are seen in this passage. (See notes—Mt.8:28-31; Mk.5:2-5 for more discussion and thoughts for application.)

1. Evil spirits are enemies of man, possessing a man for long periods of time. They take hold of a man, controlling his faculties and causing him to act abnormally, hurting both himself and others.

2. Evil spirits cause men to lose their sense of shame and conscience. This man was driven to run around naked. The point is, evil spirits destroy man's sense of modesty, privacy, intimacy, and respect. Evil spirits cause men to enjoy the attention of public exposure and the embarrassment of others.

3. Evil spirits cause alienation, the loss of all friends and social life. They lead a man to be *cut off*, ostracized from others. They often force a man to withdraw into himself and away from others, including immediate family; or they cause society to push the man away, forcing him to live alone or with others like himself. Evil spirits often destroy a man by making him live as it were among the dead, among those who have no contact with the world of living men. This is seen in this man's being forced to live among the tombs of the dead.

4. Evil spirits are enraged against the Lord. Note three things in this verse. They knew that Jesus was the Son of the Most High God (cp. the Holy One of God, Mk.4:34). They also opposed Him and feared Him (see note—Mk.1:23-24; 5:6-7. Cp. Mt.8:31-32; Jas.2:19.)

5. Evil spirits seize men. Their influence and unrestrained nature seem to come and go, to lie calm and then to break forth in violence.

6. Evil spirits hate restraint and cause men to mistreat and oppose others. They drive men to struggle against morality and justice and against being governed, restricted, controlled, and disciplined. They drive men to live wild and loose lives, to do as they please. They cause men to become unclean, sullen, violent, and malicious (cp. Mt.8:28; 9:33; 10:1; 12:43; Mk.1:23; 5:3-5; 9:17-20; Lk.6:18; 9:39).

7. Evil spirits take away a man's name, his identity, and his recognition. They deprive a person of purpose, meaning, significance. They destroy his self-image and his public image.

Note that Christ asked the man what his name was. The Lord was stirring within the man fond memories of his name before he had become demon-possessed.

8. Evil spirits are numerous and formidable. The evil spirit cried out within the man that his name was *Legion*. The legion refers to the Roman military legion which included over six thousand men. This definitely indicates that the man's case was desperate; the evil spirits in him were formidable, just as a military legion was formidable. (Cp. Mary Magdalene who had been possessed by seven devils, Mk.16:9. Note how a specific number was known. Cp. also Mk.5:9 "many.")

9. Evil spirits desire a body to inhabit for the purpose of working evil. They desire to be malicious, violent, and destructive. The evil spirits are said to be the ones who are speaking here. They recognized Jesus' sovereignty. Note how the "evil spirits" thought and worked.
   a. They were indwelling and hurting this man physically, mentally, and spiritually.
   b. They wished (if exorcised from the human body) to hurt other men by damaging and destroying their property.
   c. They wished (if exorcised) to keep other men from Christ by destroying property and having them blame God for the devastation and loss.

10. Evil spirits are subject to the Lord's power. Christ had the power of His Word. The devil's power may be great, but the Word of Christ is omnipotent (all powerful), for all power belongs to Him.

> **"Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).**
> **"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Ro.8:31f. Read this whole passage for a beautiful and powerful description of the Lord's love and might.)**

There was the result of Jesus' Word: the man was saved; the evil spirits were cast out of the man. Christ had the power to deliver and save. All He had to do was say, "Go," and whatever evil indwelt the man was gone. The man was delivered from all evil: its presence, guilt, and consequences. The man was "saved to the uttermost" (Heb.7:25). (See note—Mk.5:8-13 for more discussion and thoughts for application.)

> **"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).**
> **"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).**
> **"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).**
> **"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).**
> **"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (Jn.17:2).**
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(8:33) **Swine**: a question is often asked about the swine which were killed. This is discussed in Matthew (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:32).

2 (8:34-37) **Covetousness**: the reaction of a covetous people (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:32; Mk.5:14-17 for more discussion and application). Note three things.

1. The people saw the great deed done, the marvelous deliverance of the demon-possessed man. However, their response was not one of rejoicing; it was fear—fear of Christ's power. They had known the demon-possessed man, how desperately hopeless his condition had been; and here he sat, delivered and made whole. What enormous power this man Jesus had!
2. The people rejected Jesus, being overwhelmed "with great fear." They were bound to be gripped with a sense of judgment because of their swine's being killed. They were also bound to be wondering if the proclaimed Messiah had come to judge them ahead of time or to destroy more of their property. They definitely knew they were breaking the law of God by *keeping swine* (cp. Lev.11:7; Is.65:3-4; 66:17). Because of this sin and other sins and their callousness toward the healed demonic, they were bound to be fearful standing there face to face with God's Son. They were unwilling to repent of their sins and to begin living for God. Thus, they could feel nothing else but fear.
3. Jesus did exactly what they asked. He left them. They chose the tasty, satisfying nourishment of the *swine of the world* over the joy and salvation of Christ. And so far as we know, He left forever, never to return to those who coveted this world more than Him.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).

3 (8:38-39) **Witnessing—Call**: the spirit of a delivered man. The man was a dynamic example. As soon as he was delivered, he begged to be "with Christ," to travel all around, sharing the good news of Christ. He was *on fire* for the Lord and wanted to commit himself to the ministry. But note what Christ did. He redirected the man; He commissioned the man to go to his own hometown.

Thought 1. Christ often redirects our fervor and willingness. He knows where we can best serve Him and the cause of His kingdom.

Thought 2. Every man, when saved, should become a dynamic witness for the Lord and be willing to go anyplace.

Thought 3. We should never let a redirection or a call to go elsewhere kill our fervor.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

	X. Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter & Heals a Woman: The Reward of True Faith, 8:40-56 (Mt.9:18-26; Mk.5:21-43)	came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.	
1 The Gadarenes rejected Jesus, but the Galileans welcomed Him	40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him: for they were all waiting for him.	48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.	e. Her reward: Jesus' undivided attention & healing
2 The faith of a desperate ruler a. His rank: A religious ruler b. His approach: He forgot pride & position—denied himself c. His faith: He believed Jesus could save His daughter d. The reward: Jesus went to help him	41 And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:	49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.	**4 The faith of stubborn, helpless parents** a. The parents' helplessness: The daughter died
	42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.	50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.	b. The parents' need: A strong faith*PS1*
3 The faith of an embarrassed, hopeless woman a. Her hopelessness b. Her shame: Ceremonially unclean & socially outcast c. Her unusual "touch of faith": Many touched Jesus but only she was healed	43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,	51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.	c. The parents' strong faith: They followed Jesus despite the mockery
	44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched.	52 And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.	
	45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?	53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.	
		54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.	d. The reward: Jesus' undivided attention & resurrection power
	46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.	55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.	
d. Her fearful awe & honest trust	47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she	56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.	e. The unusual command

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

X. Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter and Heals a Woman: The Reward of True Faith, 8:40-56

(8:40-56) **Introduction**: true faith will be rewarded. This passage gives a glimpse into just how enormously faith will be rewarded.

1. The Gadarenes rejected Jesus, but the Galileans welcomed Him (v.40).
2. The faith of a desperate ruler (v.41-42).
3. The faith of an embarrassed, hopeless woman (v.43-48).
4. The faith of stubborn, helpless parents (v.49-56).

1 (8:40) **Minister—Jesus Christ, Rejection**: the Gadarenes rejected Jesus, but the Galileans welcomed Him. Note two points.

1. One people drove Him away; the other hoped in Him. One country was closed to Him; the other was opened to Him.
2. Jesus sought work to do. Note a crucial point. When He was rejected by a people…
   - He did not retaliate, strike back.
   - He did not begin to moan, grumble, or gripe.
   - He did not slip into discouragement or depression.
   - He did not quit.

What did He do? He immediately left the people, the country of those who rejected Him, but He sought to minister elsewhere.

2 (8:41-42) **Faith—Self-Denial—Care—Humility**: the faith of a desperate ruler. One of the persons waiting for Jesus was a man named Jairus.

1. Jairus was a religious ruler, probably the highest-ranking official in the area. He was the head of the synagogue, the very center of Jewish life in the city. He was evidently well-to-do and highly esteemed among the people.
2. Jairus approached Jesus willing to pay the ultimate price.
   a. He laid his position on the line in order to secure Jesus' help. The religionists were now opposing Jesus with a fierceness seldom seen, and they were attacking Him publicly. By coming to Jesus, Jairus was running the risk of arousing the hostility of his peers and of being censored and losing his position.
   b. He denied and forgot self completely, laying all pride aside. He ran up to Jesus and fell down at Jesus' feet begging for help (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Lk.9:24-26).**
>
> **"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas.4:6).**
>
> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**

3. Jairus' concern was over someone else. He was running the risk of losing everything for the sake of someone else: his twelve-year-old daughter. She was his only child and she was dying. Note Jairus' faith. He besought (begged) Jesus to help. He believed with all his heart that Jesus could save his daughter—if He would only come to his house.

> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

4. Jairus' faith was immediately rewarded. "Jesus went"; He answered Jairus' plea. Jesus turned and began to move toward Jairus' house. The humble, self-denying approach of Jairus caused Jesus to turn and begin meeting his desperate need.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).**

3 (8:43-48) **Hopelessness—Faith—Jesus Christ, Work of**: the faith of an embarrassed, hopeless woman. Five simple points are brought out about this woman.

1. She was hopeless.
2. She was ashamed, extremely embarrassed over her problem. The reason was twofold. First, she was considered ceremonially unclean; that is, she was cut off from society and religious worship (Lev.15:19-33). She had even been divorced, for the law required it (Lev.15:25-27). Imagine a woman's having to live with the shame of being divorced because of a medical problem. Second, she was hesitant about letting anyone know about her condition. Her hemorrhaging was a personal, intimate matter for her, something she did not want to be known and discussed publicly.
3. Her unusual *touch of faith*. Note that many were thronging Jesus and touching Him, but only one touched Him in faith. The woman had an *expectant, believing attitude*. She believed that if she could only touch Him she would be made whole (v.47; cp. Mt.9:21), and she was: "Her issue of blood stopped at once" (este).

> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).**
>
> **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).**
>
> **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).**

4. Her fearful awe and honest trust. Note what now happened.
   a. Jesus knew what had happened. He had allowed the woman to be healed in order to help her in her embarrassment. However, secret discipleship was impossible. She had to confess her deliverance.

> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

b. Serving and helping others cost Jesus, and cost Him dearly. Virtue (dunamin), spiritual power, flowed out from His being into the woman. It was that which healed her. Note that the disciples were unaware of what it cost Jesus to minister. They were insensitive to the spiritual energy He was exerting, ignorant of what Jesus was doing:

⇒ He was taking our infirmities upon Himself and bearing our sicknesses.

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Mt.8:17; cp. Is.53:4).

⇒ He was teaching that public confession of Him was essential.

Note what the woman did when she "saw that she was not hid." She knew that He who had such power knew who had touched Him, so she came as all should come in approaching the Lord: "trembling and falling down before Him," confessing all.

Thought 1. It is spiritual virtue that flows into and delivers any of us, the spiritual virtue (power) of Christ.

5. The woman's faith was rewarded, wonderfully so. Her faith caused Jesus to meet her face to face; her faith did some wonderful things for her.

a. She was called, "Daughter." This was the only time Jesus ever called a woman, "Daughter." What a distinct privilege! It meant she had become a child of God's.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

b. She was given comfort (tharsei), or more accurately, cheer, courage, confidence, and boldness in her faith and healing.

c. She was assured that she was whole permanently. Her deliverance would last.

d. She was given peace (see note—Jn.14:27).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

4 (8:49-56) **Faith—Helplessness**: the faith of stubborn, helpless parents. Five points are seen in the suspense of this scene.

1. The helplessness of Jairus: his daughter died. It was while Jesus was still speaking to the hemorrhaging woman that the news came to Jairus: his daughter was dead. Note three things.

a. Jairus' faith had been sorely tried. His daughter was critically ill, and he was forced to wait while Jesus ministered to another patient. What he feared had happened. Jesus was too late; his daughter had died.

b. Jairus was pulled off to the side and told not to bother the Lord any more now; the Master was too busy to bother with his situation since his daughter was now dead.

c. Jesus' power was thought to be limited and ineffective in the face of death. So the messenger suggested that Jairus could now go home. The point is that Jairus was totally helpless, and the power of Jesus was thought to be limited to the living. The thought that Jesus' power would be effective in dealing with the dead never crossed this gloomy messenger's mind.

2. The parents' need: a strong, stubborn faith. Jesus did not even give Jairus a chance to speak. Jesus forcibly said:

⇒ "Fear not" (me phobou): do not be gripped with terror, dread, fear, anxiety.

⇒ "Believe only" (see notes—Mk.11:22-23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; note—Ro.10:16-17; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.10:38).

⇒ "And she shall be made whole" (swthesetai): restored, made alive, saved.

Imagine the strong faith required to believe simply because of Jesus' Word, because of what He said.

3. The parents' strong faith: they followed Jesus despite the mockery.

a. Jesus took only the parents and His inner circle into the house. The parents and daughter would need quiet and time to be reunited and to regain their joyful composure before seeing people. The inner circle would give enough witness to verify and record the incident for all generations.

b. The mourners who scorned Jesus would probably include relatives, friends, neighbors, and the professional mourners. The professional mourners were a custom in the East. Note how Jesus was scorned and ridiculed.

c. The girl was dead. Some readers stress Jesus' words, "she is not dead, but sleepeth," saying that she was actually still alive (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Lk.8:50).

d. The parents' stubborn faith was rewarded, greatly so. Their faith caused Jesus to save their daughter, to actually raise her up from the dead. Her spirit returned to her body and she arose.

Note Jesus commanded that food be given to her. This activity would help her mother handle the emotion of the moment and help to strengthen the daughter.

Thought 1. *Stubborn faith* is desperately needed by many parents in behalf of their children. However, note what must precede stubborn faith: a desperate faith that forgets and denies oneself, seeking Jesus no matter the cost. Difficult cases require both a desperate faith and a stubborn faith. It is such faith that receives the *great* reward.

> **"Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20; cp. Mt.21:21).**
>
> **"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:22-24).**
>
> **"But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole" (Lk.8:50).**
>
> **"And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper" (2 Chron.20:20).**

e. Jesus gave an unusual command. He was probably commanding the parents to keep silent about the matter because the crowds surrounding Him were already too large.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:50) **Death—Sleep**: some argue that this girl was actually alive and that Jesus knew it. But note several facts. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.11:13 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus and the Bible speak of death as nothing more than sleep. By sleep is meant *rest and comfort in God* (Mt.27:52; Acts 7:60; 1 Th.4:13-18). Many within the world think of death as annihilation or ceasing to exist. Jesus drew the contrast in order to say that death is not annihilation. Believers continue to exist, resting in the life and comfort of God.
2. Note that Jesus knew the girl was dead (v.53). He clearly said so.
3. Note the words "her spirit came again." The point is this: her spirit had left her body, and upon the command of Jesus, her spirit returned. Her life returned to the body immediately.

	CHAPTER 9		c. To warn rejecters
	Y. Jesus Commissions His Disciples, 9:1-9 (Mt.9:35-10:42; Mk.6:7-13)	5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.	
1 Their call: To come together for ministry	Then he called his twelve	6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.	**5 Their obedience: They went forth preaching & ministering**
2 Their equipment: Power & authority	disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.	7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed,	**6 Their effect**
3 Their mission: To preach & minister	2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.	because that it was said of	a. Herod was disturbed by their message
4 Their method	3 And he said unto them,	some, that John was risen from the dead;	
a. Not to seek success through personal appearance & materialism	Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.	8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.	b. The people speculated about Jesus' identity
b. To minister in the homes, to the interested & the hospitable[psi]	4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.	9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.	c. Herod desired to know Jesus' identity

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

Y. Jesus Commissions His Disciples, 9:1-9

(9:1-9) **Introduction**: this was the first time Jesus sent His disciples out alone; therefore, it a significant event. The instructions given by Jesus to the early disciples are needed by every generation of believers. It is the only sure way the world can ever be reached and grounded in the Lord.

1. Their call: to come together for ministry (v.1).
2. Their equipment: power and authority (v.1).
3. Their mission: to preach and minister (v.2).
4. Their method (v.3-5).
5. Their obedience: they went forth preaching and ministering (v.6).
6. Their effect (v.7-9).

1 (9:1) **Ministers, Call—Unity—Jesus Christ, Ministry—Power**: the disciples' call was to come together for ministry. Jesus had to call His disciples back *together*. Note the word "together" (sunkalesamenos). The word reveals several things to us.

1. The disciples had families and responsibilities. We tend to glamorize the disciples and Jesus, forgetting the disciples were ordinary men with day-to-day duties. They were not with the Lord at this time. They had to spend some time at home taking care of their families and whatever other duties they had. No doubt they did spend most of their time with Jesus as travelling evangelists, but at certain times, they returned home in order to tend to family affairs.
2. The basic ingredient for ministry is *togetherness*. Note the words, "called...together." The very thrust of the words points to the importance of *coming together*.

> **"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (Jn.13:33-34).**
>
> **"Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Ph.1:27).**

3. The purpose for coming together is to minister. Jesus was completing His Galilean ministry. He was now ready to set His face toward Jerusalem (Lk.9:51). His ministry had been successful. Multitudes knew of His coming to earth, many had been helped and some did believe and trust. Now, before He left the area, He wanted to reach out one more time to those who were close to believing and to more deeply root and ground those who already believed.
4. The call of Jesus was for the disciples to have power over "all devils, and to cure diseases."
   a. "Power...over *all* devils." The word "all" means that the disciple was to have power over all kinds of evil, no matter how evil and enslaving, strong and fierce, subtle and undetected. It also points to the glorious purpose of Jesus. He had come to defeat and conquer the evil forces of this world, to rout and triumph over "all" of them.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he [Christ] made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).

b. "Power...to cure diseases." This would demonstrate the great compassion of the Lord and draw people to Him (Jn.12:32). It would also help tremendously in confirming the faith of some.

2 (9:1) **Power—Authority**: the disciples' equipment was to be power and authority. Jesus equipped His disciples with power and with the authority to use that power. Power is the *gift*, the necessary resource to minister; authority is the *right* to minister. The disciple has to decide when and where to exercise his power (resource). The awesome responsibility for such power should help to keep the disciple on his face before God, acknowledging his total dependence upon God. It should also help the disciple to seek a closeness with God, a true sensitivity to the Spirit of God.

Thought 1. Think how little power is really seen in the lives and ministry of believers, lay and minister alike! How *displaced* or *misplaced* so many believers are. The *authority* to minister (where and when) has not been used as it should. The face of the Lord has not been sought, not to the point that a true closeness to His Spirit has directed our authority. We have taken the authority, the right to minister where we wish into our own hands. The evidence: after 2000 years so much of the world still has not heard the gospel.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor.2:4).

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor.3:6).

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:13).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" (1 Th.1:5).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

3 (9:2) **Ministers, Duty—Mission**: the disciples' mission was to preach and minister. Note three points.

1. They were sent on the very same mission as Christ.

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing" (Lk.9:11).

2. They were to preach the Kingdom of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Preaching met the spiritual needs of the human soul.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10; cp. Jn.20:31).

3. They were to heal the sick. Healing met the physical needs of the human body.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous" (1 Pt.3:8).

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).

"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother" (Zech.7:9).

"Who [ministers, believers] can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity" (Heb.5:2).

4 (9:3-5) **Mission—Ministry—Method**: the disciples' method was threefold.

1. They were not to seek success through personal appearance and materialism. They were to live in utter simplicity and humility. This was the point of the things Christ listed (v.3. See note—Mk.6:8-13 for more discussion.) Christ was saying three things to the disciples.

a. The need and the hour were urgent. Concentrate on preaching and ministering. Do not get sidetracked.

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:2).

b. Learn to believe and trust God day by day. Become a living example of what is being preached: faith in God. Do not begin to trust in the things of the world. Learn to trust God daily, and then others can learn what is meant by "believing" and "trusting" God through your example.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

c. Avoid the very appearance of evil. Having your mind upon the things of this world will distract from God and from the needs of men and from the ministry. Become attached to God and to His kingdom alone; not to money, houses, lands, cars, clothes, hairstyles, appearance, food, buying, selling, and accumulating. Be heavenly-minded and ministry-centered, so that men may know there is a far better land than what this earth offers.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb.11:13-16).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb.11:24-26).

2. They were to minister in the homes to the interested and the hospitable families (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:4).

3. They were to warn rejecters. If a community or city did not receive their witness and if a home could not be found that would receive them, then the disciple was to leave.

a. He was not to force the issue or create a bad situation either for the rejecters or for himself. There was to be no tongue-lashing, accusation, or divisiveness created.

b. He was simply to leave; and as he left, he was to give a *silent* testimony against them. He was to shake the very dust from his feet. This was a symbol of serious judgment. It meant that not even the dust of that place was worthy of the gospel of God, much less the people. The place and its people were *left* to themselves just as they had wished. They were left *without God* and His glorious news of salvation, so they were to be left alone to govern their own lives just as they had willed. God would *abandon* them to their own way and choice of life.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:4) **Church, In Homes**: the method Christ chose for evangelizing was the method of home evangelism (cp. 10:5f). Note this, for it should speak loudly and clearly to us. The disciple was to carefully investigate and search out a receptive family and home. He was to make that home the center for ministry. Note several things about this method.

a. It emphasizes the family, making it the very hub of ministry.
b. It stresses stability, security, and settledness. Nothing on earth is to be any more secure and stable than the family. By placing the center of ministry in the home, the Kingdom of God becomes secure and stable.
c. It centers preaching and ministering in the community, right where people live and walk. It makes the presence of Christ visible to all in day-to-day living.
d. It serves as the center from which the message can move out in an ever-widening circle, spreading from family to family.

Thought 1. The most ideal form of evangelism is probably this method given by Christ: a selected home and family serving as the center of witness within a community or town. The early church was definitely centered in the homes of committed believers (Acts 5:42; 12:12; 16:40; 20:20; 1 Cor.16:19; Col.4:15; Phile.2).

5 (9:6) **Obedience**: they went forth and preached and ministered. The disciples did exactly what Christ had commissioned them to do. They did not fail in the least.

a. They departed. There was no hesitation, no question, no condition, no hanging back, no slowness to move.
b. They went through the towns. They reached a home and ministered to its surrounding community, ever moving farther and farther out into the whole town. And then they moved on to another town to bear witness to its people as well.
c. They preached and ministered "everywhere." They had an extensive ministry, very successful in its outreach, ministering to both soul (preaching) and body (healing).

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:60).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).

6 (9:7-9) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: their effect was phenomenal. The message and ministry of Jesus and His apostles reached even into the halls of government. The impact of the message and ministry reached far and wide during these days. (See outline and notes—Mt.14:1-14; Mk.6:14-29 for detailed discussion.)

1. Herod became disturbed. He had murdered John the Baptist, and some were saying that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead. Of course, Herod's conscience was bothering him, just as all men are nagged by questions (at least questions about reality and the hereafter). He thought he had gotten rid of John's convicting preaching. Was it possible that John had arisen or that another like John had come on the scene? Herod wished to know.
2. The people were speculating about Jesus' identity (see outline and notes—Jn.7:37-53).

	Z. Jesus Teaches How to Minister, 9:10-17 (Mt.14:15-21; Mk.6:30-44; Jn.6:1-14)	for we are here in a desert place.	
1 He demonstrated & taught the need for privacy & rest a. The twelve returned & reported to Jesus b. Jesus sought privacy with the disciples	10 And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.	13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.	b. The right attitude: Let the disciples meet the peoples'needs c. The problem: Inadequate resources
2 He allowed the needy to interrupt the much needed privacy & rest	11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.	14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.	**5 He approached needs in an orderly fashion**
3 He met both spiritual & physical needs		15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.	
4 He challenged the disciples to meet the people's needs a. The wrong attitude: Let the people take care of themselves	12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals:	16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.	**6 He looked to God in meeting needs** a. He thanked God for what He had b. He broke & gave what He had c. He utilized all for future ministering & feeding
		17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.	

DIVISION III

THE SON OF MAN'S ANNOUNCED MISSION AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, 4:16-9:17

Z. Jesus Teaches How to Minister, 9:10-17

(9:10-17) **Introduction**: Jesus once said, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." So it is with the Lord's disciple. But how the disciple ministers is of vital concern, for how he ministers determines the eternal fate of men and the success or failure of the Lord's mission. In this passage Jesus teaches His followers *how to minister.* (See outlines and notes—Mt.14:15-21; Mk.6:30-44 for more discussion and applications.)

1. He demonstrated and taught the need for privacy and rest (v.10).
2. He allowed the needy to interrupt the much needed privacy and rest (v.11).
3. He met both spiritual and physical needs (v.11).
4. He challenged the disciples to meet the people's needs (v.12-13).
5. He approached needs in an orderly fashion (v.14-15).
6. He looked to God in meeting needs (v.16-17).

1 (9:10) **Devotion—Rest—Evaluation**: Jesus demonstrated and taught the need for privacy. The twelve returned from their mission and reported what had happened. Jesus had never needed time with them as much as He did now, for He was closing out His Galilean ministry. In fact, there was to be little public ministry hereafter. From this point onward He was to concentrate primarily on His disciples, giving them intensive training (see notes—Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27; 20:17; 20:20-28 to see the emphasis upon this intensive training).

1. Jesus needed to discuss their witnessing tour with them. As they reported, He needed to point out both the strengths and weaknesses of how they went about it. They must learn to minister in the most effective way possible. An evaluation session was needed.

2. The disciples needed to evaluate themselves; but they needed to do it in the presence of God alone so that they could restore both their spirits and bodies. They were physically exhausted and their spirits were drained.

What did Jesus do? "He took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging [somewhere near] to the city of Bethsaida." Note: He took them to a "desert place." Its quietness and privacy are mentioned twice, which indicates that they did not actually enter the city (v.10, 12).

The point was clearly demonstrated for the disciples. There is a time for ministry and for evaluating oneself and one's ministry; there is also a time for renewing one's spirit and body.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mk.6:31).**
>
> **"Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest" (Ex.34:21; cp. Ex.23:12; 31:15; 35:2).**
>
> **"Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings" (Lev.23:3).**

"And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness" (Ps.55:6-7).

"And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Ex.33:14).

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee" (Ps.116:7).

"To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Is.28:12).

"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not" (Is.30:15).

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim.4:15).

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:29).

"I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings" (Ps.77:12).

"My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD" (Ps.104:34).

"I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways" (Ps.119:15).

"I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands" (Ps.143:5).

2 (9:11) **Ministry—Vision**: Jesus allowed the needy to interrupt the much needed privacy. The emphasis is on the words "the people followed Him and He received them." (See note—Mk.6:33 for the drama of the scene.) The people were disturbing and interrupting the disciples' need for privacy, for rest and spiritual renewal. The disciples had been ministering, doing all they could, yet here the people were demanding more. Note the contrast between Jesus and the disciples. The disciples became irritated (v.12; cp. the rude statement, "except we should go and buy meat for all this people" of v.13). Jesus, on the other hand, was filled with compassion for the people (cp. Mk.6:34). The disciples had a much needed lesson to learn, and they needed to learn the lesson more than they needed rest. The lesson was simple but dramatic: while one is resting the multitudes are still lost. They are as sheep without a shepherd (Mk.6:34). A disciple must not rest unless it is *absolutely necessary*. Too many are lost and hurting.

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).

"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth" (Is.62:1).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer.20:9).

3 (9:11) **Heals—Healing**: Jesus met both spiritual and physical needs. The people did not need preaching alone; they also needed help physically. Both body and soul needed to be saved and restored. So Jesus...

- spoke (preached) unto them the Kingdom of God.
- healed them that had need of healing.

Note two points.

1. Jesus preached the Kingdom of God—of which God is the ruler and man is the subject, of which the Word of God is Law and the obedience of man is demanded.

2. Jesus healed the people that "had need of healing." This is always true. A believer who really *needs healing* is blessed by God and healed. But note: *the need of healing is not always the greatest need of a person*. God sometimes uses the physical need to meet that which is far more important: the spiritual need and the glory of God. Therefore, not all believers are always healed. Sometimes the believer needs to learn love, joy, peace, endurance, prayer, trust, faith, and hope through his suffering. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:1-4 for detailed discussion.)

However, there is and has been a problem with the truth of this down through the centuries. So many use the spiritual need as an excuse for not having the faith and godly power to be healed and to heal. As Jesus Himself said, it is much easier to tell a man his sins are forgiven than it is to tell him to take up his bed and walk. Jesus met both needs of a man, his spiritual needs and his physical needs: "healing them that *had need* of healing." (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:1-4 for detailed discussion.)

The disciples needed to learn that both the spiritual and physical needs of men were to be met.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

4 (9:12-13) **Resources—Ministering—Needs, Attitudes Toward**: Jesus challenged the disciples to meet the people's needs. The people had been listening to Jesus for hours. Sundown was soon to come. There was danger the people would be caught out in the desert in the dark, unable to get food before the next day. Some had already gone most of the day without food. It was time for Jesus to stop and let the people go; however, He gave no sign of stopping. So the disciples suggested He dismiss the crowd. Note the two attitudes toward meeting the needs of people.

1. The wrong attitude was illustrated by the disciples. They suggested that Jesus let the people go and take care of their own needs. Keep in mind that the crowd was not welcomed by the disciples, not this day. It was to have been a day of rest and spiritual renewal for them. The point is, the disciples had not sensed any personal responsibility for the *hunger* (physical or spiritual) of the crowd. They were willing, even wanting the crowd to go away, no matter the difficulty they would have in fending for themselves.
2. The right attitude was illustrated by Jesus. He emphatically said, "Give ye them to eat." The "you" is emphatic in the Greek. Jesus was stressing that it was the disciples' responsibility. They were to take care of the people's needs. They were to "feed" the people (physically and spiritually). The people were not to be left to themselves. They could not fend nor provide for themselves.

Note something else: it was more important for the people to be hearing the gospel and receiving ministry than to be out seeking bread. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" (Lk.4:4). It is, of course, necessary to seek bread sometime in order to survive, but seeking spiritual food is absolutely essential. Seeking spiritual food must be interrupted only when necessary.

> **"And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou are careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful [sitting at Jesus' feet learning]: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Lk.10:41-42).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**
>
> **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).**

3. The problem was inadequate resources. The disciples readily confessed that they had too little to meet the need of the people. Just think about the enormity of the situation for a moment. The crowd was huge; the task was *impossible*. There was no possibility the disciples could meet the need of the people. But note: they did exactly what needed to be done:

⇒ They told Jesus exactly what they did have.
⇒ They did the best thinking they could, giving the best solution they could.

What the disciples had was inadequate, but they did lay what they had before Jesus and discussed the only solution they knew (to go and buy food).

> **"And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it" (Dt.1:16-17).**
>
> **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor.16:2).**
>
> **"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).**
>
> **"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Mt.5:42).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**

5 (9:14-15) **Organization**: Jesus approached needs in an orderly fashion. There were over five thousand men alone, not counting women and children. The need was so great, organization was necessary for the need to be met. The need was divided and spread about among the disciples by setting the people up in groups. Each group or company had fifty persons, or double rows of fifty each (Mk.6:40).

Thought 1. The task is enormous. It can be met only by an orderly, organized approach.

6 (9:16-17) **Ministering**: Jesus looked to God in meeting needs. Note exactly what Jesus did.

1. Jesus looked up to heaven, giving thanks to God for what He did have. This is what is meant by the *blessing*.
2. Jesus broke and gave what He had. Note a crucial point. Jesus was doing what He could: looking up to God, giving thanks and then giving what He had. He could do no more.

Thought 1. The lesson is clear for every believer. Once we do our part, God will multiply our resources.

3. Jesus utilized all. There was plenty to feed all, in fact more than enough.

Thought 1. There will always be enough to feed all—if we will only confess our inadequate resources, give thanks for what we have, and then give what we have.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps.24:1).

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies" (Ps.41:1).

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps.50:10).

"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Pr.11:25).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Pr.22:9).

"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Pr.28:27).

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccl.11:1).

"But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand" (Is.32:8).

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday" (Is.58:10).

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts" (Hag.2:8).

	IV. THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM AND DEATH, 9:18-50	19 They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.	
		20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.	**3 The disciples' conviction: Jesus was Messiah**
	A. The First Prediction of Death: Who Jesus Really Is, 9:18-22 (Mt.16:13-23; Mk.8: 27-33)	21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;	**4 The full meaning of the conviction** a. The full meaning: Was not yet grasped
1 Jesus was alone praying	18 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his	22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and	b. The full meaning: Jesus was the suffering & conquering Savior[DS1]
2 The people's belief: Jesus was only a great man	disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?	be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.	

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM AND DEATH, 9:18-50

A. The First Prediction of Death: Who Jesus Really Is, 9:18-22

(9:18-22) **Introduction**: Who is Jesus? The most critical time in a man's life is when he answers this question.

1. Jesus was alone praying (v.18).
2. The people's belief: Jesus was only a great man (v.18-19).
3. The disciples' conviction: Jesus was the Messiah (v.20).
4. The full meaning of the conviction (v.21-22).

1 (9:18) **Prayer**: Jesus was alone praying. He sensed a deep need for prayer.

1. He needed personal strength. He was "setting His face toward Jerusalem," which means that He was setting His face toward the cross where He was to die for the sins of men (Lk.9:51). The days ahead held excruciating suffering for Him.
2. The disciples needed a very special *quickening* from God. They, too, had to face the issue of the cross, that the Messiah had to die for the sins of the world in order to save men. This was a radically different concept of the Messiah than the popular concept. The popular concept said that the Messiah was to be the Son of David, the promised King who was to come and free Israel from her enemies and set up the Kingdom of God over all nations of the earth (see note—Mt.16:21-28).

The disciples also had an immediate need, the need for a very special *revelation* into His person. It was time for them to grasp and confess without any hesitation that He was the Messiah, the very Son of God. Jesus was now ready to examine their hearts and convictions about Him, so He went before God to beg a very *special insight*, a very special revelation of the Spirit for the disciples.

Thought 1. Three important lessons on prayer can be gleaned from what Christ was doing.

1) We must pray before momentous events.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas.5:13).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3)**

2) We must pray for others, that they might have special insight and the quickening power of the Spirit upon their lives.

> **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).**

3) We must pray for strength to withstand severe trials, that we might be enabled to bear whatever cross lies ahead.

> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Is.41:17).

"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech.13:9).

2 (9:18-19) **Jesus Christ, Concept of—Man, Concept of Christ**: the people's belief was that Jesus was only a great man. The scene was that of Jesus' being off to the side, away from the disciples and all alone. He was seeking the face of God and agonizing in prayer. Then all of a sudden He quit praying and arose, and walked over to the disciples. Immediately He asked them, "Whom say the people that I am?" Why did Christ ask this question? What was He doing?

1. The disciples' concept of the Messiah needed to be corrected. Their concept was the popular concept that saw the Messiah only as the greatest of men. They desperately needed to grasp and understand to the fullest measure who Jesus was. The very destiny of the world rested in their hands. Men were doomed and lost forever unless the disciples fully understood. Therefore, Jesus had to examine them to make sure they were thinking for themselves and rejecting the false ideas of Messiahship held by men.

2. The popular opinion of the Messiah was wrong. Most of the people honored Jesus highly, very highly. They saw Him as a great man; in fact, they saw Him as one of the greatest of men. However, such a concept would spell doom for the world if it were not corrected. Jesus had to make sure the people's idea had not influenced and corrupted the thinking of the disciples.

a. Some thought Jesus was John the Baptist, that is, the forerunner of the Messiah (Mal.4:5). Both John and Jesus were doing a unique and great work for God. Both were divinely chosen and gifted by God, and both proclaimed the Kingdom of God and prepared men for it. Therefore, when some looked at Jesus and His ministry, they thought Jesus was not the Messiah Himself, but the promised forerunner of the Messiah (Mal.4:5).

b. Some thought Jesus was Elijah. These were professing Jesus to be the greatest prophet and teacher of all time. Elijah was so considered, and Elijah was also predicted to be the forerunner of the coming Messiah (Mal.4:5). Even today the Jews expect Elijah to return before the Messiah. In celebrating the Passover, they always leave a chair vacant for him to occupy. Elijah had also been used by God to miraculously feed a widow woman and her son (1 Ki.17:14). The people connected Elijah's miracle and Jesus' feeding of the multitude.

c. Some thought Jesus was one of the old prophets. These were professing Jesus to be a great prophet sent for their day and time. He was thought to be one of the great prophets brought back to life or one in whom the spirit of a great prophet dwelt (cp. Dt.18:15, 18).

Thought 1. Note that the same false confessions about Christ exist in every generation.

1) He was only a great man of righteousness, martyred for His faith. As such He leaves us a great example of how to live and stand up for what we believe.
2) He was one of the greatest teachers and prophets of all time.
3) He was a great man who revealed some very important things to us about God and religion. As such He can make a significant contribution to every man in His search for God.
4) He was a great man and prophet sent to the people (Jews) of His day; however, we can learn a great deal that will help us by studying His life.

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:22-23).

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:3).

3 (9:20) **Jesus Christ, Concept—Man, Concept of Christ**: the disciples' conviction was that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus sat and listened closely to what the disciples had to say about the people's ideas regarding the Messiah. Now He was ready for *the question*...

- the question whose answer determines a man's eternal salvation.
- the question which is the most significant question ever asked.

"But whom say ye that I am?" The "you" is emphatic. Jesus stressed the *personal*, the importance of a personal response: "But *you*, whom do *you* say that I am?" Note several things.

1. The answer was immediate and forceful: *the Christ of God*. Peter was the spokesman for all, and he emphatically declared that Jesus was *the Christ of God*. It was a powerful statement—a statement profound in meaning.
2. The answer was profound in its meaning, for Jesus was "the Christ," that is, "the Messiah," *the anointed One of God* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18). This means three things.
   a. Jesus was sent on a deliberate mission, the mission of saving man (Lk.19:10).
   b. Jesus was *sent and qualified* by God to carry out that mission (Jn.3:16; 4:34; 5:23-24, 30, 36-38; 6:29, 38-40, 44, 57; 7:16, 18, 28-29; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:45, 49; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; 1 Jn.4:9-10, 14).
   c. Jesus was the fulfillment of all the prophecies which promised the coming of the Messiah for man.
3. The question was very personal. It might even offend some. But Jesus meant the question to be personal. It had to be, for a man's eternal destiny and fate is determined by his answer. Jesus was not just a man as the popular idea of Him declared. He was more, much more. He was *the Christ of God*. Man's life, death, and eternal fate hinged on how he saw and confessed Christ.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (Jn.1:41).

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him [the Messiah], of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn.1:45).

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).

"Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (Jn.4:29).

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69).

"She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27).

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God" (Jn.20:28).

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).

4 (9:21-22) **Messiah—Messiahship—Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection**: the full meaning of the conviction. There are two significant points here.

1. The full meaning of the Messiah was not yet fully grasped. The disciples were yet to experience the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The prophecies of the Messiah which stuck out in their minds were those dealing with His exaltation, sovereignty, power, and glory. They saw His ruling and reigning over the earth and subjecting men to God by force. Their idea of the Messiah was that of an earthly rule within the bounds of the physical and material world. They had little if any idea of the spiritual world; therefore, they were not ready to share the truth of the Messiah (see note—Eph.1:3).They would be sharing an incomplete message, a false message; so Jesus had to charge them to tell no man, not yet, not until they understood the real meaning of the spiritual salvation which He was bringing to man. Note the importance of understanding the full meaning of the Messiah. Jesus charged them and then commanded them to say nothing until they did understand.
2. Jesus began to clearly reveal that the Messiah had to be both a suffering and a conquering Savior. For some time Jesus had been telling His disciples about His death and resurrection, but they had not understood. Why? There are two reasons:
   ⇒ The idea of a suffering Messiah differed radically from their own idea of the Messiah (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23).
   ⇒ The revelation had been hid in pictures and symbols.

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (Jn.2:19).

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (Jn.3:14).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

The difference now was that Jesus no longer spoke in pictures and symbols, but He told them in simple and direct words (Mt.20:18-20; Lk.18:31-33). A new stage in the revelation of God's plan for the world was now taking place: God's Son was to die and be raised again for the sins of the world. God's plan for saving the world was to take place through a suffering Messiah, not a conquering Messiah who was going to deliver a *materialistic* world into the hands of His followers. His death was to usher in the Kingdom of God, making it possible for His followers to live eternally in the very presence of God Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; cp. Jn.3:16; 5:24f).

Note the word "must" (dei). It is strong; it means a constraint, an imperative, a necessity was laid upon Him. He had no choice. His death and resurrection had been planned and willed by God through all eternity. The prophets had so predicted. He must fulfill the will of God, for God had ordained His death. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 2:23 for more discussion. Cp. Mt.26:54.)

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Lk.24:26).

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Lk.24:46-47).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:22) **Jesus Christ, Opposition**: note the three Jewish groups who were to take the lead in killing Jesus. These were the three groups who made up the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of Jewish justice. It was comprised of seventy members (cp. the historical basis for this structure, 2 Chron.19:5-11).

1. The elders: these were the older, respected men of a community. The elders were judges of the civil courts, of temporal affairs (Ex.3:29; 12:21; 24:9; Num.11:25; 1 Sam.16:4; Ezra 10:14; Mt.27:12).
2. The chief priests: these were primarily leaders from among the Sadducees who held most of the high offices of Jewish government under Roman rule (see note—Acts 23:8). The chief priests were judges of religious affairs.
3. The Scribes: these were Pharisees who held the teaching positions of the nation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2).

	B. The Terms of Discipleship, 9:23-27 (Mt.16:24-28; Mk.8:34-9:1)	vantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?	**materialist** a. If he gains the world b. And loses himself c. What does he gain?[DS2]
1 The terms of discipleship a. Must deny self b. Must take up the cross—daily[DS1] c. Must follow Jesus	23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.	26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.	**4 The judgment of the materialist** a. The reason: He is ashamed of Jesus & His Words b. The judgment: Counted unsuitable for glory
2 The warning to the materialist a. Do not save life for self b. Spend life for Christ	24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.	27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.	**5 The disciple's reward: God's kingdom**
3 The question for the	25 For what is a man ad-		

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM ANDDEATH, 9:18-50

B. The Terms of Discipleship, 9:23-27

(9:23-27) **Introduction**: Jesus was to bear the cross for man. He had just discussed this fact with His disciples (Lk.9:22). Now He said there was another cross—a cross which man was to bear for Him. If a man wished to follow Christ, he had to bear this cross. There was no option. Discipleship demanded it.

1. The terms of discipleship (v.23).
2. The warning to the materialist (v.24).
3. The question for the materialist (v.25).
4. The judgment of the materialist (v.26).
5. The disciple's reward: God's kingdom (v.27).

1 (9:23) **Cross—Self-Denial—Death, to Self—Discipleship**: there are three terms of discipleship if a person wills to follow Christ.

1. A person must deny himself. Man's tendency is to indulge himself and do exactly what he desires; but the believer is not to indulge himself, his comfort and ease, appetites and urges, thoughts and feelings, deceptions and enticements, plots and intrigues, pride and boastings, reactions and disturbances. The believer is to deny himself by discipline and control and by loving and caring, sacrificing and giving, helping and ministering.
2. A person must take up his cross and do it daily (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Cross*—Lk.9:23).
3. A person must follow Jesus. However, man's tendency is to follow someone else and to give one's first allegiance to something else. Within the world, there are many things available for a man to serve and to put first. There are…

- service organizations
- humanitarian needs
- religion (institutional)
- family
- recreation
- hobby
- education
- profession
- houses
- business
- clubs
- self (fame, honor)
- comfort
- clothing
- social acceptance
- pleasure
- health
- looks
- sports
- fleshy stimulation

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:27-29).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal.5:16).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:1-2).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph.5:5).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:23) **Cross—Discipleship**: people in Jesus' day knew what it meant to "take up" a cross. They saw scores of criminals bear the cross to the place where they were to be executed, and they witnessed scores of crucifixions, some even by the side of the roads that led in and out of the cities.

The cross does not mean merely bearing one's particular hardship in life, such as poor health, abuse, unemployment, invalid parents, an unsaved spouse, a wayward child. The cross is always an instrument of death, not just an object to carry or bear. The Christian is to die mentally and actively. He is to deny himself daily. He is to let the mind of Christ, the mind of humbling himself to the point of death, be in him and fill his thoughts every day (Ph.2:5-8; 2 Cor.10:3-5). He is to put his will, his desires, his wants, his ambitions to death. In their stead, he is to follow Jesus and to do His will all day long. Note this is not negative, passive behavior. It takes positive, active behavior to *will*, to *deny self*, to *take up* one's *cross*, to *follow* Christ. A person has to act, work, get to it, be diligent, consistent, and enduring in order to die to self.

There are several ways the believer dies to self. Romans 6:11-13 spells out the ways as clearly as they can be.

> **"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:11-13; cp. Ro.6:2-10).**

1. The believer reckons or counts himself crucified with Christ.

> **"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" (Ro.6:11[a]).**
> **"Knowing this, that our old man is [was] crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).**
> **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).**
> **"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).**

2. The believer reckons or counts himself dead to sin, but alive to God.

> **"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Ro.6:11).**
> **"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1 Pt.4:2).**

3. The believer does not let sin reign in his body.

> **"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Ro.6:12).**
> **"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).**

4. The believer does not yield his bodily members as instruments of sin.

> **"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin" (Ro.6:13[a]).**
> **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).**

5. The believer yields himself to God—as much as those who are alive from the dead are yielded to God.

> **"But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead" (Ro.6:13[b]).**
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Ro.12:1).**
> **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Ro.13:14).**

6. The believer yields his bodily members as instruments of righteousness.

> **"But yield...your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13[c]).**
> **"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal.5:16).**

It should be noted that one's hardship or burden can bring a person to the place where the Lord can deal with him. It is then that the hardship becomes the cross and denial of self that Jesus is talking about. With an act of self-denial, the Christian can then reckon himself alive to God (Ro.6:13). He can then follow Jesus. This is an act which can be described as committing all that one is and has to Christ. It is an act that needs to be repeated every day (cp. Mt.10:38). (See outlines and notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23-26; 19:27-30.)

2 (9:24) **Life**: the warning to the materialist is clear. Note the word "life" (psuche). In this context it means the natural, animal life; the earthly life that quickly passess away; the fading, aging, decaying, corruptible life of the earth. The warning is twofold. (See note—Mt.16:25-28 for more discussion.)

1. Do not save your life for yourself. If a person saves his life, that is, works to please himself on this earth, he will lose his life eternally. A man does not have life...
   - to indulge himself: getting all he can of the comforts and pleasures and interests of life.
   - to hoard life: keeping all the good things of life and seldom becoming involved in giving and sacrificing to help those who do not have.

> **"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).**
>
> **"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (Lk.12:19-21).**
>
> **"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).**
>
> **"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [indulge, party, carouse] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:12-14).**
>
> **"He that laboreth, laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him" (Pr.16:26).**
>
> **"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (Eccl.6:7).**
>
> **"It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion" (Is.29:8).**
>
> **"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil" (Is.56:2).**

2. Spend your life for Christ. Note the words "for my sake." The person who loses his life, that is, works to please Christ on this earth, shall save his life eternally.

   a. A man has life to know God and fellowship with God.

> **"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).**
>
> **"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).**

   b. A man has life to know men and fellowship with men.

> **"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet [fit] for him" (Gen.2:18).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**
>
> **"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).**
>
> **"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:63).**
>
> **"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up" (Eccl.4:9-10).**
>
> **"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Mal.3:16).**

   c. A man has life to help save a world lost in sin and shame and suffering.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

3 (9:25) **Materialism—Worldliness—Wealth—Soul—Life**: the materialist is questioned. The man who seeks to save his life, who works to please himself, is challenged to think honestly. Christ asks one question of the materialist, but it has two parts or pictures. (See note—Mt.16:25-28 for more discussion.)

1. The picture of gaining the *whole* world. Note that Christ did not say this: what if a man could gain and own all the land of Texas, or all of the wealth of Africa. He said what if a man could gain the *whole world*, all the world's...

- land
- honor
- gold
- wealth
- pleasure
- satisfaction

Imagine for a moment: What if a man could gain the whole world? No man can or will gain it all; but many pursue and some do gain a great deal of land, wealth, honor, pleasure, and carnal satisfaction.

2. The picture of losing self, of being cast away. Note that this is a stated fact, an inevitable and sure result. The man who seeks to please himself is doomed to "lose himself" and to "be cast away." He *tried to find himself* here on earth, but he never did. He *lost himself*. He lost the greatest things in all the world: certainty, assurance, confidence, and satisfaction of knowing that he is eternally secure and destined to live and serve God forever.

"What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:25).

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom [false professions] shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:11-12).

"And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment [righteousness]? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:12-13).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor.9:27).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:25) **Castaway** (zemiotheis): to suffer the loss of, to forfeit, to lose what is of greatest value, to be punished by forfeiting and losing.

4 (9:26) **Judgment—Jesus Christ, Coming Again—Ashamed, of Christ—Rejection, of Christ**: the judgment of the materialist is tragic. He did not have to suffer the judgment of God, but the materialist chose the world and its things and pleasures over Christ. Why is the materialist to be judged?

1. There is basically one reason: the materialist is ashamed of *Jesus and His words*. He is embarrassed and ashamed by such things as...

- being known as a true believer.
- following and obeying Christ completely.
- witnessing and standing up for Christ and morality.
- living less extravagantly than others.
- having less because of giving so much.
- associating with the needy to help them.
- driving a cheaper car.
- living in a less expensive home.
- not socializing with the worldly.
- not compromising and going along.
- not having the things others have.
- not joining in off-colored talk and jokes.

Simply stated, the man *loved* the acceptance and recognition of society, the comfort and pleasure of the world too much—he loved it all too much to give up his life and bear the reproach of Christ. He misjudged, counting the few years (ten to thirty years) of plenty on this earth as worth the unending years of the new earth and heavens.

2. Judgment is the most tragic event imaginable in the life of the materialist. He is counted unsuitable for glory.
   a. The Lord is coming. It is stated without equivocation. It is definite, even fixed. Jesus said He shall come.
   b. The Lord is coming in a threefold glory.
      ⇒ There is His own glory, exalted as the Messiah, the Christ of God (Ph.2:9-11).

⇒ There is the glory of God in all the brilliance and splendor of His person (1 Tim.6:16; 1 Jn.1:5; Rev.22:15).
⇒ There is the glory of the angels in their magnificence of being and brightness. They shall accompany Jesus when He returns to judge the earth.

The point is clear: when Jesus comes in His glory, the materialist will not join Him. He will not be welcomed into the glory of the Lord. Why? Christ will be *ashamed* of him. He will be embarrassed by the man, too embarrassed to acknowledge that He knows the man. The man is...

- not properly dressed (with the righteousness of God).
- not employed (in the things of God).
- too dirty (morally and righteously).
- too poor (in the spirit).
- too immoral (not repenting).
- too unjust (not changing).
- too disliked (by being obstinate in unbelief).
- too different (from the children of God).
- too uneducated (in the things of God).

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23).

"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Mt.25:12).

"But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Lk.12:9).

"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).

5 (9:27) **Reward—Kingdom of God**: the reward of the disciple is God's kingdom. The believer enters the Kingdom of God immediately upon believing (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Standing there in the crowd before Christ, some were to be eye-witnesses of the death and resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit. They were to taste and experience the Kingdom of God. Since that day, many have been saved and have seen the Kingdom of God before experiencing *physical death* (cp. Jn.3:16; 5:24; 8:52; Heb.2:9, 14-15).

	C. The Events of the Transfiguration: A Glimpse into Glory, 9:28-36 (Mt.17:1-13; Mk.9:2-13)	were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.	a. Peter, James, & John
1 Jesus took three disciples up into a mountain	28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.	33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.	b. They desired to retain the experience
2 Event 1: Jesus was praying			
3 Event 2: The countenance & clothing of Jesus were changed—a glittering white	29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.	34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.	**6 Event 5: A cloud overshadowed them**
4 Event 3: Two men appeared & talked with Jesus a. Moses, the lawgiver; Elijah, the great prophet b. They discussed His death	30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: 31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.	35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.	**7 Event 6: A voice spoke to them**
5 Event 4: Three disciples witnessed the event	32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they	36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.	**8 Event 7: A stunned silence fell upon them**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM AND DEATH, 9:18-50

C. The Events of the Transfiguration: A Glimpse into Glory, 9:28-36

(9:28-36) **Introduction—Transfiguration**: there were at least seven reasons for the transfiguration.

1. Jesus needed a very special strength to face the pressure of the cross. In the transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane, God is shown strengthening His Son in a marvelous way. Jesus was enabled to become the sin-bearer for the world (2 Cor.5:21).
2. The disciples needed their faith strengthened to face what lay ahead. Therefore, God gave them a glimpse of the glory of Jesus, that He is "the brightness of His glory, the express image of His Person" (Heb.1:3).
3. The disciples needed the quickening power and insight of God's Spirit, for Jesus was to be killed (Mt.16:21; cp. Mt.17:1-2). After the resurrection, the disciples' memory would need to be *quickened* to understand the spiritual significance of the cross. They would thereby become dynamic witnesses for Him. Remembering the transfiguration would stir their conviction.
4. The disciples needed to know that Jesus was more than a great lawgiver and a great prophet. In fact, He was the very Son of God who fulfilled all the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament). He was the One who was to usher in the New Testament or covenant between God and man (see outline and notes—Mt.5:17-18; 2 Cor.3:6-18; cp. Mt.9:16-17).
5. The disciples needed to see into the glory of the spiritual world and into the reality of life after death. The disciples needed to understand God's purpose in Christ: to save man eternally and to make it possible for man to be transferred from this world into the next upon death. The Messiah of the cross was God's way, not a messiah of power and dominion.
6. The disciples would need to be reminded of the glory of Christ in the future, for the cross was an ugly sight because of the blood and suffering and sin and death. But it was also a glorious event planned by God, through which He revealed His love and grace and through which He saves the world. (See outline and notes—Mt.16:21-28.)
7. The disciples needed some glimpse into the glory that will be experienced when all believers are raised and transformed into the Lord's image. By seeing Moses and Elijah, the disciples saw two Old Testament believers who were *still living*, and they were living in a glorious state (v.30-31). They also knew that Christ had power over life and death. He could raise whom He wished from the dead to be in glory with Him.

The transfiguration was a striking event, an event that both interests and intrigues men. But, as has already been seen, intrigue was not its purpose. We should learn from the transfiguration, learn more about who Jesus really is and more about the life we are to live.

1. Jesus took three disciples up into a mountain (v.28).
2. Event 1: Jesus was praying (v.28).
3. Event 2: Jesus' countenance and clothing were changed—a glittering white (v.29).
4. Event 3: two men appeared and talked with Jesus (v.30-31).
5. Event 4: three disciples witnessed the event (v.32-33).
6. Event 5: a cloud overshadowed them (v.34).
7. Event 6: a voice spoke to them (v.35).
8. Event 7: a stunned silence fell upon them (v.36).

1 (9:28) **Inner Circle**: Jesus took three disciples up into a mountain. The disciples were Peter, James, and John—His inner circle (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Inner Circle*—Mk.9:2). Why did He take just these three disciples? The answer is not given. Perhaps it was for the same reason that leaders sometimes need to be alone with only a few of their closest friends.

⇒ There is the need for supportive companionship and prayer because of severe pressure.

⇒ There is the need to guard what is happening from spreading out into the public before it should.

The leader knows that the fewer witnesses to an event the less likely something will spread. In Jesus' case, He was under severe pressure, and the transfiguration and the glory of His person could not be understood until after the cross and the resurrection. He had to keep the matter quiet for now (cp. v.36).

2 (9:28) **Jesus Christ, Prayer of—Prayer**: the first event was Jesus' praying. The transfiguration was a spectacular event—one that met the special needs of Jesus Christ. Note that Jesus went up into the mountain for the express purpose of praying (v.28). At least two things drove Him to pray at this time.

1. The cross lay right before Him. The *weight* and *load* of bearing the sin of the world was closing in on Him, and the pressure was almost more than He could bear. The terrifying strain and pressure are seen in three significant events that lay just ahead: the need for Moses and Elijah to talk with Him about His death; the excruciating pressure of Gethsemane; and the terrifying cry on the cross (Mt.26:36-46; see note—Mt.27:46-49).
2. The disciples had so much to learn and time was short. Jesus faced a tremendous problem: how to make them understand that God's way was not the way of earthly power and might (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—Lk.7:21-23), but the way of spiritual and eternal salvation (Jn.3:16; 2 Cor.5:21; 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18).

Jesus had no choice with such pressure and responsibility bearing in upon Him. He had to seek God and trust God to meet His need, and God did—in a most remarkable and encouraging way. While He met Jesus' need, God also met the needs of the three disciples who accompanied Him.

Thought 1. God will always meet the needs of the person who prays and seeks His help.

> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Is.41:17).**
>
> **"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).**
>
> **"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**
>
> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).**

3 (9:29) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Glory**: the second event was the change of Jesus' countenance and clothing. Note three points.

1. His countenance or face was altered and became different. "His face did shine as the sun" (Mt.17:2). Imagine being as bright "as the sun!"
2. His clothing was altered and became different, a glittering or dazzling white. The word "glistering" or "dazzling" (exastrapton) means to flash like lightning, to gleam, brighten, be radiant.

> **"White as light" (Mt.17:2).**
> **"White as snow" (Mk.9:3).**
> **"White and glistering" (Lk.9:29).**

3. Jesus was praying when these changes took place. Apparently, He was concentrating so intensely and was so wrapped up in God that God transformed Him, that is, allowed His Godly nature to shine right through Him.

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

1) The divine nature of Christ is seen in this event. God is showing man that Christ is definitely His Son. There is no excuse for unbelief.
2) The need of Christ was desperate, so God was meeting His need in a very special way. When our need is desperate, God will meet our need in a very special way if we will come to Him in intense prayer.

Thought 2. When a genuine believer prays with intensity and heavy concentration, his countenance is sometimes changed. He experiences a precious glow, a brightness, a light about his whole countenance.

> **"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor.3:18).**
>
> **"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).**
>
> **"If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him [God]; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear: because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away: and thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning" (Job 11:13-17).**
>
> **"They looked unto him [God], and were lightened: and their faces were ashamed" (Ps.34:5).**
>
> **"Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed" (Eccl.8:1).**
>
> **"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).**

4 (9:30-31) **Jesus Christ, Death—Moses—Elijah—Exodus—Salvation**: the third event was the two men who appeared and talked with Jesus. Note two things.

1. Moses and Elijah appeared and talked with Jesus. Moses was the great lawgiver and Elijah was the greatest of the prophets. These two men were honoring and ministering to Jesus. By such they were *symbolizing* that the law and the prophets found their fulfillment in Jesus. Jesus was the One of whom the law and the prophets spoke; He was the One to whom they pointed (cp. Lk.24:26-27; 1 Pt.1:11).

2. The conversation concerned the death of Jesus. Jesus was sensing extreme pressure in thinking about His death, and the thought probably never left His mind. Death for Him meant so much more than the death of men. He was going to die for the sins of all men of all generations, and God was going to separate Himself from Jesus. The pressure and suffering were to be unbearable (see note—Mt.20:19; Mk.10:33). He desperately needed to be strengthened—inwardly and spiritually—to bear the suffering of the cross.

Apparently, Jesus needed a very special kind of encouragement, an encouragement from two Old Testament believers—believers who had lived in the faith and expectation of His coming to save them. Sharing their love for Him and their trust and hope in His dying for them, they would stir Him to continue on for the sake of mankind. It must have been a precious moment for all three. Luke gives some hint of this. His word for "decease" (exodos) means exodus. There stood Moses sharing how God had so miraculously saved and delivered the children of Israel out of bondage and how the exodus (deliverance) was only a picture of the marvelous deliverance that He, God's Son, was to accomplish for man. Jesus was to accomplish a new exodus, a new *saving deliverance*, except this time it was to be for all men. All men were to be delivered from the bondage of sin and death, from the devil and hell—delivered into the glorious liberty of God and life, both abundant and eternal life. Jesus' dying was to be well worth it, Moses and Elijah stressed. Note: the very encouragement that our Lord needed as Man was given by two who had believed and hoped in His coming. Being reminded of the marvelous deliverance (exodus) that had happened so long ago was bound to strengthen and lift the heart of Christ. Just seeing Moses and Elijah stand there, two who had trusted and believed and hoped, was bound to cause the Lord's spirit to rise. He was greatly encouraged and knew that He could not fail these men who had trusted and hoped in Him so much.

Elijah's stress, of course, would have been the many prophecies concerning the sufferings of Jesus and the glory that should follow. Again, Luke hints at this in the word "accomplish" (pleroo).

> **"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the son of man shall be accomplished" (Lk.18:31. Cp. Lk.12:50; 22:37.)**
>
> **"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pt.1:10-11).**

Thought 1. Our faith and hope are realized and fulfilled in Christ. He is our Deliverer or Exodus out of the grip of sin and death, the devil and hell. We can be free in Christ, free to live abundantly and eternally.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).**
>
> **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Ro.8:1-4).

Thought 2. Discussing death should not be feared, not if we are genuine believers. Sharing with other believers will encourage us in our faith and hope.

5 (9:32-33) **Spiritual Experiences—Glory**: the fourth event was the presence of three disciples to witness the event. Apparently it was night (v.37). The three had fallen asleep. Suddenly something woke them—more than likely the brilliance of the light, the Shekinah glory upon Christ. The three were *tasting glory*. They were in the very presence of God Himself and were tasting some of heaven's perfection: joy, peace, security, fulfillment. They did not want to leave this hallowed ground.

Note what Peter did.

1. Peter offered to build three *shelters* (skenas) for Jesus and the two prophets. By this act he hoped to extend the stay of the heavenly guests and the glorious experience. The shelters offered were the booths made of branches and grass which could be quickly built, the kind often built by travellers on their stops along the road night by night.
2. Peter said, "Let us." Even in a moment as glorious as this, Peter would not act against His Lord's will. Imagine the devotion and loyalty.

Thought 1. There is always a pull to live in the glory and forget the human need, to experience the high and neglect the low. We must always remember: it is the discipline of serving where there is need and ministering to the low that results in glory and the experiences of highs.

"Is it not [your purpose] to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Is.58:7).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous" (1 Pt.3:8).

6 (9:34) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Covenants—Law vs. Grace**: the fifth event was the cloud that overshadowed them. The cloud and the voice of God terrified the disciples and caused them to fall immediately upon their faces, prostrate and unable to look up. As mortal men they were crouched in fear, and paralyzed in terror. Note three facts.

1. The cloud was "a bright cloud." This was the Shekinah glory, the cloud that symbolized God's presence. It was the cloud that guided Israel out of Egypt and that rested upon the tabernacle and above the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy Place (Ex.40:34-38). God "only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which *no man can approach* unto" (1 Tim.1:16). God dwells in unapproachable light upon which no man can look. Peter later called it "the excellent glory" (2 Pt.1:17).
2. The "bright cloud" overshadowing Christ was a sharp contrast to the dark and threatening cloud that overshadowed the giving of the old covenant to Moses, that is, the law (Ex.19:18; 20:21). There is a point to be made here. The law (old covenant) was dark and threatening (see notes—Gal.3:10). The new covenant (the love of Christ) is bright: it is given to save and bless, not to threaten and condemn (Heb.12:18-24. Cp. Heb.8:6-13.)
3. The voice which spoke actually said, "This is My Son, the Beloved One" (Greek). Note the two facts stressed: Christ is God's Son, and He is the Beloved One. The idea is that Christ is the *only begotten Son* who was to be given for the world.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).

7 (9:35) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the sixth event was the voice that spoke out of the cloud. The message was clear: "This is my Son, my chosen One [ho huios mou, ho eklelegmenos], hear ye him!" "Listen to Him, for He is my Son, my chosen One." God was both telling and warning the disciples to listen to Christ...

- He was God's Son, the beloved and chosen One.
- What Jesus spoke was the truth, even when He predicted His death and resurrection.

Thought 1. God warns every living man to listen to Christ for the same two reasons.

> **"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:9-12).**
>
> **"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (Jn.8:26).**
>
> **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jn.12:49).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**
>
> **"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).**
>
> **"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).**
>
> **"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet [Christ] shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you" (Acts 3:22).**

8 (9:36) **Quietness**: the seventh event was the stunned silence. Jesus was standing there all alone. There was stone silence. No one said anything, not even Jesus. We can picture the silence throughout the night. They were apparently on the mountain all night (v.37). Note the disciples said nothing about the experience during those days (see note, *Inner Circle*—Lk.9:28).

Thought 1. There is a time for silence, for being still and meditating upon the Lord.

> **"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (Ps.4:4).**
>
> **"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).**
>
> **"Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers" (1 Sam.12:7).**
>
> **"Oh that ye would altogether hold your peace! And it should be your wisdom" (Job 13:5).**
>
> **"Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14).**
>
> **"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Pr.10:19).**
>
> **"Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding" (Pr.17:28).**
>
> **"A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccl.3:7).**
>
> **"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab.2:20).**
>
> **"Holy thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests" (Zeph.1:7).**
>
> **"Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation" (Zech.2:13).**
>
> **"Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly" (Acts 19:36).**
>
> **"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Th.4:11).**
>
> **"But let it [one's dress or clothing] be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:4).**

	D. The Second Prediction of Death: A Rebuke of the Present Generation, 9:37-45 (Mt.17:14-23; Mk.9:14-32)	O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.	**& a wayward heart**[DS2,3]
		42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.	**3 Rebuke 2: A lack of God's power** a. Jesus rebuked the disciples' lack of power by His own act of healing
1 The next day after the transfiguration a. Jesus was met by a crowd b. A man cried out in desperation	37 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.	43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,	b. The people were amazed
1) For his only son	38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child.		
2) The problem: An evil spirit possessed him[DS1]	39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.	44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.	**4 Rebuke 3: A slowness to grasp the Messiah's death**
c. The disciples were powerless	40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.	45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.	
2 Rebuke 1: A lack of faith	41 And Jesus answering said,		

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM AND DEATH, 9:18-50

D. The Second Prediction of Death: A Rebuke of the Present Generation, 9:37-45

(9:37-45) **Introduction**: Jesus was rebuking His generation (v.41). They deserved to be rebuked—so does any generation which stands guilty of such faithless living.

1. The next day after the transfiguration (v.37-40).
2. Rebuke 1: a lack of faith and a wayward heart (v.41).
3. Rebuke 2: a lack of God's power (v.42-43).
4. Rebuke 3: a slowness to grasp the Messiah's death (v.44-45).

1 (9:37-40) **Powerlessness—Seeking Christ**: it was the next day after the transfiguration. Jesus and the three disciples were coming down from having spent the night on the mountain. A huge crowd ran to meet Jesus, and from their midst a man broke forth, elbowing his way up to Jesus (Mt.17:14; Mk.9:15).

1. The man cried out in desperation: "Master, I beseech thee." The words "cried" and "beseeched" are strong; he shouted and begged for Jesus to meet his need.

"Look upon my son: for he is mine only child." The word for "look upon" (epiblepsai) is a medical term. It means to carefully examine the patient, to look upon with pity. The son had an evil spirit that abused him physically (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:39).

2. The disciples were powerless in helping the man, despite his desperate need. This was tragic, for it meant that the power of God had left them. They had just demonstrated the power to cast out demons on their preaching tour (Lk.9:1-6, 10), but now they had no power. There was something wrong in their lives, some sin, some lack which was blocking the power of God. Jesus later told them they had not been praying and fasting as they should (Mt.17:21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:39) **Evil Spirits**: the son's illness seemed to have been both physical and spiritual. The description of the illness in Mark points toward what is known today as epilepsy and demon-possession (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:17-18). The demon-possession in particular seems to have heightened and aggravated the condition, perhaps causing some suicidal tendencies (Mt.17:15; Mk.9:22). Throughout the gospels this seems to be one of the major works of evil spirits: to *heighten and aggravate* existing conditions.

2 (9:41) **Unbelief—Heart, Wayward**: the first rebuke was for a lack of faith and a wayward heart. Note three things.

1. Jesus spoke to His whole generation. He enlarged His comments beyond the disciples. They had no power; neither did anyone else in His generation. What the disciples lacked was lacked by all. Their sins were the sins of all, the sins of *being faithless and perverse* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—Lk.9:41).

2. Jesus actually said that His presence would not always be available; He would not be patient with man's unbelief forever. Note: there is a point of coming judgment in this statement.
3. Jesus was looked upon only as a great prophet and minister...
   - not as the very presence of God in their midst.
   - not as the true Messiah before whom a person must repent.
   - not as the Christ to whom a person owed his life and service.

Thus, the generation of people were walking around faithless and perverse before God, as powerless and helpless as ever.

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe" (Lk.22:67).

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:24-25).

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" (Jn.12:37).

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" (Is.53:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:41) **Faithless** (apistos): disbelieving; being without faith; being out of faith; not keeping faith, unbelieving (cp. Tit.1:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(9:41) **Perverse** (diastrepho): to distort, to twist, to turn aside or away, to be torn in two, to be corrupted (cp. Acts 20:30; Ph.2:15).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim.6:5).

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them" (Pr.11:3).

"A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised" (Pr.12:8).

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit" (Pr.15:4).

"Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich" (Pr.28:6).

3 (9:42-43) **Minister, Duty**: the second rebuke was for a lack of God's power. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus rebuked the disciples' lack of power by His own act of healing.
   a. Jesus healed the boy while the evil spirit was actually attacking the boy, while he was at his very worst. The Lord's power was clearly demonstrated.

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

b. Jesus rebuked the spirit, broke the devil's power by *His Word*. Satan could not stand before God's Word. Jesus had purposed to spoil principalities and powers.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
>
> **"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).**
>
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

c. Jesus showed tenderness for men. He delivered the little boy to his father.

2. The people were all amazed (exeplessonto depantes). They marvelled, were astonished at "the mighty power of God." The Greek word is "megaleioteti," which means majesty. They marvelled at "the majesty of God." Note that Jesus brought honor to God, not to Himself.

Thought 1. Powerlessness is inexcusable. Why? Because Christ has revealed how the believer can possess the power and strength of God.

> **"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Mt.17:20-21).**
>
> **"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (Jn.3:27).**
>
> **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).**
>
> **"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor.3:5).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8. See outline—Ro.8:1-17.)**

4 (9:44-45) **Dullness—Understanding, Lack of**: the third rebuke was for a slowness to grasp the Messiah's death. Apparently, the disciples began to think about the earthly reign of Jesus. The power of God demonstrated that Jesus had the power to conquer the earth and subject all men to Himself. Their hopes were stirred.

But note what Jesus did. He rebuked their thoughts of a physical and material Messiah. He again had to show them that God's Messiah had to die in order to save the world.

1. Jesus strongly exhorted: "Let these sayings sink down into your ears." The Greek is, "Put these sayings into your ears." Give special attention to them.

2. The word "delivered" (paradidosthai) means to be ordained, predetermined in the counsel and plan of God. (See note—Mt.17:22.)

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**
>
> **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).**

3. The disciples did not grasp the Messiah's death. They just did not understand. Note why: it was hidden from them, so that they could not perceive it.

Why was it hid from them? Certainly not because of God. The reason had to be because of their unbelief and perverseness. They just refused to see it. They were spiritually dull, lacking a sensitivity to spiritual truth.

> **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).**
>
> **"Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time [the day and age of Christ]?" (Lk.12:56).**
>
> **"Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word" (Jn.8:43).**
>
> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Ro.3:11).

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing" (Heb.5:11).

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle" (Ps.32:8-9).

"Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:20).

"When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire: for it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favor" (Is.27:11).

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).

"Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it? But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest" (Jer.5:21-24).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).

1 The desire for greatness: Wanting place, recognition & power **2 The picture of greatness** a. Jesus took a child b. Jesus held the child **3 The right concept of greatness** a. Receiving a child in	**E. The Way of Greatness: Humility, 9:46-50** (Mt.18:1-4; Mk.9:33-41) 46 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. 47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, 48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me:	and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great. 49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.	Jesus' name b. Reward 1) Will receive Jesus 2) Will receive God 3) Will be great **4 The right to greatness: Not an exclusive right**

DIVISION IV

THE SON OF MAN'S INTENSIVE PREPARATION OF HIS DISCIPLES FOR JERUSALEM AND DEATH, 9:18-50

E. The Way of Greatness: Humility, 9:46-50

(9:46-50) **Introduction**: people are interested in greatness to varying degrees. It is enough for some people to simply be accepted and approved by friends and neighbors; that is enough *greatness* for them. Others want more: to be elevated to a particular position, to live in a particular neighborhood, to own a certain kind of car, to hold a particular club membership—they want something that gives them greater recognition and greater prestige. They crave for more greatness than others. Some crave the greatness of authority and rule, of power and fame, of position and wealth. They want the prestige and honor and recognition far above the ordinary.

Note another fact: the nature of a person determines whether he secures his greatness by hook or crook or by respect and honesty, by meanness and depravity or by right and goodness. A man's heart determines whether people are blessed or hurt by his greatness. A good neighbor or ruler blesses others. A bad neighbor or ruler hurts others.

Jesus teaches the way to greatness.

1. The desire for greatness: wanting place, recognition, and power (v.46).
2. The picture of greatness (v.47).
3. The right concept of greatness (v.48).
4. The right to greatness is not an exclusive right (v.49-50).

1 (9:46) **Greatness—Worldliness—Material vs. Spiritual—Selfishness**: the disciples desired greatness in the Kingdom of Christ. They desired places of honor, recognition, and power.

1. The disciples were actually arguing over the highest positions in the Lord's kingdom. The word "reasoning" (dialogismos) means a dispute, debate, or argument. They were maneuvering for positions of leadership. Later, James and John were even to manipulate their mother into asking Jesus for the highest positions.

2. The disciples were thinking of an earthly kingdom, a physical and material rule right here on earth. Their desire was for worldly position, name, recognition, honor, authority, challenge, duties, pleasure, and wealth. They were not thinking in terms of goodness or character. They did not mean the greatest in love and care, in ministry and help, but in position and rule, name and recognition.

3. The disciples were full of self, just as all men are. They were thinking of self, not of others, not how they could be great in helping others. They were not even thinking of Jesus. And remember, He had just been revealing that He was to *give* His life for the salvation of the world (v.44. Cp. Mk.9:33-34.) Their thoughts should have been on Jesus and the meaning of what He had said. They should have been seeking to encourage Him and to learn all they could from Him. Instead they were so full of self, they could think of nothing but themselves.

Thought 1. It is difficult to admit that we are full of self, that is, self-centered and selfish. The fact hurts; we revolt against it. But the truth has to be faced before we can become what we should be.

> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
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> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
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> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).**
>
> **"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).**
>
> **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:16-17).

"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth" (Ps.10:3).

"They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps.49:6-7).

"Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Pr.25:14).

"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:10).

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).

4. The disciples did not understand what the Kingdom of Heaven was. They still saw an earthly and temporal kingdom and not a spiritual and eternal kingdom. They still thought in terms of getting all they could for a few short years while on this earth. They had not grasped the hope and reality of the spiritual world, of eternal life and blessings. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; Eph.1:3 for more discussion.)

2 (9:47) **Greatness—Salvation—Deliverance—Freedom—Bondage**: the picture of greatness was acted out by Jesus. Note that He pictured what greatness was before He explained the right concept. The picture involved two acts. First, He reached out and took a child; and second, He set the child by His side. What was Jesus doing?

Very simply, Jesus was *showing* the disciples what greatness was. A person is great when he takes a child and brings that child to Jesus. Greatness surrounds Christ and children, children who are *willing* to be brought to Christ. Greatness is setting children, the people of the world, by the side of Christ, beside the One who can meet all their needs.

1. Greatness is bringing people to the One who can give them freedom from the bondages of this world. Imagine how great the person is who shows men how to be liberated from...

- sin
- guilt
- drunkenness
- immorality
- oppression
- loneliness
- suffering
- lying
- stealing
- emptiness
- death
- laziness
- cursing
- selfishness
- hatred

2. Greatness is bringing people to the One who can give them the right to live, to live abundantly on this earth and eternally when entering the next world.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 Jn.5:11-13).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Pr.11:30).

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).

3 (9:48) **Greatness**: the right concept of greatness is explained. Greatness is *receiving* a child, that is, a person, in the name of Jesus. To receive a child means at least three things.

1. It means doing just what Jesus did: we *reach out and welcome and accept* a person into our arms. This sounds easy—taking a child into our arms—but it is not always so. Sometimes a person...

- is unkempt, dirty, even filthy.
- is acting ugly, mean, misbehaving.
- is disliked, rejected, unacceptable to others.

And there is always the threat that receiving a person will cause our own friends to withdraw their friendship because the person is unacceptable to them.

2. It means sharing the best news that we have: the *good news of God's kingdom*. Note: Jesus did not say that greatness is *just* receiving a child. He adds that the child must be received *in His name*. The name of Jesus has to be shared with the person. The person is to be told and shown that we act in the name and cause of Jesus. The kingdom of God is to be shared with the child (the person received).

3. It means that we help the person in every way possible, no matter the cost. We do our best to meet his...
   - physical and mental needs.
   - material and social needs.
   - spiritual and godly needs.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**

Now, note what Jesus covered in this point. He revealed what the reward will be for receiving people in His name. This stresses the importance of receiving people. It is close to His heart, the very purpose for which He came to earth (Mt.20:28). It is the thing His followers are to be doing, the very thing to which we are to commit our lives. Therefore, He wants to challenge His followers to get to it. There is no better challenge than to lay the reward out in front of them. The reward is threefold for the man who receives persons *in the name of Jesus Christ*.

1. The disciple receives Christ. Note, it is in the very act of receiving others that we receive Christ. This means that the disciple receives a very special presence of Christ, an abiding presence, a presence that cares for and looks after and guides and directs his life.

Another way to see what Christ is saying is this...
- Receiving our neighbor *equals* receiving Christ.
- Loving our neighbor *equals* loving Christ.

> **"If a man say, I love God [Christ], and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 Jn.4:20. Cp. Mt.22:36-39.)**

2. The disciple receives God. Again, this is active, that is, it is *in the very act* of receiving Christ that we receive God. God enters the disciple's life *at the very moment* the disciple receives Christ.

> **"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Lk.6:35-36).**

3. The disciple shall be great. Note: Jesus did not say *greatest*; He said "great." Every one who serves by bringing men to Christ by receiving others *in the name of Christ* shall be great.

Note a crucial point. It is the person who receives others and who is actually reaching out to others in the name of Jesus who *receives Christ*. Reaching and receiving others is the evidence that one has received Christ. A person's heart has to be opened both to Christ and to others before Christ can ever enter his life. To open one's heart to Christ is to open one's heart to others. There is no such thing as an open heart to God and a closed hand to man. It is out of the heart that man acts. If his heart belongs to God, then his hand (life) belongs to man. He will do all he can to love and help man, receiving and welcoming every child who will be brought to Christ. That person "shall be great."

> **"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).**
>
> **"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mt.13:43).**
>
> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**
>
> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile" (Ro.2:10).**
>
> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

"For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb.10:34).

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb.11:26).

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pt.5:4).

"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).

4 (9:49-50) **Tolerance**: the right to greatness is not an exclusive right. John knew that the apostles had done just what Christ had demonstrated they should not do. They had just failed to receive a man; in fact, they had rejected the man. And to top it off, the man was ministering in the name of Christ. John wanted to find out if they were right in forbidding others to preach in Jesus' name. John felt there were bound to be limits to what Jesus was saying—certainly not everyone was to be received and welcomed and brought to Jesus—some people "followeth not with us." They were...

- different
- untrained
- uneducated
- immoral
- doctrinally unsound
- unruly
- unauthorized
- too far right
- too far left

What Jesus said is pointed and clear, yet it is difficult for some to accept.

⇒ "Forbid him not."

⇒ "He that is *not against* us is for us."

Note: Jesus said, "*against us*." Jesus and His followers are one. The man who stands against us stands against Jesus, and he who stands against Jesus stands against us. A person's attitude and behavior are to be watched. The way he acts toward Christ and His followers determines whether we receive him or not. A person who is against Jesus and His followers is not to be received. The person who receives Jesus and His followers is to be received (cp. Lk.9:5; 10:10-11). (See outline and notes—Mk.9:38-41 for more discussion.)

"And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Mt.10:11-15).

"And other sheep I have, which are *not of this fold*: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:16).

"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Ph.1:15-18).

"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me" (Lk.10:16).

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (1 Cor.8:12).

	V. THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21	for him.	
		53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.	b. He was rejected by the Samaritans[DS2]
		54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?	c. The disciples reacted against the Samaritans
	A. The Son of Man's Mission: Jesus' Mission Misunderstood, 9:51-56		
1 His mission: To secure salvation a. By the ascension[DS1] b. By death: He set His face toward Jerusalem	51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,	55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.	**3 His mission explained**
2 His mission misunderstood a. He sent forerunners to prepare the way	52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready	56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.	a. He did not come to use His power to destroy men's lives b. He came to use His power to save men

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

A. The Son of Man's Mission: Jesus' Mission Misunderstood, 9:51-56

(9:51-19:28) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus' Purpose**: this passage marks a significant turning point in Jesus' ministry. Chapters 9:51-19:28 have no parallel in the other Gospels. Most of the events are recorded by Luke alone. The thrust of the passage is that Jesus' face is set—it is fixed toward Jerusalem.

Luke divides this journey of Jesus into three stages. Each stage begins by strongly emphasizing Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem (Lk.9:51, 53; 13:22; 17:11). There are also several passages that hint or mention the journey (Lk.9:53, 57; 10:1, 38; 13:33; 14:25; 18:31; 19:11, 28).

(9:51-56) **Introduction**: Jesus turned and set His face toward Jerusalem and death. This was one of the turning points of His life. As He launched forth in this new direction, the first subject covered is His mission. The mission of the Son of Man is seen in clear terms—terms so clear that the follower of the Lord cannot miss the meaning.

1. His mission: to secure salvation (v.51).
2. His mission misunderstood (v.52-54).
3. His mission explained (v.55-56).

1 (9:51) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: Jesus' mission upon earth was to secure salvation. Jesus knew His mission; He knew why He had come to earth. He also knew that the time for Him to die for the salvation of men was at hand. Note the words, "when the time was come." He was fully aware that the time had come (Lk.9:22, 27, 31). Therefore, He turned around and "set His face to go to Jerusalem."

What is so significant about Jerusalem? Very simply, it was in Jerusalem that Jesus was to die for the salvation of men and be received up, that is, ascend into heaven. When Jesus "set His face to go to Jerusalem," Jerusalem symbolized the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. It was in Jerusalem that He secured salvation for man through His death, resurrection, and ascension.

1. Jesus Christ secured salvation by His ascension (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Ascension*—Lk.9:51 for discussion).
2. Jesus Christ secured salvation by His death.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
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> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"[God] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).**
>
> **"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).**
>
> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).**

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24; cp. 1 Pt.3:18).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:51) **Jesus Christ, Ascension**: the words "received up" (analempseos) mean taken up. They refer to the ascension of Christ (cp. analambano, Acts 1:2, 11, 22; 1 Tim.3:16). Salvation was to be secured by the ascension of Christ. How? The Ascended Lord means at least four things.

1. It means *the Risen Lord*. The ascension means that Christ arose from the dead. If He had remained in the grave, He would still be there in the form of dust. He could not have ascended. If He were to be "received up," He had to be *raised up—quickened—made alive—taken up*. No one can be *taken up* without first being raised up. Therefore, to speak of the ascension is to mean that Christ is risen. Death is conquered; man can now be saved from death.

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor.15:12-24).

"[Christ] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:7-9).

"How it was not written for his sake alone, that it [righteousness] was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:23-25).

2. It means *the Advocate or Representative Lord*. On earth Christ lived a perfect life; He was without sin (2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 1 Pt.1:19; 2:22; Jn.8:46). He was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him" (Ph.2:8-9). He is "sitting on the right hand of God (Col.3:1). He is "Jesus Christ the righteous"; therefore, He is our "advocate with the Father" (1 Jn.2:1). He is able to represent us before God because He has lived upon earth and secured a perfect righteousness. He is the Ideal Man (see note—Mt.5:17-18), our advocate, the One who is qualified to plead our case before God and see to it that we are saved.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

3. It means *the Priestly or Intercessory Lord*. Every man suffers while on earth: suffers pain, trial, need, want, temptation, loss, illness, and eventually death. We are incapable of even knowing how to pray as we ought in order to secure the help we need. But Christ knows and understands. He has been to earth and suffered just as we suffer. Therefore, He knows how to intercede for us and how to deliver us.

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:14-16).

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:16-18).

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:33-34).

4. It means *the exalted Lord*. Christ has ascended to be exalted, to rule and reign over the universe for God. There is a great day of judgment coming upon the world, a day when all men shall bow the knee and acknowledge that Jesus is Lord, the Son of the living God.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph.1:19-23).

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor.15:24-26).

2 (9:52-54) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: Jesus' mission upon earth was misunderstood. Note three things of vital importance.

1. Jesus sent some disciples to run ahead of Him, to prepare the way for His coming. Apparently, this was the *method* Christ used to let the people of an area know He was soon to enter their city. Those who had interest could thereby be prepared for His coming.
2. Jesus was rejected by the Samaritans. Why? Because He was heading for Jerusalem, going to a place they despised. The Jews were unacceptable to them; therefore, they would have nothing to do with Jesus if He were going to minister in Jerusalem. Jerusalem had its own worship and priests, and the Samaritans had theirs. If Jesus would be theirs alone, they would gladly receive Him; if not, then He was not welcomed in their circles. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Samaritans*—Lk.10:33 for more detailed discussion.)
3. James and John were upset, fiery and angry over such rejection. They asked Jesus if they should destroy the village by calling fire from heaven to consume the people. Note two crucial points.
   a. The faith of James and John in Jesus was strong. They believed without question that Jesus had the authority to control the power of heaven, either through Himself or through them.
   b. The wrong understanding of Jesus' mission that James and John had was also strong. They thought in terms of a Messianic Ruler on earth, subjecting men and forcing them to worship and serve God. They saw the Messiah's judging those who rejected Him.

      Note that James and John were guilty of the very some error that the Samaritans had just committed. They were full of bitterness, wrath, and vengeance, reacting against the Samaritans just as the Samaritans had reacted against the Jews and Jesus. They wanted to destroy the Samaritans because the Samaritans were not willing to worship (Jesus) and live as James and John wished.

"For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(9:53) **Samaritans**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.10:33.

3 (9:55-56) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: Jesus' mission explained. Jesus' mission was not to destroy life, but to save it. This is repeated time and time again.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Ro.8:1).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

Thought 1. Note several facts.

1) Christ proclaimed that today is the day of salvation, and He proclaimed it loudly and clearly.

> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

2) Scripture pronounces that judgment is *to come*. There is a day "appointed unto men once to die, after this the judgment."

> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27)**

	B. The Great Cost of Discipleship, 9:57-62 (Mt.8:18-22)	said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.	a. Jesus invited the man b. The man had divided attention c. Jesus' demand 1) A sense of urgency 2) Go now & preach
1 A person must count the cost a. The man offered himself b. Jesus offered no luxury, no materialism—only self-denial & sacrifice[DSI]	57 And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.	60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. 61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.	**3 A person must not look back** a. Another man offered himself b. The man's double allegiance c. Jesus' judgment: Looking back disqualifies a person
2 A person must follow immediately	59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he	62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.	

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

B. The Great Cost of Discipleship, 9:57-62

(9:57-62) **Introduction**: some people desire to follow Christ; therefore, they attach themselves to Him and join the church. Yet they come ever so short and miss eternal life. Why? Because they never knew the price of discipleship. They were to pay a great price, but they knew nothing about it or else were unwilling to pay the price. True discipleship costs everything a person is and has.

1. One must count the cost (v.57-58).
2. One must follow immediately (v.59-60).
3. One must not look back (v.61-62).

1 (9:57-58) **Discipleship**: one must count the cost. A man offered to become a follower of Jesus, and he made an unusual promise: he would follow Jesus wherever He led. Why? For the same reasons so many are attracted to the Lord.

⇒ He enjoyed the presence of the Lord and His followers.
⇒ He was motivated by the Lord's wisdom and teaching.
⇒ He appreciated the good the Lord did.

Jesus' reply was to the point. The man had to count the cost, for Jesus offered no luxury and no material comfort—only self-denial. The man had to deny himself and sacrifice all he was and had. Note several facts. (See note—Mt.8:19-20 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus Himself was the prime example. He denied Himself completely. He sacrificed and gave all, both Himself and all He had. He did not even have a place to lay His head. The animals of the world did; the birds had their nests and the foxes had their holes, but Jesus had no place. He gave all to meet the needs of a dying and desperate world.
2. Jesus told the man to count the cost. A profession was not enough. Being *willing to follow* was not enough. The man must deny himself completely, sacrificing and giving all he was and had to meet the needs of a lost and desperate world (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23 for discussion).
3. Jesus called Himself the Son of Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:58 for discussion). This pictures exactly who He was. The man was to follow Jesus, accepting Him as the Son of Man. He was to accept Jesus as the Ideal Servant of man, the Ideal Man who loved and cared and ministered and felt for all, and who did it perfectly.

Thought 1. Some persons are willing and determined to go to the ends of the earth. However Jesus said that *He—the Son of Man, His pattern of life*—must be accepted.

Many are committed, but their commitments are *self-commitments*, not Christ-centered commitments. We must realize that self-commitments can arise from (1) strong wills, (2) strong determinations, and (3) strong discipline. And the person can follow through in a great way. But self-commitment is not enough for Christ. There has to be a total commitment to the Son of Man, abandoning all of self and all of the world.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).**
>
> **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:5-8).**

"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(9:58) **Son of Man**: Jesus was not only what an ordinary man is, a son of man; but Jesus was what every man ought to be, the Son of Man Himself. As such, He has become the *Ideal Man*, the *Representative Man*, the *Perfect Man*, the *Pattern*, the *Embodiment* of everything a man ought to be (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16). Jesus Christ is the *perfect picture* of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (cp. Jn.1:14; Col.2:9-10; Heb.1:3). The title also means the *Ideal Servant* of man. It stresses His sympathy for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (cp. Lk.4:18). Jesus is the pattern, the model, the perfect example of concern and caring. He served just like every man ought to serve others.

Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It was His favorite term. The title *Son of Man* is probably based upon the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13-14. There is a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man in 1 Cor.15:45-47. Each served as a Representative Man in God's plan for world history.

2 (9:59-60) **Discipleship—Decision—Call**: one must follow Jesus immediately. Note three things.

1. It was Jesus who invited the man to follow Him. There was something very special within the man that caught Jesus' eye, and Jesus was moved to call him. In fact, the *specialness* within the man was of such quality that Jesus stayed after the man even after the man hesitated. The man was of too much value to let go, so Jesus pleaded and argued and even commanded, "Go thou and preach."

Thought 1. Note two important points.

1) Every person is of extreme value to Jesus. Therefore, the Spirit stays after a man as long as the man allows Him, despite man's selfishness.
2) Every person who is called by Christ to "preach" must take heed and respond immediately. The Lord's call is to be the primary thrust of a person's life.

2. The man had divided attention. The call of God came to this man, yet he hesitated (see note—Mt.8:21). Note two facts.

a. The man's hesitation was legitimate. Caring for parents is essential. His father was either already dead or on the verge of death. He was legitimately needed at home.
b. The man's problem was *divided attention*. When he felt God's call, he looked at his situation and did not yield immediately. What happened so often happens. His circumstances and problems overwhelmed him, so he wanted to wait and handle them. As soon as the problems were handled, he would leave and follow Jesus.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26-27).

"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mk.10:28-30).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:2-4).

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Tim.2:24-26).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim.4:5).

3. Jesus demanded that the man act now and not wait. Jesus saw through the man's partial commitment. He saw through the man's lack of trust in God. Jesus expects us to take care of our parents (1 Tim.5:3-8), but He demands first loyalty and immediate response. He demands two things in particular.

a. A sense of urgency. Imagine! Jesus refused to give the man time to bury the dead. Why? Because the need is so great, and men are dying every hour without Christ. Nothing can be done for the dead (his father), but the living can be reached and snatched out of the grip of death and saved unto eternal life. If we hesitate, for whatever reason, some whom we might have reached will die and be doomed. The point is forceful: the hour is urgent.

"And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway [immediately] they forsook their nets, and followed him" (Mk.1:17-18).

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4)

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Ro.13:11-12).

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (1 Cor.7:29).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).

"Stir up the gift of God which is in thee" (2 Tim.1:6).

"Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance" (2 Pt.1:13).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps.90:12).

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl.12:1).

b. Go and preach the Kingdom of God. Note that Christ tells His messengers what to preach, yet how little the real message of God's kingdom is preached (see note—Mt.19:23-24).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:5).

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer.20:9).

"The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord GOD hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:8).

3 (9:61-62) **Decision—Discipleship**: one must not look back. Note three things.

1. This man offered himself to Jesus. He was *willing* to follow Jesus. Something about the Lord touched his heart or else the Lord's teaching and ministry appealed to him. He saw the enormous benefit to men and to society as Christ ministered to the needs of men. In either case, he made a decision to follow Jesus. He was *willing*.

2. The man had a *double allegiance*. Note the words "but" and "first." The man had thought through his decision and concluded that he was willing to follow Christ, *but* something else needed to be handled *first*: a family affair, a business affair, an employment affair, a financial affair—some other concern was put first (as is the case with so many).

Something else could have been concerning the man. He may have wanted his family's counsel and advice, to see how they felt about his decision. Perhaps he felt their approval was needed. Then again, he could have been putting his love for family before his love for Christ. Perhaps he was attached to his family more than he was attached to Christ. Family should be our *first* attachment *after* our attachment to Christ. Christ is to be first in our lives.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Mt.12:30).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt.25:34-36).

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk.10:36-37).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:15-17).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pt.5:2).

"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth" (Josh.24:14).

"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam.15:22).

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Ki.18:21).

"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (1 Chron.28:9).

"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Ps.2:11).

"Stand in the gate of the LORD'S house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the LORD" (Jer.7:2).

"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me" (Ezk.3:17).

3. Jesus' judgment was descriptively stated—stated in such a way that once heard or read, it would be difficult to forget: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." The man got the point, and he probably never forgot it. It more than likely pricked his conscience and disturbed him often as the saying flashed across his mind. He had willed to follow Christ, but he "had looked back"; therefore, he was not fit for the Kingdom of God.

The idea is this. A man who begins to plough and then looks back...

- ploughs a crooked row. No row (person) is ever straight, not like it should be. (Each row or person receives only partial teaching.)
- ploughs an inconsistent field. The field under his care is never matured; it never receives consistent work.
- ploughs in a spirit lacking total commitment. He may turn away at any time, leaving a job unfinished.
- ploughs but allows distractions and disruptions which affect the crops (the plants are not cared for).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:21-23).

"And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Lk.12:47).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered them, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (Jn.6:63-70).

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal.1:6-7).

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how return ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (2 Pt.2:20).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:19).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev.2:4-5).

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer.48:10).

	CHAPTER 10 **C. The Seventy Sent Forth: Great Purpose, 10:1-16** (cp. Mt.10)	before you: 9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. 10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, 11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. 12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. 13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. 15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell. 16 He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.	b. Minister to people c. Proclaim the Kingdom of God
1 Jesus appointed seventy disciples to prepare the way for Him a. Had many disciples b. Sent two by two c. Saw tremendous need d. Sent as forerunners	After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.		
2 First, pray for more laborers	2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.		
3 Second, go into an antagonistic world	3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.		
4 Third, trust God & sense the hour's urgency	4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.		
5 Fourth, guard the message—do not force it upon people	5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.		
6 Fifth, accept compensation, but do not seek luxury	7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.		
7 Sixth, be accommodating & adaptable a. Identify with people	8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set		**8 Seventh, walk away from rejecters** a. Any city & people who reject 1) Symbolize God's rejection by wiping off the very dust of the city 2) Reason: Kingdom of Heaven came near, but they rejected it 3) Judgment: Shall be greater than Sodom's b. Any who *only profess* to be God's people[PS1] 1) Illust. by two Jewish cities 2) The reason: The works of Christ were seen, yet He was rejected 3) The judgment: To be more terrible c. Any who have a constant witness but reject: To receive the greatest judgment—hell **9 Eighth, know that the Christian laborer represents the Lord**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

C. The Seventy Sent Forth: Great Purpose, 10:1-16

(10:1-16) **Introduction**: this passage tells the Christian laborer how he is to labor and tells the hearer how he is to treat the laborer of God.

1. Jesus appointed seventy disciples to prepare the way for Him (v.1).
2. First, pray for more laborers (v.2).
3. Second, go into an antagonistic world (v.3).
4. Third, trust God and sense the hour's urgency (v.4).
5. Fourth, guard the message—do not force it upon people (v.5-6).
6. Fifth, accept compensation, but do not seek luxury (v.7).
7. Sixth, be accommodating and adaptable (v.8-9).
8. Seventh, walk away from rejecters (v.10-15).
9. Eighth, know that the Christian laborer represents the Lord (v.16).

1 (10:1) **Apostles—Disciples—Jesus Christ, Followers—Witnessing**: Jesus appointed seventy disciples to prepare the way for Him. The number seventy is disputed, for some very good manuscripts say seventy-two were appointed. No matter which number is adopted, the number is held to be symbolic just as the appointment of twelve apostles is said to be symbolic. The twelve apostles are said to symbolize…

- the twelve patriarchs.
- the twelve tribes of Israel.
- the twelve leaders of the tribes.

The seventy are said to symbolize...

- the nations of the world (cp. Gen.10 where seventy names are listed; seventy-two in the Septuagint Greek Version of the Old Testament). The point being made in the symbolism is that the gospel is to go into all the world.
- the seventy elders who saw the glory of God (Ex.24:1, 9).
- the seventy elders of Israel (Num.11:16f).
- the seventy palm trees at Elim (Ex.15:27). (Note there were also twelve wells of water at Elim said to represent the twelve apostles.)
- the great Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews, which had seventy members.

Whatever the case may be, the verse does point out four significant things.

1. Jesus had many disciples, many more than just the twelve often pictured. There were at least seventy disciples who followed Jesus so closely that He could send them out as witnesses for Him. Peter spoke of the witnesses as "these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" (Acts 1:21; cp.1:15).
2. Jesus sent them out two by two for mutual encouragement and help.
3. Jesus saw a tremendous need, a need so great that a great corps of witnesses was needed.
4. Jesus sent the seventy forth as forerunners. They were to prepare the people for His coming (cp. Tit.2:12-13).

Thought 1. All four points are applicable to us. Think them through. How many of us follow Christ so closely that He can send us out as witnesses for Him?

2 (10:2) **Prayer—World—Ministers—Vision—Laborers**: first, pray for more laborers (see outline and notes—Mt.9:37-38 for more discussion). This was the very first duty. There were not enough laborers because the need was so overwhelming. (We must always be praying diligently for laborers.) Jesus gave four reasons.

1. There was a great harvest of precious souls to be reached with the gospel. The number was staggering, and the vast majority were without Jesus, reeling to and fro under the weight of the problems of a sinful and dying world.

> **"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (Jn.4:35-36).**
>
> **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:9).**

2. The laborers were few, very few.
3. The need was urgent: the crop was ripe, ready for *harvest*. Some wanted the *gospel*, the answer to life. They were actually ready to be reaped, wanting purpose, meaning, and significance in their lives. They might not know what was causing the longing and aching within their hearts; they might not know how to identify it, but they were ready to listen and grab hold of the answer. And Jesus was the answer.
4. God was the One who had to send forth laborers. He was the Source of laborers, and prayer was the method He used to send them forth.

Thought 1. Note a crucial point. A generation's concern determines how well that generation gets along under God's care. A generation that longs for God—that seeks after God to send forth laborers—will have laborers and see a good deal of righteousness prevail during its life. A generation that ignores God finds immorality and ungodliness, injustice and evil getting worse and worse. The answer to a solid generation, to a moral and just generation is prayer—prayer for laborers to be sent forth to reap the precious harvest of souls. If voices are not proclaiming love and morality and justice, then sin and death will reign.

> **"But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mk.4:29).**
>
> **"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:5-6).**
>
> **"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).**

3 (10:3) **Persecution—Sheep—Wolves**: second, go into an antagonistic world (see note, pt.2—Mt.10:16 for more discussion). Note two points.

1. The threat or danger of persecution. Jesus said that some men would be as wolves...
   - protecting their territory, snarling and putting down the messenger of God, trying to scare him away from trying to tame the world.
   - growling and threatening the believer who opposes the way of the world.
   - hungry and ready to hunt down, attack and consume.
2. The spirit of the Christian laborer. He was to be as a sheep: meek, harmless, and non-combative.

> **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember" (Acts 20:28-31).**
>
> **"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).**

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you" (Jn.16:1-4).

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).

"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto" (1 Th.3:3).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (1 Pt.4:12-16).

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 Jn.3:12).

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt.10:17).

4 (10:4) **Conversation—Trust—Necessities—Minister**: third, trust God and sense the hour's urgency. The charge was twofold.

1. Trust God. They were not to carry a money-bag (purse, ballantion) or a traveller's bag (pera) or two pair of sandals. They were to trust God for provisions, not worrying about money for food, housing, or clothing (Mt.6:24-34). Worrying about such things would be cumbersome, taking away precious time that should be spent in ministering. Also, they were preaching a message of faith and trust in God. They needed to live what they were preaching and become a living picture of the dependency that God wants from every man.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:11-13).

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps.37:3).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their help and their shield" (Ps.115:11).

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Ps.118:8).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Is.50:10).

2. Act now, the hour is urgent. They were not to waste time by stopping along the way and carrying on needless conversation. Such time was to be spent in ministry or prayer. Their mission was focused upon another world that lasted forever, a world into which every man was to eventually enter. Man desperately needed to sense the urgency and commitment necessary to enter the Kingdom of God. This world and its needless affairs were not to be engaged in by the Christian laborer. (Note: all affairs are not needless, but so many often are.)

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (1 Cor.7:29).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps.90:12).

5 (10:5-6) **Peace**: fourth, guard the message, do not force it upon people. Three points were stressed by Jesus.

1. The message of the laborer was peace (see note, *Peace*—Jn.14:27 for discussion)...
   - the peace with God.
   - the peace of God dwelling within a person's heart.
   - the peace between men.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Ro.10:15).

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace" (Eph.2:13-17).

"[Have] your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph.6:15).

2. The laborer was to proclaim peace to whatever house he entered. If the "son of peace," that is, the head of the household, was a man of peace, then the message of peace was to be continued. But if the message of peace was not accepted, then it was to be taken away. The disciple was not to proclaim the message of peace to anyone who was not willing to receive it. Neither the messenger nor the message was to be forced upon anyone.

"And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Mt.10:12-15).

3. The method Christ used was *house evangelism* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:4 for discussion).

6 (10:7) **Stewardship—Minister, Compensation**: fifth, accept compensation, but do not seek luxury. There were three things being stressed.

1. "The laborer is worthy of his hire"; therefore, he should be given compensation and taken care of (1 Tim.5:18). Scripture says the laborer is really worth double compensation and such appreciation should be expressed to him (1 Tim.5:17). He is never to be taken advantage of. He is to be looked after by seeing that he has a house, food, and drink—all the necessities of life.

"Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor.9:14).

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate [give, support] unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal.6:6).

"Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate [give, share] with my affliction" (Ph.4:14).

"For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim.5:18).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:17-18).

2. The laborer was to accept compensation. He was not to be self-conscious or embarrassed in receiving payment for his labor.

3. *However*, he was not to seek luxury, going from house to house and person to person seeking more and more of the better things of life. *The laborer was to live in simplicity, giving all that he had beyond his own needs—giving all to meet the needs of others*. He was to seek to meet the needs of men, not to secure the things of this world. What a contrast of value: things vs. people. How mixed up men allow their values to become.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:1-2).

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, they were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb.11:13-16).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward" (Heb.11:24-26).

7 (10:8-9) **Missions—Missionaries**: sixth, be hospitable, accommodating, and adaptable. Jesus gave three charges that will help His messenger reach those to whom he goes.

1. Identify with the people. This is the point Jesus was making. He simply used the most sensitive and basic thing to

stress its importance, that of food. If necessary, God's messenger was to change his customs and habits to reach the people. He was to accommodate and adapt himself to the people he was trying to reach, even down to the food eaten. The people were to see that he accepted and received them into his life and heart.

"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" (Tit.1:8).

"Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb.13:1-2).

"Use hospitality one to another without grudging" (1 Pt.4:9).

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mk.12:31; cp. Gal.5:14; Jas.2:8).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).

"Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" (Ro.15:2).

2. Minister to the people. The messenger was to minister to the people's physical needs, even to the point of healing the sick.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

3. Proclaim the Kingdom of God. Note: the message was given by Christ; it was not created in the mind of the messenger. Note also that the kingdom was near people, right before them. The opportunity to receive the kingdom was present, right then and there (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24 for discussion).

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.4:17).

"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.10:7).

"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Lk.4:43).

"And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him" (Lk.8:1).

"And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Lk.9:2).

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk.16:16).

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Lk.21:31).

"To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12).

"And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more" (Acts 20:25).

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23).

8 (10:10-15) **Rejection—Judgment, Degrees of—Profession Only**: seventh, walk away from rejecters. This, of course, protected the messenger from harm, at least to some degree. It also served as an immediate warning to any who rejected, perhaps causing them to think about the matter more deeply and changing their minds and hearts toward Jesus. Jesus discussed three classes of rejecters.

1. There would be cities that would reject Him (v.10-12). The messenger was to symbolize God's rejection of them by shaking the dust off his feet. This was a silent testimony that God was doing just what they wanted, leaving them alone to walk through life as they desired (see note, pt.3—Lk.9:3-5 for more discussion).

The reason for God's judgment was that they rejected the Kingdom of God. The kingdom came near them; the opportunity was there, but they rejected it. They shut their doors to God. Their judgment was, therefore, to be greater than Sodom's (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.10:15; DEEPER STUDY # 4—11:23 for more discussion).

2. There would be those who *only professed* to be God's people. These were illustrated by two towns that were heavily populated by Jewish people who professed to be the people of God. Yet they *only professed*. They rejected God's Son, despite the mighty works done among them. Therefore, they were to be judged. Their profession was profession only. Therefore, their judgment was to be greater than the judgment which was to come upon the heathen. Why? Because they had the opportunity to accept Christ, an opportunity that the heathen never had (Tyre and Sidon). Note the degrees of judgment taught. (See outline and notes—Mt.11:20-24; Ro.2:11-15 for more discussion.)

3. There would be those who had a constant witness. These were to receive the greatest judgment of all, hell itself. Capernaum was the *chosen* city and headquarters of Christ (Mt.9:1), yet they rejected Christ. (See outline and notes—Mt.11:20-24 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Judgment is definitely coming, and everyone who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ will be condemned.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Lk.12:48).**
>
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**
>
> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).**
>
> **"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).**
>
> **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).**
>
> **"Wherein they [unbelievers] think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot [partying], speaking evil of you: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (1 Pt.4:4-5).**
>
> **"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).**
>
> **"...every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Dt.24:16).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim" (Jer.7:13-15).**
>
> **"But every one shall die for his own iniquity" (Jer.31:30).**
>
> **"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezk.18:20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:13) **Woe**: not a call for vengeance, but an expression of deep regret, of warning (cp. 6:24).

9 (10:16) **Ministers, Rejection; Acceptance; Treatment of**: eighth, know that the messenger represents the Lord. This stresses two critical points.

1. The messenger's position and message were of the highest value. The messenger represented Christ and was to be given the most serious hearing possible. He was counted as though Christ Himself were speaking.
2. The rejection of the messenger was the most serious offense. It was counted as the rejection of God Himself.

> **"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (Mt.10:40).**
>
> **"And whoso shall receive one such little child [believer] in my name receiveth me" (Mt.18:5).**
>
> **"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt.25:40).**
>
> **"Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it *not* to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:45-46).**
>
> **"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:1-4).**
>
> **"But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ" (1 Cor.8:12).**

	D. The Seventy Return (Part I): Great Power, 10:17-20		
1 The seventy returned a. With joy b. With great results & a testimony of power	17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.	from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.	**3 The Christian laborer has power over all enemies: perfect security**
2 The Christian laborer has power over Satan	18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall	20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.	**4 The Christian laborer is to rejoice in his salvation, not in his power**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

D. The Seventy Return (Part I): Great Power, 10:17-20

(10:17-20) **Introduction**: Christ gives great power to the person who truly labors for Him. The presence of God's power in the laborer's life is a wonderful thing; however, it is something that can be misunderstood and abused. When the seventy returned, Jesus used the occasion to teach a much needed lesson on the power of God in a person's life.

1. The seventy returned (v.17).
2. The Christian laborer has power over Satan (v.18).
3. The Christian laborer has power over all enemies—perfect security (v.19).
4. The Christian laborer is to rejoice in his salvation, not in his power (v.20).

1 (10:17) **Power—Ministry, Results; Praise for**: the seventy returned. The testimony of their return has several significant lessons for every generation of Christian laborers.

1. They returned with joy (chara). The word means joy and rejoicing, a heart full of gladness. Frankly, their spirit was different from what so many express after an arduous ministry. They were not sharing and reveling in...
   - how much they had done for Christ.
   - how taxing the work had been.
   - how strong the opposition and enemy had fought.

The very opposite was true. They were filled with joy and were rejoicing in Christ over the phenomenal power of Christ's name.

2. They returned with astounding results—results that were wrought through the name of Christ. The seventy expressed surprise: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us." But note two facts.
   a. The power had come *through Christ's name*.

> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**

   b. Their shock at such power or results led to a confession of their own weakness and nothingness before Christ. They knew and readily confessed that the power to do the work had not come from them. Only the name of Christ could give genuine power and results.

3. They returned giving glory to Christ. They praised Him for the glorious experience He had granted them "through His name." They were not in any sense of the term drawing attention to themselves. They were lifting up Christ and praising Him. The devils were subject unto them through *Christ's name*.

4. They returned having ministered to both body and soul. Men's bodies were healed (v.9), and they were freed spiritually when the demons and forces of evil were cast out of their lives. (See outline and notes—Mt.8:28-34 for more discussion and thoughts.)

2 (10:18) **Power—Satan, Defeat of**: there was power over Satan (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Satan*—Rev.12:9). Satan "falling from heaven" means falling from the height and the summit of power. The word "beheld" (etheoroun) means that Jesus thought upon, gave full attention to, contemplated, envisioned Satan's falling from his summit of power as the *god and prince* of this world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Satan*—Rev.12:9). The idea is that Jesus saw the seventy's victorious mission as a sign of the total defeat of Satan that was now beginning.

1. Jesus saw Satan defeated in the souls of men.

> **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:1-2; cp. v.3-10).**
>
> **"Who [God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness [Satan], and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).**

2. Jesus saw Satan defeated through the spread of the gospel.

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:31-32).

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I do go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (Jn.16:7-11).

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).

3. Jesus saw Satan defeated in the daily strategies and struggles which he wages against the individual believer (See note—Ro.8:2-4.)

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:10-12; cp. v.13-18).

4. Jesus saw Satan defeated in His power over death.

5. Jesus saw Satan defeated through His death on the cross.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it [the cross]" (Col.2:15).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24. Cp. Jn.12:32.)

6. Jesus saw Satan defeated in the end of the world, in the consummation of the ages and time. (See outlines and notes—Rev.20:1-3; 20:7-10.)

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev.20:10).

Thought 1. We are to "behold" the power of God in the same way that Christ "beheld" it. God's power is for the purpose of defeating Satan, of delivering men from the power of Satan.

3 (10:19) **Power—Deliverance—Satan, Power Over**: the Christian believer has power over all enemies; he has perfect security. Are the words "power over serpents and scorpions" to be taken literally or figuratively? (Cp. Mk.16:15-18.)

1. There is a literal meaning in this sense. If it is God's purpose to continue using His servant, then God will protect His servant no matter the threat or injury, whether by shipwreck (Acts 28:14f) or snake bite (Acts 28:3-5). The life of a genuine believer is in the hands of God every moment of his life, and God looks after the believer. Whatever befalls him is under the will and care of God (Ro.8:28f; cp. 2 Cor.11:23-30 for a descriptive picture of what does befall God's servant and a picture of how God delivers until He is ready to take His servant home.)

But note a crucial point. A man does not test God; he does not presume upon the power of God. The true servant of God does not put himself in *harm's way* where he will be threatened. Such a person is busy at the wrong thing. The servant is to be busy reaching people for Christ, not proving his ability with animals or his immunity to their bites.

2. There is a spiritual meaning. Power is given over the enemy (Satan). Note five points.

a. The enemy does have power; the idea is that he has enormous power.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).

b. The Lord's power is greater, much greater.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Ro.8:31).

"Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4; Heb.2:14-15; 1 Jn.3:8).

c. The Lord gives His power to His laborer.

"Then he called his twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases" (Lk.9:1).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

d. The laborer's power is over *all* the power of the enemy.

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:19).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

e. The laborer is *perfectly secure* against all enemies. No spiritual power shall by any means be able to touch him. He is secure in the hands of God.

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:29; cp. Eph.6:10-18).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Th.3:3).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"Who [believers] are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:5).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24-25).

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land [promised land, heaven]; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen.28:15).

4 (10:20) **Joy—Book of Life—Salvation**: the Christian laborer is to rejoice in his salvation, not in his power. Note two points.

1. The real basis for joy is not power, but salvation. The great privilege of a believer is not his work and ministry, but the fact that he is a child of God's and has been given eternal life.

⇒ He has been adopted as a son or daughter of God.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

⇒ He has received the Spirit of adoption which gives him open access into the very presence of God.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Ro.8:15).

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).

"Hitherto [before Jesus' death, salvation] have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

⇒ He has been made an heir of God and, unbelievably, an equal heir with Christ.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus

Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

2. The believer's name is written down in heaven (cp. Rev.13:8; 17:8; 20:12; 22:19).

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev.3:5).

"And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life" (Ph.4:3).

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb.12:22-23).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it [heaven] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27).

"Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Ex.32:32-33).

"Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Ps.69:28; cp. Jer.17:13).

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan.12:1).

	E. The Seventy Return (Part II): Great Privileges, 10:21-24 (Mt.11:25-27)	man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.	**only Son** a. God & the Son alone know one another b. The Son reveals God to some
1 Jesus rejoiced **2 Privilege 1: The spiritual insight into truth** a. Into "these things" b. God hides truth from the wise & prudent c. God reveals truth to babes d. Such action is well pleasing to God **3 Privilege 2: The knowledge of God & of His**	21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. 22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no	23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: 24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.	**4 Privilege 3: The insight & privilege of learning God's full revelation**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

E. The Seventy Return (Part II): Great Privileges, 10:21-24

(10:21-24) **Introduction**: the Christian laborer has three great privileges. Jesus was filled with such a joy over these privileges that He broke forth in praise to God. How the Lord's heart longs to share these privileges with every person.

1. Jesus rejoiced (v.21).
2. Privilege 1: the spiritual insight into truth (v.21).
3. Privilege 2: the knowledge of God and of His only Son (v.22).
4. Privilege 3: the insight and privilege of learning God's full revelation (v.23-24).

1 (10:21) **Joy—Rejoicing**: Jesus rejoiced (egalliasato). The word is much stronger than the English *rejoice*. The Greek means great joy and exultation. It means to be filled with joy or thrilled with joy. There is the idea of *victorious joy* because of the glorious triumph over the arch-enemy Satan (v.18-20). Note: this joy comes only from the Spirit; it cannot be worked up. It is a joy of confidence and assurance that arises from down deep within—a confidence and assurance that all is well with God and the victory is won over evil. This was the joy experienced by Christ when the seventy returned. Souls had been snatched from the grip of sin and death, for the power of God over evil had been exercised by men. Satan's fall was assured. God would be victorious within the world as the gospel was carried forth by His servants; the Spirit of God stirred Jesus to rejoice greatly over the victory won.

> **"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).**

2 (10:21) **Truth—Self-Sufficient—Predestination—Humanism—Unbelief—"Babes"—Wise and Prudent of the-World**: first, there is the privilege of spiritual insight into truth. The Christian laborer is able to grasp the spiritual truth of things. Note four points.

1. The term "these things" refers to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. More specifically, however, it refers to the truth which the seventy had learned (v.19-20); that is, that God is active in the world. God saves men and cares for men, giving them power over the forces of evil and writing their names in heaven. Note an important fact: knowing "these things" is the greatest knowledge in all the world. No other knowledge could ever surpass knowing God in such a personal way, knowing...
   - that He has saved us.
   - that He cares and looks after us.
   - that He delivers us from the power of evil.
   - that He infuses us with assurance and confidence and perfect security.
2. God hides "these things" from the wise and prudent. Such people are those who think themselves wise and intelligent. They are the self-sufficient, the proud, the wise of this world (1 Cor.1:21, 25-29; 2:14). These are blind to the Lord of heaven and earth and to the truth. The proud and self-sufficient by their very nature sense no need for help and refuse to receive help. They rest in their own ability and achievements.
   a. Spiritual truth is *hid*. Where? In God. God has done the logical thing. He has taken spiritual truth and locked it up in Himself. The only access to truth is through God. The only key to spiritual truth is faith and trust in God.

      The man who considers himself wise and intelligent and sufficient enough without God never comes to God. Therefore, a personal relationship with God is never known. The self-sufficient person never comes to know God nor the spiritual truth *hid* in God (Ro.1:18-22). God and His presence and His plan for the ages are foreign to the self-sufficient person. He does not believe God—not enough to come to Him. Therefore, the things of the Spirit and of the gospel are hid from him. However, God's heart and truths are open to the one who comes in dependency and trust.

Note a crucial point. What Christ condemns is not intelligence and wisdom, but intellectual pride and self-sufficiency. God made man to think and reason and seek and search in order to discover and build, but God expects man "not to think of himself too highly" (Ro.12:3; cp. Ph.2:3-4). A man is to walk humbly during his short stay on earth, knowing from whom he has come and to whom he is going. He is to trust God, putting his time and destiny in God's hands.

b. God is helpless to reveal truth to the "wise and prudent" of this world. Why? Because they *rest* in their own ability and achievements and *sense no need* beyond themselves. They sense no need for God. They...

⇒ keep God out of their lives.
⇒ question the value of God.
⇒ push God away.
⇒ believe they have no need for God, not now.
⇒ deny God's existence.
⇒ believe God is irrelevant in a scientific, technological world.

c. God is not the Author of man's self-sufficiency and pride. Man is the one who makes himself his own *god* and creates the religion of humanism (that man is sufficient unto himself). God has no choice. He has to do two things.

First, God has to leave such persons to themselves. God cannot force man to worship Him, for forced behavior would be making robots out of man. And God wants to be loved and worshipped by men because men *choose* to worship Him. Therefore, man's sin becomes his punishment; his rejection becomes harder and harder, and he is removed farther and farther away from God—exactly what the man had desired (Jn.12:39-40; Ro.1:18-32. Cp. Acts 28:26-27; Ro.11:7-8.)

Second, God has to hide the truth from such persons because their *evil hearts* would only corrupt the truth. They would mix the truth with their own *rationalized and humanistic ideas*. Note another fact: if the self-sufficient knew the truth, they would be honored as the creators of the truth. They would lift man up as the source of truth. Unfortunately, this is exactly the claim made by so many. However, God will not share the honor due His Son with anyone. His Son, the only Son He has, is to receive all the honor and praise of this earth. Why? Because He is the One who has loved perfectly, loved so much that He laid down His life to save the world.

d. If a man honors God with what he has (his intelligence, abilities, and achievements), God will give "these things" to that man. But if the man takes what he has and claims to be self-sufficient, then God has no choice but to hide "these things" from his understanding.

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous" (Lk.18:9).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word" (Jn.8:42-43).

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (Jn.8:46-47).

"Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (Jn.12:39-40).

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn.12:47-50).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Ro.1:20-22; cp. v.18-32).

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor.1:18-21; cp. 1 Cor.3:19-21).

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"And the afflicted people thou wilt save: but thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down" (2 Sam.22:28).

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil" (Pr.3:7).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).

"The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish" (Is.24:4).

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:8-10).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.3-4).

"This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there in none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand" (Zeph.2:15).

3. God reveals "these things" to *babes* (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mk.10:14). The babes are the humble before God, those who acknowledge...
   - that this world is not all there is.
   - that a few short years of life are not all there is.
   - that they have an inadequacy in solving the *seed of corruption*, that is, the seed of sin and death in the world.
   - that God is, and that He is their Father.
   - that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb.11:6).

The *babes* are those who look up to God as their Father because they are...
   - open and receptive within their spirits.
   - dependent and trusting spiritually.
   - responsive and submissive to spiritual truth.
   - teachable and obedient to God.
   - loving and forgiving toward others (Mt.22:36-40; 1 Jn.4:20-21; Mt.6:14-15).

(See Pt.1 of this note to see what it is that God reveals to babes.)

4. It pleases God enormously that He is able to reveal "these things" to the "babes" of the earth.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (Jn.15:14-15).

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

3 (10:22) **Revelation—Spiritual World—Jesus Christ, Deity; Knows God; Sovereignty**: second, there is the privilege of knowing God and Christ in a very personal way. Four things are being said by Christ.

1. Christ holds the supreme place in the universe. All things have been delivered into the hands of God's Son, for all things have been made for God's Son (Col.1:16-17). Jesus Christ is the supreme Authority over the universe; therefore, He is to oversee and rule the universe. However, His sovereignty is not seen, not right now, not by the vast majority of men. He was not understood nor accepted by the people of His day, nor is He understood and accepted by the people of today (Jn.1:10-11). But the truth will be obvious some day, for the day is coming when the Son of God will be revealed to the world.

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor.15:24-25).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to the glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Th.1:7-10).

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).

2. God and Christ alone have perfect knowledge. Therefore, a complete knowledge of God can be grasped only by the Son, and a complete knowledge of the Son can be grasped only by God the Father.

"Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:28-29).

"Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:54-55).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:25).

3. God is Spirit (Jn.4:24). He is of another dimension of being entirely. If man is to know the spiritual world, then God must reveal that spiritual world and the things of that world to man. This is what Jesus is profoundly claiming. He and God alone know each other; but He has chosen to reveal the Father, who is Spirit, to some. Passages such as v.21 show that the persons chosen to receive this revelation are the humble who truly seek God and trust the Son's testimony. (See outline and notes—1 Cor.2:6-13; 2:14—3:4; Jn.4:23-24.)

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor.2:6-8).

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor.2:14-16).

4. The persons chosen to receive this revelation are the babes who truly seek God and trust the *Son's* testimony (see note, *Truth*, pt.3—Lk.10:21).

4 (10:23-24) **Revelation—Knowledge, Hidden—Prophets, Salvation Predicted**: third, there is the privilege of seeing and learning God's full revelation. Note several things.

1. Jesus shared this point with His disciples alone. What He said is understood only by His disciples.

2. Jesus said that He himself was the great salvation which the godly prophets and kings of old desired to see and hear. Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. He was the One promised by God down through the ages. (Cp. Is.53:1f.)

"I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD" (Gen.49:18).

"And now I [Paul] stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:6-8).

"Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph.3:5).

"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Pt.1:10-12).

3. Jesus was saying that His disciples were highly privileged to know Him, to see and hear Him and the truth which He revealed.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death and life" (Jn.5:24; cp. 1 Pt.1:10-13).

	F. The Parable of the Good Samaritan: The Two Supreme Questions of Life, 10:25-37 (cp. Mt.22:34-40; Mk.12:28-34)		
1 A lawyer tempted Jesus	25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?	31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.	b. The priest: Placed work above people 1) Saw the injured traveller 2) Rushed by him
		32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.	c. The Levite: Placed safety before compassion 1) Saw him 2) Stopped & looked
2 Question 1: How do we inherit eternal life?[DS1]		33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,	d. The Samaritan:[DS2] Placed compassion before prejudice & opinion 1) Gave his heart: Compassion
a. First, the law has the answer	26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?	34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.	2) Sacrificed his work, time, energy, goods, and money
b. Second, love God supremely	27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.		
c. Third, love your neighbor as yourself d. Fourth, obey & you shall live	28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.	35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.	3) Saw to it that continued care was given
3 Question 2: Who is my neighbor?	29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?		
a. The traveller: Was foolish & irresponsible 1) Travelled alone	30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.	36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?	e. The Lord's commission: Go & do likewise
2) Was robbed		37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.	
3) Was assaulted & left half-dead			

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

F. The Parable of the Good Samaritan: The Two Supreme Questions of Life, 10:25-37

(10:25-37) **Introduction**: there are two supreme questions of life, questions that could revolutionize the world if men would ask them and then heed their answers.

1. A lawyer tempted Jesus (v.25).
2. Question 1: how do we inherit eternal life (v.25-28)?
3. Question 2: who is my neighbor (v.29-37)?

1 (10:25) **Jesus Christ, Questioned**: a lawyer tempted Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Lawyer*—Mt.22:35). The lawyer was not seeking the truth. He was not really trying to discover the way to God. His purpose was to trip Jesus, to lead Jesus to discredit Himself by giving some unusual answer that would arouse the people against Him.

2 (10:25-28) **Eternal Life—Love**: the first supreme question of life is: How do we inherit eternal life? Note that the lawyer's question stressed works. He asked, "What shall I do?" To him, salvation was by works. God was going to accept him because he was or could become *good enough*. He had no concept of the part that God's love and grace played in salvation (cp. Eph.2:8-8; Tit.3:5-7 for a description of what he failed to see).

Note how clearly Jesus led the conversation to spell out the steps to eternal life.

1. First, the law has the answer to eternal life. If a man wishes eternal life, he must look into the law of God. Note Jesus' instructions to the lawyer, "How readest them?" The lawyer had a little leather box called a phylactery. Several passages of Scripture were in the box, two of which were Dt.6:3 and Dt.6:11. These were the two verses which he quoted.

Thought 1. God has given us the answer to eternal life in clear terms—so clear we are left without excuse.

1) He has given us the answer in written words. It is in black and white, certain and unmistakable.
2) He has given us the answer in the life of Christ Himself. God has caused the words to be lived out in a human life, giving us the example of the Ideal Life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Jesus Christ, The Word*—Jn.1:1-5).

2. Second, love God supremely.
   a. "Love the Lord thy God." Love God as *your* very own God. This is a personal relationship, not a distant relationship. God is not impersonal, not far out in space someplace, distant and removed. God is personal, ever so close, and we are to be personally involved with God as though face to face. The command is to "*love the Lord thy God.*" Loving God is alive and active, not dead and inactive. We are, therefore, to maintain a personal relationship with God that is alive and active.
   b. Love God with all that you are, with all of your being, all of your nature. Jesus breaks our being into three parts: the heart, the soul, and the mind (see notes—Mk.12:29-31 for more discussion).

> **"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Th.3:5).**
>
> **"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).**
>
> **"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:5).**
>
> **"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).**
>
> **"Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments, always" (Dt.11:1).**
>
> **"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul" (Josh.22:5).**
>
> **"O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).**

3. Third, love your neighbor as yourself. If a man wishes eternal life, he has to love his *neighbor*. The first commandment, "Love God," is abstract; it cannot be seen or understood standing by itself. There has to be a *demonstration*, *an act*, *something done* for love to be seen and understood. A profession of love without demonstration is empty. It is profession only. Love is not known without showing it. Several important things need to be said about love at this point.
   a. Love is an active experience, not inactive and dormant. This was the point Jesus was making. Love for God *acts*. Love acts by showing and demonstrating itself. It is inaccurate and foolish for a man to say, "I love God," and then be inactive and dormant, doing nothing for God. If he truly loves God, he will *do things* for God. Any person who loves does things for the one loved.
   b. The *primary thing* God wants from us is to love our neighbor, not to do religious things. Doing religious things is good, but it is not the first thing God wants. God wants us to make loving our neighbor the first order of our lives. To do religious things is only dealing with things such as rituals, observances, ordinances, laws. Such things are lifeless, unfeeling and unresponsive. They are material objects; therefore, they are not helped by our doing them. Only we are helped. They make us feel good and religious, which is beneficial to our growth, but religious things are not what demonstrate our love for God. Loving our neighbor is what proves our love for God. A man may say he loves God, but if he hates and acts unkindly toward his neighbor, everyone knows his religion is profession only. (See note—Mt.22:39 for more discussion.)
4. Fourth, obey and you shall live eternally.

> **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 Jn.3:14).**
>
> **"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? and this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 Jn.4:20-21).**
>
> **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mt.5:44).**
>
> **"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mk.12:31).**
>
> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).**
>
> **"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).**
>
> **"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:8-10).**
>
> **"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal.5:14).**
>
> **"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).**

"Let brotherly love continue" (Heb.13:1).

"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (Jas.2:8).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).

"Beloved, let us love one other: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1 Jn.4:7-11).

"But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself" (Lev.19:34).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:25) **Eternal Life**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.

3 (10:29-37) **Love—Brotherhood—Compassion—Ministering—Care**: the second supreme question of life is: Who is my neighbor? Note the lawyer sought to "justify himself." He sensed that Jesus was saying that he had not done the law; he had failed to love his neighbor. So he asked the logical question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered and drove the point home to the human heart by doing what He had so often done—He gave an illustration.

1. There was a traveller who was foolish and irresponsible. He was foolish because he travelled the road between Jerusalem and Jericho that was known for its danger. It was about twenty one miles in distance, in a wild country, a rugged, rocky pass much of the way. It was a favorite habitat for marauding thieves, so much so it was called *the Way of Blood.* Travellers never journeyed there alone. They always travelled with caravans. Therefore, this traveller was irresponsible, foolish, and reckless. Some would even argue that such foolishness was undeserving of help.

Thought 1. How many are foolish and reckless in life, exposing and destroying their bodies by walking where they should not and by doing what they should not?

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Pr.22:3).

"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein" (Hos.14:9).

2. There was the priest who placed his religious work and ceremony before the welfare of the man. Note this was a religionist, and he did not even make a move toward helping the man. He "passed by on the other side" which means he rushed away. The priest was probably hurrying to meet his evening religious duties. The trip was a day's journey, and he would have to rush to make it. There was also a religious rule that made a person unclean for seven days after touching a dead body. This ceremonial ritual caused a priest to lose his turn of duty at the temple. The priest was not about to sacrifice his primary work and privilege for the man.

Thought 1. How many put work, even religious works, and *busyness* before helping others?

Thought 2. How many put their church and its ceremony and ritual before the needs of desperate men? How much less would be invested in buildings and facilities if men were seen as half dead travellers who needed our compassion and help?

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:41-43).

"And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Lk.12:47).

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

3. There was the Levite who placed safety before compassion. The Levite was touched with enough feeling to walk over and look upon the man. But he shrank from helping. Perhaps He...

- feared being identified with the robbers.
- feared that the robbers might still be lurking behind the shadows of the surrounding cliffs.
- felt that meddling with the poor soul was just too much bother to undergo.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments" (Lk.16:19-23).

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say into them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye have given them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:14-16).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:17-18).

"Because that he remembered not to show mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart. As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him" (Ps.109:16-17).

"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Pr.21:13).

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?" (Pr.24:11-12).

"The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them" (Ezk.34:4; cp. v.5-10).

4. The good Samaritan placed compassion before everything: prejudice, opinion, work, time, energy, and money. The *good Samaritan* teaches beyond question who our neighbor is. The good Samaritan gave his heart, his compassion, his all in order to help the desperate man.

a. The injured man was a Jew. The good Samaritan and the Jew were of different races—races who hated and despised each other. No prejudice has ever run any deeper than the prejudice between these two (see note—Lk.10:33). Yet the good Samaritan had a sense of *common humanity*. He was a man who saw another man—not as a Jew and not as an enemy. This was most strange, for the Jews cursed the Samaritans, and there was the likelihood that the injured Jew would curse the Samaritan when he had recovered. However, despite all, the good Samaritan saw a fellow human being in desperate need, and he was moved with compassion for him.

b. The good Samaritan gave up his work, time, and energy to help the man. Note what he did. Each step is significant in showing how we are to love our neighbors.

⇒ He went to him: went forth, reached out personally to help.
⇒ He bound up his wounds: eased his pain.
⇒ He poured oil and wine into his wounds: gave of his own goods.
⇒ He set him on his own beast: sacrificed his own comfort.
⇒ He provided rooming for him: provided the basic necessities.
⇒ He took care of him: nursed, looked after him personally.

Note the time, energy, and money involved in this. Showing love to one's neighbor is putting love into action; and putting love into action requires time, energy, and money. Love is not just an idea or a feeling toward God. It is *practical acts and commitment* to help any who need help.

c. The good Samaritan saw to it that continued compassion and care were given. *Two denarii* amounted to somewhere between twenty-four to forty-eight days of room and board, a considerable sum. And note: the good Samaritan said that if it cost more, he would pay it when he returned. The good Samaritan saw a desperate need and did *all he could* to help.

5. The Lord's commission was forceful: go and do likewise. Note a striking point: Christ still did not answer the lawyer. There was no need. The answer was strikingly clear. If the lawyer wished eternal life, he had to "go and do likewise." He now knew who his neighbor was: it was any man who needed mercy, whether a friend or just an acquaintance or even an enemy. The lawyer was forced to admit this. However, more than just confession was needed. Love was needed. The lawyer and all of us need to demonstrate love as we go about our daily affairs. We must help our neighbors—all those around us who hurt and are suffering.

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Mt.25:35-40).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:20).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).

"If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again" (Ex.23:4).

"And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee" (Lev.25:35).

"For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers" (Dt.10:17-19).

"Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth" (Pr.24:17).

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee" (Pr.25:21-22).

"Is not this the fast [religion] that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Is.58:6-7).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:33) **Samaritans**: Samaria was the central part of Palestine. Palestine was a small country, reaching only one hundred twenty miles north to south. The country was divided into three sections:

⇒ Judea, the southern section
⇒ Galilee, the northern section
⇒ Samaria, the central section, lying right between the two

There was bitter hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans. Two things in particular caused this hatred.

1. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed by birth. What had happened was this. Centuries before (about 720 B.C.), the King of Assyria had captured the ten tribes of Israel and deported a large number of the people, scattering them throughout Media (cp. 2 Ki.17:6-41). He then took people from all over the Assyrian empire and transplanted them into Samaria to repopulate the land. The result was only natural. Intermarriage took place and the people became a mixed breed, a breed including...
   - the transplanted people
   - the weak of the land who had been left behind
   - the outcast and irreligious who had intermarried with the original Samaritans

The fact of a mixed breed, of course, infuriated the strict Jews who held to a pure race.

2. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed by religion as well as by birth. The transplanted heathen, of course, brought their gods with them. The God of Israel eventually won out, but the religion of the Samaritans never became pure Judaism. Three things happened to cause this.
   a. When Ezra led the Jews back from exile in Babylon, the first thing the Jews did was to start rebuilding their temple. The Samaritans offered to help them but the Jews rejected their help, declaring that the Samaritans, through intermarriage and worship of false gods, had lost their purity and forfeited their right to worship the only true God. This severe denunciation, of course, embittered the Samaritans against the Jews in Jerusalem.
   b. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim to stand in competition with the Jewish temple at Jerusalem (cp. Jn.4:20-21).
   c. The Samaritans twisted both the Scripture and history to favor their own people and nation.
      ⇒ They twisted Scripture by accepting only the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. Just imagine! They missed all the richness and depth of the Psalms and prophets.
      ⇒ They twisted history by claiming that three great events took place on Mt. Gerizim, events that set it apart as a place of worship. It was the place where Abraham offered Isaac, where Melchizedek met Abraham, and where Moses built his first altar after leading Israel out of Egyptian bondage.

	G. The One Thing Needed: To Sit at Jesus' Feet, 10:38-42	40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.	**3 Martha's problem: She was distracted** a. Distracted by serving b. Distracted by material things: Food, necessities & the cares of the world
1 Jesus entered a village **2 Two strong characters** a. Martha's character 1) Giving 2) Courageous 3) Caring & loving b. Mary's character 1) Loving & humble 2) Gripped with a spiritual hunger	38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.	41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: 42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.	**4 Martha's one need: To sit quietly & listen to Jesus' words**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

G. The One Thing Needed: To Sit at Jesus' Feet, 10:38-42

(10:38-42) **Introduction—Devotion**: this event is historically misplaced, for Mary and Martha lived in Bethany, a suburb two to three miles outside of Jerusalem. Why then does Luke place it here on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem? Perhaps he feared the Parable of the Good Samaritan might be construed to teach salvation by works. Mary and Martha's experience teaches that waiting and sitting at Jesus' feet is much more important than running to and fro trying to work one's way into God's favor. There is one basic essential in life, and that is sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing His Word.

1. Jesus entered a village (v.38).
2. Two strong characters (v.38-39).
3. Martha's problem: she was distracted (v.40).
4. Martha's one need: to sit quietly and listen to Jesus' words (v.41-42).

1 (10:38) **Bethany**: Jesus entered a certain village. The village was Bethany which was a suburb of Jerusalem only about two miles away (see note, *Bethany*—Mt.21:17; cp. Jn.11:1).

2 (10:38-39) **Spiritual Hunger—Character—Mary—Martha**: the scene pictures two strong characters.

1. Martha is the first person seen, and she has a highly commendable character. It is said that "Jesus loved Martha" (Jn.11:5). Therefore, it is important to see the strong points of her character and to see what it was that caused a person who was so strong to fail.
   a. Martha was a *giving* person. Note that she owned a house so large she could give lodging to Jesus and His apostles. Taking care of so many was expensive, yet she willingly entertained them. The next two traits also show how giving she was.
   b. Martha was a *courageous* person. It was now dangerous to associate too closely with Jesus, especially around Jerusalem. The authorities were seeking some way to kill Jesus (see Jn.7:25, 30, 32). Many of His own disciples had forsaken Him (Jn.5:66) and others were now speaking against Him (Jn.7:20, 43-44). Even His own family had rejected Him (Jn.7:3-5). Nevertheless, Martha welcomed Him; she was willing to let the world know of her devotion to Him.
   c. Martha was a caring and loving person. She loved and cared for her sister Mary. Note that Mary was living with Martha and that her brother Lazarus was also living there (Jn.11:1f). For some unknown reason, Martha was taking care of them both. She felt a deep devotion for her family, loving and caring for them very much. This was apparent even in the midst of the disturbance she felt toward Mary (v.40).
2. Mary also had a commendable character. (Her name was *Miriam* in the Hebrew.)
   a. She was loving and humble. Note how she loved Jesus; she attached herself to Him. Her love and devotion ran deep, so deep that nothing else mattered except being right next to Him. Note also her humility. She *sat* at His feet, not by His side and not in front of Him. The room or courtyard was large enough to entertain a large crowd, so she could have chosen to sit elsewhere. Mary definitely had a devoted love and a sense of humility toward her Lord.
   b. She had a spiritual hunger for the Word of the Lord: she "heard His Word." She sat there, fixing her eyes and attention upon Him. She centered her mind upon what He said, listening and concentrating and hearing every word. She did not take His message lightly. She hungered for the Word of Christ, so she absorbed His words and took them to heart. This means that she had...
      - a spiritual hunger
      - a readiness to hear
      - a desire to surrender
      - a willingness to do

3 (10:40) **Service—Ministry, Burdened Down—Stress—Pressure—Busyness—Murmuring—Complaining**: Martha's problem was that she became distracted. The word "cumbered" (periespato) means to draw around, to twist, to be drawn here and there, to be distracted. The idea is that Martha was drawn around and twisted with anxiety and worry. She was distracted, running here and there, being drawn by the cares of this person and that person. There are two ways Martha's distraction can be viewed and applied to our lives.

1. She was distracted by "much serving." She loved others; so she ministered to them, helping whomever and wherever she could, even using her own home as a center for caring. But Martha had a problem. She was "cumbered," loaded down with the cares and needs of others. She became so weighed and burdened down, so tired and fatigued, so pressured and tense...
   - that she lost sight of her priority
   - that she became aggravated and critical of those who were not helping

2. Martha could also be distracted by material things, by the food and necessities and cares of this world. Martha had wealth, which is indicated by her entertaining Jesus and His large group. Apparently, she was a very active lady, possessing initiative and some management ability. She had much to look after, including a brother and sister who lived with her. It was the things of this world—food, necessities, cares, and social entertaining—that had distracted her.

As any lady of the house would do, she felt a keen responsibility for taking care of the guests and meeting their needs. When Jesus and His large group arrived, she naturally expected her sister to help with the preparation of the meals and lodging. The problem in her mind was that even Jesus did not suggest that Mary help. Martha was disturbed with Jesus as well as with Mary.

Martha had a legitimate complaint, and that legitimacy points out the importance of sitting at Jesus' feet and hearing His Word (v.39). No matter *how* important anything else is, sitting at Jesus' feet is the one thing that is to be given priority.

The fact that Martha owned a house, entertained Jesus and His large group, and took care of her sister shows that Martha was loving and concerned about people. But evidently she had become too busy. Perhaps her wealth, initiative, hospitality, social status, and management ability were the things that had priority in her mind and life. As good as they were, they were not enough, for they did not meet the one basic essential in life: having her spiritual hunger fed with the Word of Christ Himself.

Thought 1. Man needs food and necessities and some social entertainment. But he is not to be distracted by these. He is not to be choked by the cares of this world.

> **"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).**
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> **"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:4).**

Thought 2. We should seek out opportunities to serve, working to meet the needs of a desperate world. But we must not become cumbered and burdened down to the point...
- that the pressure gets to us
- that we become critical of others

> **"Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves" (Jn.6:43).**
>
> **"Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer" (1 Cor.10:10).**
>
> **"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:14-15).**
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> **"Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).**
>
> **"The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD" (Pr.19:3).**
>
> **"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun" (Eccl.2:11).**
>
> **"Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me" (Eccl.2:18).**
>
> **"Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" (Lam.3:39).**

4 (10:41-42) **Devotions—Worship—Quiet Time—Anxiety—Busyness**: Martha's one need was to sit quietly and listen to Jesus' words. Note four things.

1. Jesus loved and was tender toward Martha despite her failure. This is seen in His double address, "Martha, Martha." Jesus was deeply concerned for her. She was under stress and pressure and she had become disturbed. So many men

had moved in upon her, and she was trying her best to meet the needs of all. Jesus' heart went out to her, wanting to ease the pressuring and stressful situation and her sense of anger with Mary (cp. Lk.22:31; Acts 9:4 for double addresses tenderly spoken).

2. Jesus reproved her because she was anxious and troubled about "many things." The word "anxious" (merimnais) means to worry. It has the idea of being inwardly torn and divided in two, of being distracted from what one's mind and heart and life should be focused upon. The word "troubled" (thorubazei) means to be disturbed, agitated, in turmoil, stirred up, ruffled. Martha sought to please Jesus with her service and ministering, but two things were wrong.

⇒ She was looking after "many things," too many. She was trying to do *too much* for so many.

⇒ She had become anxious and troubled.

3. Jesus said, "One thing is needful." What was the one thing? He clearly said that it was the *good part* which Mary chose. And in the words of Scripture, "*Mary...sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His Word.*" Martha's mistake was failing to do what Mary did. She let "many things" distract her from her *devotion* to the Lord, from sitting at His feet and hearing His Word. Note what Jesus meant by the "many things," what it actually was that distracted Martha from her devotions:

⇒ giving lodging and food to those who needed such

⇒ preparing the food for those who needed it

⇒ serving the hungry

⇒ making the needy comfortable

(Remember that Jesus was poor in worldly goods, having no place to lay His head, and apparently He sometimes had no money for food. Yet, He still stressed the spiritual over the physical.)

4. Jesus said that the "good part" chosen by Mary would not be taken away. The hunger and thirst after righteousness (God's Word) would be filled and never taken away (Mt.5:6).

Thought 1. Our devotion to Christ is a daily affair (Lk.9:23). Therefore, seeking to hear His Word is to be a daily experience. Every believer should have what is commonly called *daily devotions*, a time set aside every day when he gets alone with God and sits at God's feet to seek His Word.

> **"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).**
>
> **"And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day" (Lk.2:37).**
>
> **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).**
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> **"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Ro.15:4).**
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> **"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim.4:15).**
>
> **"And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them" (Dt.17:19).**
>
> **"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh.1:8).**
>
> **"But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ps.1:2-3).**
>
> **"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still" (Ps.4:4; cp. Ps.63:6).**
>
> **"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (Ps.5:3).**
>
> **"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps.19:14).**
>
> **"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Ps.55:17).**
>
> **"I will remember the works of the LORD: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings" (Ps.77:11-12; cp. Ps.104:34; 119:15-16; 119:47; 119:96-100; 119:148; 127:1-2; 143:5).**
>
> **"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).**
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> **"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan.6:10).**

	CHAPTER 11	Him?
	H. The Great Subject of Prayer, 11:1-13 (cp. Mt.6:5-15; cp. Mk.11:20-26)	7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.
1 Jesus prayed a. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray b. John had taught his disciples to pray	And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.	8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.
2 Jesus' model prayer a. Thank God 1) For being our Father 2) For heaven b. Praise His name c. Pray 1) For His kingdom 2) For daily bread	2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread.	9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
3) For forgiveness	4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.	10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.
4) For deliverance		11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for fish give him a serpent?
3 Man's part in prayer[DSJ] a. The illust.: Man is to persevere & endure in prayer	5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before	12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

b. The point: Perseverance & endurance receive what is requested	
c. The exhortation 1) Ask—shall be given 2) Seek—shall find 3) Knock—shall be opened	
d. The answer assured	
4 God's part in prayer a. The illust.: God is not evil, but He is good—He is just like a father	
b. The point: God is *most* willing to give—especially the Holy Spirit to dwell within man's heart & life	

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

H. The Great Subject of Prayer, 11:1-13

(11:1-13) **Introduction**: this is one of the most thorough passages in all of Scripture dealing with the great subject of prayer. It is a passage that should be studied time and again.

1. Jesus prayed (v.1).
2. Jesus' model prayer (v.2-4).
3. Man's part in prayer (v.5-10).
4. God's part in prayer (v.11-13).

1 (11:1) **Jesus Christ, Prayer Life**: Jesus prayed. It had been predicted that He would give Himself to prayer (Ps.109:4), and He was always praying. (See Introduction, Special Features, pt.7 for a complete list of Jesus' recorded prayer times.)

⇒ He prayed at His baptism (Lk.3:21).
⇒ He prayed during His temptation (Lk.5:16).
⇒ He continued all night in prayer (Lk.6:12).
⇒ He was alone praying (Lk.9:18).
⇒ He went up into a mountain to pray (Lk.9:28).
⇒ He was now praying in a certain place (Lk.11:1).

While Jesus prayed, something caught the eye and ear of the disciples. Apparently, they were off to the side someplace but within sight and hearing. Three things stirred them to ask Jesus to teach them to pray.

1. Jesus often prayed, and He emphasized prayer as one of the greatest needs of human life. He always insisted that it was the source of His strength in living and serving God. Therefore, the disciples were aroused to hunger after the same strength for life and service.
2. Jesus prayed as a Son to His Father, and such intimacy stirred the disciples to want the same kind of relationship with God.
3. John had taught His disciples to pray. It was a common practice for a teacher to instruct his disciples in prayer. Jesus' disciples used this as the basis to ask Him: "Lord, teach us to pray."

2 (11:2-4) **Prayer**: Jesus' model prayer. Naturally, Jesus will teach anyone to pray—anyone who is really sincere and wants to begin praying. Note what Jesus did. He said, "*When ye pray, say....*" or "After this manner...pray ye" or "Pray then like this." He was giving a *model prayer* upon which we are to base our praying. It is a guide, the points of which are to be *prayed through*. The believer is to develop the points as He prays. (See note—Mt.6:9-13 for more discussion.)

1. Thank God for two things.
   a. Thank God for being "our Father." This is a personal relationship, a family relationship, the relationship of a child to a parent. It is a family relationship wrought by a person's being born anew (Jn.1:12-13; 2 Cor.6:17-18. Cp. Gal.4:4-7.) A person needs to thank God for being his Father, for creating the family of God and allowing him to be a part of so glorious a family.
   b. Thank God for heaven. Heaven is the spiritual dimension of being; it is the real world, incorruptible and undefiled, and it does not fade away. More importantly, it is where God is, and it is where we shall be. We need to thank God for heaven, that He is there and that we shall be in heaven with Him.
2. Praise God. His name is hallowed, set apart, different. God is holy, righteous, pure, loving, kind, merciful, gracious. Therefore, God is to be praised for who He is.
3. Request four things in particular. But note: these should be prayed for only after we have thanked and praised God.
   a. Pray for God's kingdom to come. Christ needs to be enthroned, His rule and reign established on earth. His will needs to be done in all of our lives just as it is done in heaven. We need to pray for such to come. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for a discussion of the kingdom which shows that for which we should pray.)
   b. Pray for daily bread, that is, for the necessities of life. People are hungry, starving both physically and spiritually. We all need to be fed both without and within. We need to pray both for our bodies and spirits—*daily* (cp. Mt.6:24-32).
   c. Pray for forgiveness. We should pray for the Father to forgive our sins, and we need to take some time in discussing the matter with our Father. But note the word "our." We are to ask God to forgive "our sins," the sins of our family, neighbors, city, state, nation, and world. Sin is a shame, an affront to God. Sin is the most serious matter and most tragic event to ever occur in the universe. It is to be discussed with the Father every day—not just our own sins, but the world's sins. Intercessory prayer for the sinners of the world is to be a daily event in the life of every believer. But note a crucial fact: old sins that have been confessed and covered by the blood of Christ are not to be brought back up to God. They are already forgiven, hid and cast away by God. He does not want them remembered anymore. They are too painful and hurtful. However, there are new sins—new things committed every day—so many within our hearts and throughout the world that it would stagger the human mind. We are ever so short of God's glory—*unconformed* to the image of Christ, undeveloped and immature—so far short of what we should be. It is these and the unconfessed sins of the world and the new sins of the human heart that need to be forgiven. The believer needs to come every day begging for a fresh experience of forgiveness both for himself and for the world.

      Note there is a condition for forgiveness. We must forgive those who sin against us. We sin and sin often against God. If we expect Him to forgive us, we have to forgive those who offend us.

      > **"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mt.6:14-15).**
      >
      > **"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mk.11:25).**

   d. Pray for deliverance. The idea of God's leading men into temptation bothers some people. God tempts no one to do evil (Jas.1:13). What this request means is, "Pray for God to deliver us from temptation and from the evil one, Satan" (cp. Lk.22:40; 1 Cor.10:13).

3 (11:5-10) **Prayer**: man's part in prayer. No clearer explanation of man's part in prayer could be given than what is taught here.

1. Jesus *illustrated* very simply what man's part is. The story explains itself.
2. Jesus drove *the point* home: perseverance and endurance receives what it asks. The believer shall get what he asks if he...
   - will not leave the throne of God.
   - will not go away.
   - will not let God alone.

The whole point is that the person who prays must be sincere, fervent, constant, persistent, persevering, and enduring in seeking the face of God for whatever he wants.

3. Jesus gave an exhortation, a mini-sermon, to persevere and endure in prayer, and he stated it perfectly in two ways.
   a. The person who prays is to continue asking for what he needs.
      ⇒ Ask, and it shall be given you. But if asking does not receive it, then...
      ⇒ seek, and ye shall find. But if seeking does not receive it, then...
      ⇒ knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

      The point is this: we must mean what we pray, and the way we show God our sincerity is by continuing to ask for what we need.

b. The verbs ask, seek, and knock are all *continuous action*. We are to keep on asking and seeking and knocking, ever beseeching God to hear us.

4. The answer is assured. God will hear and answer the person who perseveres and endures in prayer. The believer always receives the need desired. In the parable shared by Jesus, the friend was occupied with a very needed and worthy matter—he was rejuvenating his body with sleep. The point is this: most have experienced being disturbed while sleeping (whether by a crying child or some other noise) and being slow to arise. Few arise unless the beckoning call persists. But one always arises if the child coughs or cries enough or the noise repeats itself enough. Persistence proves one's sincerity. There are certain requests that need a "continual coming" (Lk.18:5). (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.7:7.)

God is most willing to give. The child of God can rest assured that when the circumstances of life become hard, God will give the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to see His child through.

Now note another fact: God is not only willing to answer, He is *most willing* to answer. He loves and cares for man in all his needs. This must always be remembered. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.11:5-10.) Note something else: God always answers our prayers, but sometimes the answer has to be "no." Why? Because what we asked is not always for our good, and God is always going to do what is best for us.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Lk.18:1).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Lk.21:36).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Pr.8:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:5-10) **Prayer—Fellowship**: Why does God not always answer our prayers immediately? Why is it necessary to ask and seek and knock and to keep on asking and seeking and knocking? Why do we need to ask at all when God knows our needs even before we ask?

There are at least four reasons.

1. Prayer teaches us to communicate and fellowship with God and to trust and seek after God more and more. When God holds back the giving, we keep coming to talk and share with Him more and more. Just as a human father longs for such fellowship and trust, our heavenly Father longs for such fellowship and trust.

2. Prayer teaches us both patience and hope in God and His promises. When God does not give immediately, we patiently (enduringly) keep coming into His presence, waiting for and hoping in what He has promised us (Mt.21:22; Jn.14:26; 1 Jn.5:14-15).

3. Prayer teaches us to love God as our Father more and more. Knowing that what we ask is coming and having to wait on it causes us to draw closer and closer to God and His gifts. And then when the gift is given, our hearts are endeared ever so much more to Him.

4. Prayer demonstrates how deeply we trust God and how much we love and depend upon Him. A person who really trusts God—who really knows that what he asks is going to be received—will bring more and more to God. He will come to God in prayer more and more. But the person who is not quite sure about receiving will only occasionally come, usually only in emergencies. God easily sees how much we really love and trust Him by our prayer life.

4 (11:11-13) **Prayer**: God's part in prayer. No clearer explanation of God's part in prayer could be given than what is taught here.

1. Jesus illustrated what God's part is. God is not evil; He is good just as an earthly father is good. Jesus stressed the point with three simple illustrations. Note all three illustrations had to do with a father and his son.

2. Jesus drove the point home: God is most willing to give. Note two points.

a. Man is evil, full of selfishness and sin, yet he gives to his child when asked. (Note the enormous contrast being made between evil man and God, who is perfectly good. If evil man gives, it is impossible that God, who is good, would not give.)

b. Our heavenly Father gives us the very Source of all good things, the Holy Spirit Himself. Just imagine the very presence of God dwelling within our hearts and bodies! If He dwells within us, then every good thing is assured. Once we have the Holy Spirit, we do not have to pray to God who is *way off* in outer space somewhere. We do not have to wait upon His gifts to arrive. We have His presence within...

- to accompany and be with us.

> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).**

- to look after and care for us.

> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**

- to direct and guide us.

> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Ro.8:14).**
>
> **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (Jn.16:13).**

- to assure and comfort us.

> **"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).**
>
> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).**

- to pray and intercede for us.

> **"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).**

Thought 1. God does answer prayer.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:24).**
>
> **And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:5-6).**
>
> **"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).**
>
> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them" (Is.41:17).**
>
> **"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am" (Is.58:9).**
>
> **"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**
>
> **"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech.13:9).**

	I. The Proof that Jesus is the Messiah, 11:14-28 (Mt.12:22-30; Mk.3:22-30)		
1 Jesus proved He was the Messiah—He cast a devil out of a man a. The people wondered: Who was Jesus? b. Some accused Him: He was a deceiver, of Beelzebub c. Some tested Him: Sought a sign	14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered. 15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils. 16 And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.	22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.	**He claimed to be stronger than Satan**
2 Illust.1: A kingdom & a house—He claimed to be of another kingdom & house than Satan's kingdom & house	17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. 18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.	23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. 24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. 25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. 26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.	**6 Illust.5: A shepherd & a flock—He claimed to be the pivotal figure of history** **7 Illust.6: An empty house—He claimed that a man must turn from self-reformation to Him & be infilled with His very presence**
3 Illust.2: Religious exorcist—He claimed the right to be respected, at least as much as other ministers **4 Illust.3: The finger of God—He claimed to possess the power to usher in the Kingdom of God**	19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. 20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.	27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. 28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.	**8 Conclusion: The necessary thing—to hear the Word of God & keep it**
5 Illust.4: A stronger man—	21 When a strong man armed		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

I. The Proof that Jesus is the Messiah, 11:14-28

(11:14-28) **Introduction**: Jesus has been rejected, denied, and cursed by most men. Yet there is enormous evidence that He is just who He claimed to be. Jesus Himself gave some of the indisputable evidence in this passage.

1. Jesus proved that He was the Messiah—He cast a devil out of a man (v.14-16).
2. Illustration.1: a kingdom and a house—He claimed to be of another kingdom and house than Satan's kingdom and house (v.17-18).
3. Illustration 2: religious exorcist—He claimed the right to be respected, at least as much as other ministers (v.19).
4. Illustration 3: the finger of God—He claimed to possess the power to usher in the Kingdom of God (v.20).
5. Illustration 4: a stronger man—He claimed to be stronger than Satan (v.21-22).
6. Illustration 5: a shepherd and a flock—He claimed to be the pivotal or decisive figure of history (v.23).
7. Illustration 6: an empty house—He claimed that a man must turn from self-reformation to Him and be infilled with His very presence (v.24-26).
8. Conclusion: the necessary thing—to hear the Word of God and keep it (v.27-28).

1 (11:14-16) **Signs, Seeking—Jesus Christ, Charges Against**: Jesus proved that He was the Messiah by casting a devil out of a man. He demonstrated that He...

- was waging war against the evil forces of this world (Eph.6:12).
- had come to destroy the works of the devil (Jn.3:8).

Jesus saw a man gripped by evil, by some spirit that made him dumb and blind (cp. Mt.12:22). Jesus' heart went out to the man, and He was moved with compassion for him. Jesus cast out the evil spirit and healed the man. By doing so, He demonstrated to all that He was the true Messiah, the One who possessed the power of God perfectly. The response of the people was threefold.

1. Some were amazed and astonished, wondering just who Jesus might be.

2. Others immediately rejected Jesus. But note they did not question His power. They had to admit He possessed the power to do marvelous things. The tragedy of their rejection was this: they said the power was of Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.3:22 for more discussion.)

3. Others sought fleshly, carnal signs that would satisfy their worldly desires. To confess Christ would cost them everything they had, both wealth and friends (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; note—Mt.19:16-22). There was already plenty of evidence that Jesus was the true Messiah; they were just unwilling to give all they had to meet the needs of a desperate world and to be ridiculed and abused by the world (see note—Mt.16:2-4). Therefore, they demanded a sign—a sign so great that it would convert everyone and everything all at once. If everything could be miraculously converted all at once, then heaven would be on earth and all man's carnal desires would be met. (See outline and notes—Jn.6:22-29, esp. 6:26-27, 30.) Therefore, they asked for a sign from heaven, a sign that would convert all men. (Note: if God did this, it would be treating us as robots, eliminating our freedom of choice and will.)

Thought 1. Men think that if they had a spectacular sign, then all men would believe and two things would happen. (1) There would be no abuse, ridicule, or persecution by friends or neighbors or anyone else. (2) The whole world would be converted. The Kingdom of God would come to earth and there would be plenty for everyone. There would be no need to protect what one has nor to fear the selfishness and evil of others. This, of course, is untrue, for man is *selfish and self-centered*, seeking to control his own life. Man would still disbelieve and distrust God and would still choose to do what he desired instead of God's will.

> **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).**

Jesus knew the thoughts of the unbelievers standing there, so He delivered a crushing blow to their thoughts and unbelief. He did so by giving six illustrations.

2 (11:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Messiah, Proof of—Satan, Purpose of**: Illustration 1—a kingdom. Jesus claimed to be of another kingdom and house than Satan's. Note several facts.

1. Jesus used a very simple illustration to make His claim, that of a divided kingdom and a house. It is an illustration that is clearly understood by all because everyone knows of kingdoms and houses that are divided and that crumble every day.

2. Jesus assumed the existence of Satan and his kingdom, both of which struggle against righteousness and good. He did not deny Satan's existence nor try to correct man's *mistaken notion* about the devil and his kingdom. Why? Because the devil and his kingdom are not *mistaken notions*. They are very, very real (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9).

3. Jesus said Satan is not divided against himself. He is not going to do good nor is he going to build up God's kingdom. The very opposite is true. Satan is going to build his own kingdom, his own rule and reign. He desires to oppose and exalt himself against God. He wants men to follow him and his way of evil and by such to cut the heart of God. He wants God to hurt, and he knows that God hurts when man goes astray and turns from God's kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). Therefore, Satan seeks to lead men into evil by enticing them through the fleshly and carnal desires of human nature. Satan knows that sin leads to disease and to the destruction of the human body and family. He knows that such destruction causes great pain and hurt and suffering for God, which apparently is his ultimate motive.

The point is clear: Satan is not going to be casting out evil. Therefore, the power of Christ has to be of God. His power is good; it casts out evil. Therefore He, the Messiah, is of God's kingdom and house, not of Satan's kingdom and house.

> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).**
>
> **"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).**

3 (11:19) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: Illustration 2—religious exorcists. Jesus claimed the right to be respected, at least as much as other ministers. This is a simple argument. There were Jewish exorcists, sons of the Jewish nation, who tried to cast out devils in the name of God. Jesus argued that they were not accused of hellish power. Why was He being accused? The question is pointed and instructive, for Jesus always healed and was always successful in casting out evil. Certainly He should be respected as much if not more than other ministers.

Thought 1. The mistake of the Jews was that they exalted priests (ministers) and religion above God. Many do the same today. They read, quote, and use other ministers as their source much more than they use Jesus and the Holy Scripture.

Thought 2. Jesus Christ should be exalted as the Messiah, the Son of God who alone can cast out evil. Therefore, He must be read, quoted, and preached day in and day out. Jesus Christ must be honored by every man.

> **"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say**

unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:23-24).

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39; cp. v.40-47).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"The officers answered, Never man spake like this man" (Jn.7:46).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

"I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Rev.3:8).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).

"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Ps.34:3).

"Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Ps.107:2).

"O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Is.25:1).

4 (11:20) **Kingdom of God—Messiah**: Illustration 3—the finger of God. Jesus claimed to possess the power to usher in the Kingdom of God. The finger of God is the same as the Spirit of God (cp. Mt.12:28). The power that cast out devils is the power of God. It comes from God and from no one else (see note, pt.3—Lk.11:17-18).

Now note something of crucial importance. Jesus said, "If I possess the power of God, then I am bringing the kingdom of God to you. Wherever the power of God is, there is the Kingdom of God, for the power of God is used to bring about the rule and reign of God. Therefore, the Kingdom of God is come upon you and is beginning in this day and age. The power of evil is now being cast out." Jesus is, of course, urging that no one miss the Kingdom of God. He is ushering the kingdom in, but it has to be accepted (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk.16:16).

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk.17:20-21).

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).

"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mk.10:15).

"And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor [in spirit]: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk.6:20).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God....Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3, 5).

"And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question" (Mk.12:34).

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

5 (11:21-22) **Satan—Jesus Christ, Destroys Satan**: Illustration 4—a stronger man. Jesus claimed to be stronger than Satan.

1. Satan is the strong man. Note he is armed.
2. Satan's "goods" are men who are subjected to him: men who follow the way of the world, that is, selfishness, the rejection of God, and rebellion against righteousness.
3. Satan works to keep his palace (kingdom) and "goods" in peace, that is, under his rule and reign. There is some *peace and comfort* in Satan's realm. Satan will give pleasures to secure a person in his kingdom. But note, it is only for a season (Heb.11:25; 9:27).
4. The stronger Man is Jesus Christ.

⇒ Jesus Christ came upon Satan.

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

⇒ Jesus Christ overcame Satan.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).

"Who [God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).

⇒ Jesus Christ delivered men from Satan's strategies.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph.6:10-11; cp. v.12-18).

⇒ Jesus Christ divided Satan's spoils: the spoils of a clear mind, clean body, pure heart, and the gifts of the Spirit.

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things)" (Eph.4:8-11; cp. Gal.5:22-23).

6 (11:23) **Shepherd—Decision—History, Pivotal Point of**: Illustration 5—a shepherd and a flock. Jesus claimed to be the pivotal or decisive figure of history. Gathering and scattering is a picture of the shepherd and his flock. The person who does not stand with Christ does not gather, but scatters the flock. Where a person stands in relation to Jesus Christ determines the success and impact of his life. Jesus Christ is the decisive figure of history that determines a person's destiny (see note—Lk.7:28).

There is *no neutrality* with Christ: a person is either with Him or against Him. A person either fights against evil or against righteousness, either fights for the Kingdom of God or for the kingdom of evil. Standing still is impossible, for standing still is doing nothing for God. Standing still, being neutral, is working for evil by allowing evil to continue and to grow without opposition. A voice of silence is a voice for evil.

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10:21).

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Dt.30:15).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Ki.18:21).

"They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence" (2 Ki.17:33).

"Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images" (Hos.10:2).

7 (11:24-26) **Reformation—Regeneration—New Birth**: Illustration 6—an empty house. Jesus claimed that a man must turn from self-reformation to Him and be infilled with His very presence. Note three things.

1. What happens when a man casts the evil (spirit) out of his life?
   a. A man experiences many "dry places." No matter where he goes or what he does, there is an emptiness, a void. Nothing seems to fill the evil (spirit) put out of his life.
   b. The evil (spirit) that was in man and has been put aside seeks rest, but finds none. Man's evil spirit, when it is subdued or cast aside, becomes restless. It goes about in *restless wanderings*, yet it finds no rest.
   c. A man always experiences the craving of the evil to return. The evil (spirit) says, "I will return." Note the words, "into my house," the place that was so comfortable, that made him feel so good and at ease. He says in essence, "I will return to that which always looked good, tasted good, and felt good."
2. All the above has to do with a man's reforming and cleaning up his life. However, note what happened when the evil (spirit) returned to the man and knocked on the door of his thoughts and pried at the windows of his desires.

a. He found the house empty and *unoccupied.*
b. He found the house swept; it was clean and put in order—ready for occupancy. The man had removed all the rubbish and swept out all the dirt. He had cleaned the house (his life), but he had not invited the *tenant* (the Lord Jesus Christ) to move in and occupy the premises.

3. What happened when the evil (spirit) found the house empty and unoccupied?
a. The evil swarmed and flooded in with more force than ever. The man indulged much more than before.
b. The evil brought more evil with him—launched out and did more evil than ever.
c. The evil *dwelt* there. It is unlikely the man would ever clean his house again.

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years [religious ritual]" (Gal.4:8-10).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"After they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, [if] they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" (2 Pt.2:20-21).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev.2:4).

Thought 1. The answer to being infilled with the presence of Christ is not reformation—not the changing of the outside or the external—but the transformation or regeneration of man's heart. It is the filling of the human heart and of society with Christ Himself and with acts of Christian love and care. The message and acts of love and care are to be carried to a world suffering and reeling in pain and war, doomed to die and to be without God's presence forever.

8 (11:27-28) **Word of God**: the necessary thing is to hear the Word of God and keep it. Luke is the only Gospel writer to mention this incident. Apparently what happened was that some woman in the crowd was caught up in Jesus' teaching and presence. She just exclaimed that a woman who could bear One like Jesus was to be blessed. But note what Jesus said. There is a greater blessing than what even Mary had. Imagine! A greater blessing than being able to testify that one had given birth to Jesus! What is it? "Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it" (v.28).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jas.1:25).

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).

"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (Ex.19:5).

"When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (for the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them" (Dt.4:30-31).

"O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!" (Dt.5:29).

"And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days" (1 Ki.3:14).

"If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures" (Job 36:11).

"Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father" (Pr.28:7).

	J. The Great Proof that Jesus is the Messiah: The Resurrection, 11:29-36 (Mt.5:14-16; 12:38-42; Mk.4:21-22; cp.Lk.8:16)	32 The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.	b. Bc. they did not repent with Christ's preaching (as Nineveh)
1 The crowds thronged Jesus a. Jesus charged: This is an evil generation b. The reason: They sought a sign	29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.	33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.	**4 The sign's (resurrection) visibility: It is as clearly seen as a shining candle** a. A fact: A shining candle is not hid but is placed where it gives light
2 The one & only sign: The sign of Jonah, that is, the resurrection	30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.	34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.	b. A choice: To see the sign (resurrection) with a healthy eye or a diseased eye
3 The sign's (resurrection) effect: It will condemn this evil generation a. Bc. they did not seek Christ (as the queen sought wisdom)	31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.	35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. 36 If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.	c. A warning: Beware of a diseased eye, of a body full of darkness d. A promise: A healthy eye will give great light

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

J. The Great Proof that Jesus is the Messiah: The Resurrection, 11:29-36

(11:29-36) **Introduction**: the great proof that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of the living God, is the resurrection. Men may seek for other proofs and other signs, but God has given this one supreme sign. No other sign will ever be given to man. The resurrection leaves man without excuse.

1. The crowds thronged Jesus (v.29).
2. The one and only sign: the sign of Jonah, that is, the resurrection (v.29-30).
3. The sign's (resurrection) effect: it will condemn this evil generation (v.31-32).
4. The sign's (resurrection) visibility: it is as clearly seen as a shining candle (v.33-36).

1 (11:29) **Man, Unbelief—Jesus Christ, Deity—Signs**: crowds thronged Jesus. As soon as the crowd settled down, Jesus began to preach, and what He had to say was strong. He made a serious charge against His generation: "This is an evil generation." Why? They sought a sign.

1. What is wrong with seeking a sign, with seeking some proof that Jesus is who He claims to be? Nothing. There is nothing wrong with seeking evidence that Jesus is the Son of God. The problem is not in seeking evidence; the problem is in seeking *more and more* evidence. Think for a moment. What greater sign could God have given than to *reveal Himself* to man? The greatest sign in all the world was to have God's very own Son stand in the presence of men so that they could see and touch Him.

> **"And the Word [Jesus Christ] was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, this was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (Jn.1:14-16).**
>
> **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:1-3).**

2. What greater evidence could God give that Jesus is His Son? God met *all the needs of men* while Jesus was among them. The greatest evidence in all the world is seeing Jesus demonstrate the *love and power* of God...
   - by feeding the hungry.
   - by calming both nature and the fear of men.
   - by preaching and teaching as no other man has ever done.
   - by healing all manner of sicknesses and infirmities.

- by casting out evil spirits.
- by raising the dead.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).**
>
> **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).**
>
> **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).**
>
> **"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8; cp. Ps.23:1f).**
>
> **"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).**

3. What greater proof (sign) could God give that He was bringing salvation to man? God sent His Son into the world to personally save man. What greater evidence could God give than...
   - to have His Son live as a Man, living a perfect and sinless life, and by His perfection to secure righteousness for man.
   - to have His Son die *for men*.
   - to raise His Son from the dead.

The Jews and all men are totally unjustified in seeking additional signs. God has given the greatest signs that could ever be given. If a man rejects the signs already given, he will reject any sign no matter what the sign might be. Signs and evidence are not man's problem. Man's problem is twofold.

1. Man just does not believe because he does not want to believe. He wants to live like he wants, to do his own thing. Man wants no Lord over him, not One who demands all he is and has. Man's heart is hard, and he is obstinate in his unbelief (see notes—Lk.10:21; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24; note—12:31-32).
2. Man does not understand the love and the faith of God, that is, the true religion of God. He fails to see what God is after and has always been after: faith and love, not signs and works. God wants a man to simply believe and love Him because of who He is and because of what He does for man. The true religion of God is not a religion of works and signs, but of faith and love in Christ Jesus, His own Son (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—4:22; note—4:48-49; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25; note—4:4-5. Cp. Acts 2:22.)

2 (11:29-30) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Resurrection**: the one and only sign—the sign of Jonah, that is, of the resurrection (cp. v.32). The sign of Jonah pointed to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (see note—Mt.12:38-40). The resurrection is the *great proof* that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior of the world. He is "declared to be the son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

Jesus claimed to be greater than Jonah. He claimed to be the greatest messenger who had ever come, the Messiah Himself. Since His coming, all men are definitely without excuse. The worst sinners in history repented at the preaching of a mere man, the prophet Jonah. Now the Messiah Himself, God's own Son, has come. And He has preached and announced that the Kingdom of God itself is at hand. Every person is now, beyond question, without excuse.

3 (11:31-32) **Jesus Christ, Deity; Resurrection—Queen of Sheba—Seeking Jesus—Wisdom**: the sign's (resurrection) effect—it will condemn this evil generation. There are two reasons for this:

1. This evil generation did not seek Jesus, the One who knew the truth. Jesus gave a prime example in the Queen of Sheba of what He meant (cp. 1 Ki.10:1f; 2 Chron.9:1f). The Queen of Sheba demonstrated how a person is to seek the truth and how important it is to seek Christ. She had to seek as diligently and go through as much as anyone ever has in seeking the truth.
   a. She had a long and perilous search. She had to travel from "the utmost parts of the earth" to seek the truth.
   b. She had extreme responsibility. She was a queen with demanding duties and a busy schedule as the Head of State. As with all Heads of State, she had much demanding her time and presence and depending upon her care, yet she let nothing stop her search for the truth.
   c. She had uncertain seeking. Her search was a gamble, uncertain in at least two senses.
      ⇒ She could not be absolutely certain that Solomon was as wise in the truth as he was said to be. Reputations become exaggerated when spread by word of mouth, and she knew this.
      ⇒ She had no personal invitation to visit Solomon. Fame flatters men and causes them to become inaccessible in order to enhance their fame of being busy and laden with heavy responsibility and of being surrounded with greatness. She could not be sure he would see her nor grant much time to her.
   d. She had to bear terrible prejudice. She was a woman in a man's world. In her day women were nothing more than chattel property, possessed and used by men for their own pleasure as they so desired.

The Queen of Sheba will be used as a testimony in the day of judgment. Her diligent seeking will stand as a testimony against all who fail to seek after Christ. Her seeking will leave all without excuse. There is no distance too far, no road too perilous, no responsibility so important, no question so weighty, no prejudice or opposition so strong that it should keep a

person from seeking after Christ. The Queen of Sheba faced all this, yet despite all, she sought the truth. It was the primary drive of her life; therefore, her example leaves everyone without excuse.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [provisions] shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10; cp. v.5-8).

"And [God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:26-27).

"But if from thence [idolatry] thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"But where shall wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?...And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job 28:12, 28; cp. v.13-27).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (Pr.2:3-5).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:11-13).

"For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).

Note that Jesus claimed to be greater than Solomon. He claimed to be the way, the truth, and the life. Imagine! He claimed to be *life* itself (Jn.14:6). He claimed to be the One whom all men must seek and find or else face condemnation.

Since His coming, all men are definitely without excuse. The most improbable person (the Queen of Sheba) went to the farthest extremes possible to seek after the truth from a mere man, Solomon. Now the Messiah, who is *the truth* Himself, has come and revealed the truth of God. Beyond question, every person is now without excuse.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:9-11).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb.12:24-25).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).

2. This evil generation did not repent with Jesus' preaching. Note several things.
   a. A whole generation can be evil and adulterous—so evil and adulterous that its lifestyle and dominant character can be called "evil and adulterous" (Mt.12:39).
   b. The Ninevites gave a prime example of *repentance* and just how essential repentance is. A person must repent or else he shall be condemned.

c. There is a day of judgment out in the future. Note the words, "in judgment" and "in the judgment." Both phrases point to a definite day of judgment.

d. The Ninevites' repentance will be used as a testimony in the day of judgment. The people of Nineveh are the prime example of people's turning to God from the depth of sin. They had fallen into the pit of sin, as deeply as a people can fall. Yet, they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

e. The Ninevites' repentance leaves all *without excuse*. Why? There is no one who has fallen any deeper into sin than they did, yet they repented. They show that anyone can turn to God from sin no matter how terrible his sin is. No man has an excuse for not turning to God.

> **"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mt.5:4)**
>
> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).**
>
> **"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**
>
> **"Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever" (Jer.3:12).**
>
> **"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).**
>
> **"Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.1:3).**

f. Jesus claimed to be greater, to be superior to Jonah (see note—Lk.11:30).

4 (11:33-36) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the sign's (resurrection) visibility. It is as clearly seen as a shining candle. Note four points.

1. A fact: a lit candle is not hid but placed where it can give light and be seen. Jesus said that the lit candle, the *resurrection*, would not be done in secret nor would it be a secret. Jesus was resurrected openly and publicly so that all who were to "come in [might] see the light" and be convinced that He is the true Messiah.

2. A choice: to see the sign (resurrection) with a healthy eye or a diseased eye. The healthy eye is the single eye, the eye that concentrates on seeing the light, the way of God and righteousness. The diseased eye is the evil eye, the eye which centers upon the world and material things, the flesh and passion, pleasure and stimulation, self and wealth. Note: the one sign that God has given is dramatically clear: it is the resurrection. God has not kept the sign a secret nor has He hidden it. The sign can be seen just as clearly as a candle lit in the dark of midnight. The only conceivable thing that can prevent a person from seeing it is an unhealthy or evil eye; and if a person's eye is evil, his whole body is full of darkness, that is, full of evil and death.

3. A warning: beware of a diseased eye, of a body full of darkness. Every man thinks he sees light and has light, sees truth and has truth. Simply said, every man thinks that what he sees (believes) and embraces is the truth. The warning is clear. Take heed...
   - make sure that what you see is seen with a healthy eye.
   - make sure that what is in you is light and not darkness.

The *resurrection is the light of God. Seeing any other light or truth is darkness*. It is looking for light and truth with a diseased eye.

4. A promise: a healthy eye will give great light. Very simply, if a man is "full of light"...
   - from having seen the resurrection,
   - and allows no part of darkness (doubt, unbelief, false belief) to enter...

...then his whole being shall be full of light. He will be as full of light as the brightest light of a candle.

> **Thought 1.** Jesus Christ is the Light of the world; He is the Light to which men must open the door of their dark hearts. He is the light which men must take into their sinful lives and world of darkness.
>
> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph.5:8).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Ph.2:15).

"Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (1 Jn.2:8).

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev.21:23).

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Is.9:2).

"I the LORD have called thee [Jesus Christ, His Son] in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Is.42:6-7; cp. Mt.4:14-16; Lk.1:79).

	K. The Severe Charges Against Religionists, 11:37-54 (cp. Mt.23:13-36; Mk.12: 38-40)	reproachest us also.	
1 A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine a. Jesus accepted the invitation b. Jesus was questioned about ceremonial cleanliness	37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. 38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.	46 And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.	a. A lawyer's spiritual blindness b. Jesus' charge
2 Charge 1: Religionists are ceremonially clean, but inwardly unclean a. They clean the outside & not the inside b. God made both the outside & the inside (heart) of man c. The giving of one's heart cleanses everything	39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. 40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? 41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.	47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. 48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. 49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: 50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; 51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.	**7 Charge 6: Religionists honor the true prophets of God—so long as they are dead** a. The honor of the past servants of God b. The rejection of the present servants of God c. The judgment to be required[DS1,2]
3 Charge 2: Religionists obey God in tithing but ignore justice & love	42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.	52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.	**8 Charge 7: Religionists have taken away the key to the truth about God**
4 Charge 3: Religionists crave prominence & honor	43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.	53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:	**9 Conclusion: A reaction of hostility toward Jesus**
5 Charge 4: Religionists mislead others, causing them to become unclean & corrupt	44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them.	54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.	
6 Charge 5: Religionists burden men with rules & regulations	45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I):HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

K. The Severe Charges Against Religionists, 11:37-54

(11:37-54) **Introduction**: most people feel they are *religious*. For that reason, the religious person needs to pay close attention to what Jesus says in this passage. The religious person needs to examine his heart and life to make sure his religion is genuine. Jesus was severe in His charges against false religionists. (See outline and notes—Mt.23:1-12; 23:13-36; Lk.15:25-32; 18:9-12; Ro.2:17-29 for more discussion and application.)

1. A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine (v.37-38).
2. Charge 1: religionists are ceremonially clean, but inwardly unclean (v.39-41).
3. Charge 2: religionists obey God in tithing, but ignore justice and love (v.42).
4. Charge 3: religionists crave prominence and honor (v.43).
5. Charge 4: religionists mislead others to become unclean and corrupted (v.44).
6. Charge 5: religionists burden men with rules and regulations (v.45-46).
7. Charge 6: religionists honor the true prophets of God—so long as they are dead (v.47-51).
8. Charge 7: religionists have taken away the key to the truth about God (v.52).
9. Conclusion: a reaction of hostility (v.53-54).

1 (11:37-38) **Scribal Law—Washing the Hands**: a Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him. The Pharisee had probably been in the audience of Jesus and had become interested in Jesus' teaching. He wanted to talk personally with Jesus, so he invited Him to a meal. What happened was this. When Jesus entered the man's home, He went straight to the food and sat down to eat; He did not wash His hands. This astonished the Pharisee, for it was a serious violation of religious law. It had nothing to do with cleanliness, but with ceremonial purity. It was taught that a person's hands had been in contact with a sinful world; therefore, the person was to wash his hands before eating to prevent impurity from entering into his body. The Pharisee (religionist) was thinking to himself that Jesus had seriously violated the law of purity. Jesus, of course, knew His thoughts and began to reply. His reply was in the form of seven severe charges.

2 (11:39-41) **Religionists—Heart, Good vs. Evil—Depravity—Ritual—Self-righteousness**: the first charge was that religionists were clean ceremonially but unclean within. They kept their religious ceremonies, but they did nothing about the human heart.

1. Religionists cleaned the outside and not the inside. They treated religion like a person who would be washing dishes. The person washed the outside of the cup and platter but left the inside dirty. The heart of the religionist was full of...
   - ravening (harpazo), which means plunder, seizing, extortion, robbery, taking by force
   - wickedness (ponerias)

Most religionists deny, just as they did in the day of Jesus, that they plunder and do wickedness. But note: Jesus said that a religionist not only does these things but he is full of plunder and wickedness. What did Jesus mean? A religionist is *plundering* the way of God, trying to *seize* God's kingdom his own way instead of following the way of God. He is committing extortion against God by robbing God of the salvation He has set up. The religionist is "full of... wickedness," that is, disobeying God and refusing to follow Jesus, who is the way of righteousness established by God (Ro.10:3-4; Ph.3:9). Instead of coming to God by the Messiah, a religionist comes to God by his own righteousness. He tries to make himself clean by keeping the religious ceremonies and worship. (See note—Mt.23:25-26 for more discussion and a different explanation.)

Thought 1. Note two critical lessons that must be heeded by the religionists.

1) Jesus Christ is God's righteousness.

> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them" (Ro.10:3-5).**
>
> **"But now the righteousness of God without the law [and works] is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Ro.3:21-25).**
>
> **"[That I may] be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Ph.3:9).**

2) A man, religious or non-religious, cannot establish his own righteousness. He cannot make himself clean enough to approach God: not by works, nor by religious ceremony and worship, nor by cleaning up the outside of his platter or life.

> **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).**
>
> **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).**
>
> **"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Ro.3:20).**
>
> **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).**
>
> **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).**
>
> **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:9).**

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).

2. God made both the outside and the inside (the heart) of man. Jesus said the outside is not all that is unclean. The inside is also unclean and must be cleansed to become acceptable to God. Note that He calls religionists "fools." God made the whole man, the heart as well as the body. A man has to give God a clean heart and a clean body, a spiritual heart as well as a religious body.

Thought 1. The heart is the source of evil; therefore, it has to be cleansed by Christ—even the heart of the religionist.

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders" (Mk.7:21).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not....[these false teachers] having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:1-3, 15; cp. v.1-22).

"There is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead" (Eccl.9:3).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).

3. The giving of one's heart cleanses everything. Note what Jesus said: "Give alms [gifts] of such things as ye have [within, in your heart]." The one thing that a man has which he can give is his heart. If he gives his heart to God, then he will become clean in all things. He will be giving instead of taking, giving to God and giving to men. Simply stated, Jesus said that a man is...

- to give *all he is* to God, by which he *will become* clean within.
- to give *all he has* to God, by which he *will demonstrate* that he is clean within.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness....For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:17-18, 20-23).

"But that [seed] on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:15).

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb.10:22-23).

"And he [a lawyer] answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he [Jesus] said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this, do, and thou shalt live" (Lk.10:27-28).

3 (11:42) **Tithe—Justice—God, Love of—Poor—Oppressed**: the second charge was that religionists obeyed God in tithing but ignored justice and love. Note several things.

1. The religionists took tithing very seriously. Tithing is the command of God and was meant to be a joyful experience (Dt.14:22-23; Lev.27:30). The religionists wanted to make sure they did exactly what God wanted, so they went beyond what God required. They tithed every little thing, even the plants of their gardens and the little potted plants they might have in their homes. (See DEEPER STUDY # 6, *Tithe*—Mt.23:23 for more discussion.)

2. Jesus did not say that going beyond the tithe is wrong. In fact, God demands everything (see outline and notes—Mt.19:16-22. Cp. Lk.9:23.) Jesus was not discussing the tithe; He was simply using the tithe to illustrate His point.

3. The point was that religionists stressed outward duties such as tithing and ceremony, ritual and ordinances, works and form; but they neglected the inward duties such as *justice and love of God*.

⇒ *Justice* is the way we treat others. Religionists and their church organizations are the recipients of the tithe and offerings of God's people. The monies and gifts are too often coveted for oneself and the building of one's organization more than for ministering to the poor, the oppressed, and the lost. Too often monies are kept for extravagant buildings and livelihoods and personal comfort—monies that God wants used to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the orphan, care for the widows and reach the lost. Such extravagance and misuse of the tithe reveals an unjust heart. It is cheating the needy of the world. It is as Jesus said, passing over justice. It is overlooking what is right and just in a world that just reels under the weight of millions who are in desperate need.

⇒ *The love of God* is both the love He has given us in Christ and the love we are to have for Him and others.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" (Ro.13:8).

"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven" (Col.4:1).

"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (Jas.2:15-16).

"Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant [employee] that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates" (Dt.24:14).

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother" (Dt.15:7).

"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Dt.16:20).

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble" (Ps.41:1).

"Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps.62:10).

"Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy" (Ps.82:3).

"He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he" (Pr.14:21).

"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoreth him hath mercy on the poor" (Pr.14:31).

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Pr.19:17).

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice" (Pr.21:3).

"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Pr.21:13).

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want" (Pr.22:16).

"To have respect of persons is not good: for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress" (Pr.28:21).

"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they" (Eccl.5:8).

"Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed" (Is.56:1).

"He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the LORD" (Jer.22:16).

"Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother: and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart" (Zech.7:9-10).

4 (11:43) **Self-seeking—Tithes—Honor—Position**: the third charge was that religionists crave prominence and honor. Jesus mentioned two things.

1. Religionists loved the most prominent positions and seats. In the synagogues they sat at the front, facing the congregation. Every church has its individuals who seek prominent positions and seats.

2. They loved the titles that honored and recognized them. In Jesus' day it was "Rabbi." In our day it is the various titles we give to honor a man above others. However, Jesus did not say that position or title is wrong. It is the *love* of these that is condemned. But we must be open with ourselves and search our hearts honestly.

> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).**
>
> **"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not" (3 Jn.9).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings" (Ps.49:12-13).**
>
> **"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).**
>
> **"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity" (Eccl.3:19).**
>
> **"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Is.5:14).**

5 (11:44) **Sin, Misleading Others—Hypocrisy**: the fourth charge was that religionists misled others and made them unclean and corrupt. Again, Jesus was talking about ceremonial and religious uncleanness. A man was considered to be unclean and corrupt if he walked over a grave. Therefore, men were walking over them and not aware of the defilement and corruption they were picking up. Note exactly what Jesus said. Religionists were as graves, as men declared dead and buried, but their graves were unmarked. People could not look at the religionists and tell that they were misleading people and corrupting them. (See note—Mt.23:27-28 for more discussion.)

> **"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).**
>
> **"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:1-2).**
>
> **"For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" (Eph.5:12).**
>
> **"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**

6 (11:45-46) **Burdens—Rules and Regulations—Word of God, Adding to**: the fifth charge was that religionists burdened men with rules and regulations. Note three things.

1. A lawyer, up to this point, had excluded himself and his profession. He was applying all that Jesus was saying to someone else. It never dawned upon him that Jesus could be talking to him! All of a sudden something struck the lawyer's mind, and he felt Jesus was including his profession. Jesus proceeded to leave no doubt in anyone's mind. He was speaking to all who put religion, ritual, ceremony, heritage, and anything else before God. Man's duty, even the duty of religionists, is to turn his heart and being over to God.

2. Jesus now charged the religionist with creating man-made rules and regulations. Jesus was speaking of the Scribal law (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2). The Scribal law was considered even more important than the Word of God itself. In the minds of the religionists, the law of God was sometimes hard to understand, but not the rules and regulations of the religionists. Therefore, any breaking of the Scribal law was considered deliberate and much more serious. Jesus also charged the religionists with failing to lift one finger to help a man in keeping the law. Instead of helping the man, the religionist condemned the man.

> **"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine [the Word of God], and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).**
>
> **"And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes" (Lk.12:47).**
>
> **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).**
>
> **"Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" (Ro.2:21).**

3. Jesus said that the Law, the Word of God, was adequate by itself. Man did not have to add rules and regulation to it. (See note—Mt.23:4 for more discussion.)

7 (11:47-51) **Heritage—Roots**: the sixth charge was that religionists honored the true prophets of God as long as they were dead.

1. The religionists honored the past. They showed great respect for the prophets of old—renovating, adorning, and looking after their sepulchres and relics. They took great pride in their roots.

"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Lk.3:8).

"They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" (Jn.8:33).

"They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (Jn.8:39).

"Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples" (Jn.9:28).

2. The religionists, however, rejected the present. They *rejected the teaching and godly lives* of the prophets and apostles whom God sent. They reverenced the past—Abraham and Moses, Jeremiah and Zachariah—but they rejected God's very own Son. In rejecting Him, they bore witness that they were just as their father's were: murderers (v.48).

"And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him" (Mk.3:6).

"And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine" (Mk.11:18).

"After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people" (Mk.14:1-2).

3. The judgment upon religionists will be more severe than upon others. The blood of all the prophets, ranging from Abel to Zacharias, will fall upon their head. Why the blood of all? Because Jesus' generation had the greatest privilege and opportunity known to man. God's Son Himself, the summit of the prophets, now stood before the world, in particular before the religionists. To reject Him was to reject all the prophets. He was *the One Prophet* who embraced all prophets, the One to whom all prophets had looked. (See notes—Mt.23:29-33; 23:34-36; DEEPER STUDY # 10,11—23:35; DEEPER STUDY # 12—23:36.)

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Ro.2:5-6).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).

"All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works" (Rev.2:23).

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev.20:12; cp. Rev.22:12).

"Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work" (Ps.62:12).

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?" (Pr.24:12).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.32:19).

"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin" (Ezk.18:30).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(11:51) **Zacharias**: see DEEPER STUDY # 11—Mt.23:35.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(11:51) **Abel**: cp. Gen.4:8.

8 (11:52) **Religionists—Stumbling Block—Teachers, False**: the seventh charge was that religionists had taken away the key to the truth about God. They had taken away the key that unlocked the Scriptures and the way to God.

⇒ They stressed the external, the ceremony, the religious form over the heart and repentance, the Scripture and obedience.

⇒ They turned men away from the Scripture to their own ideas and thoughts, rules and regulations.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God" (Mt.22:29).

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor.2:17).

"As also in all his [Paul's] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pt.3:16).

Note that some persons were entering into the truth until the religionists got hold of them. The religionist stopped them from entering.

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mt.23:13).

"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.2:7-8).

9 (11:53-54) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the conclusion was hostility. The religionists could not accept the truth. They were incensed and set aflame against Jesus. They tried to trap Him so they could arrest and stop Him.

	CHAPTER 12	into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.	
	L. The Things Men Should Fear, 12:1-12	6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?	b. Do not fear the lack of necessities: God cares
1 An innumerable multitude of people gathered around Jesus	In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began	7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.	
2 Message 1: To the disciples—fear hypocrisy[DS1]	to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.	8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:	c. Fear the spirit of disloyalty, of denying Christ
a. Deeds are to be exposed	2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.	9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.	
b. Words are to be exposed	3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.	10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.	d. Fear the unpardonable sin
3 Message 2: To the friends of Christ—what to fear[DS2]	4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them	11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:	e. Do not fear persecution & trials: The Holy Spirit empowers
a. Do not fear men, but God and God alone	that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.	12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.	
	5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

L. The Things Men Should Fear, 12:1-12

(12:1-12) **Introduction**: there are things to fear in life, some very serious things. However, there is a vast difference between what men usually fear and what God says to fear. The things men fear are usually of their own making, and men would not have to fear them if they trusted God (war, deception, evil, stealing, bankruptcy, and other fears of men).

Jesus covered what men *should* fear. Note: He spoke first to the disciples (v.1-3), then to His *friends* (v.4-12). There was one thing in particular that His disciples needed to fear, and that one thing needs to be feared by everyone. That one thing is hypocrisy.

1. An innumerable multitude of people gathered around Jesus (v.1).
2. Message 1: to the disciples—fear hypocrisy (v.1-3).
3. Message 2: to the friends of Christ—what to fear (v.4-12).

1 (12:1) **Jesus Christ, Crowds Followed**: a vast crowd now gathered around Jesus, a crowd so large it could not be numbered. Many thousands (muriadon) is the Greek word. Note: so many had gathered that they were pushing and stepping upon each other. They were so eager to hear the Word of God that they were trying to get as close as possible.

> **Thought 1.** What a lesson for modern man—to be so hungry for the Word of God that we flock to His preaching and struggle to get up front!

2 (12:1-3) **Hypocrisy—Sin, Exposed**: the first message was to the disciples of Christ. He said, "Fear hypocrisy." Hypocrisy was the leaven of the religionists. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.16:12; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Mk.8:15 for more discussion and application.)

1. The religionists, surprisingly, were the ones who were guilty of hypocrisy, that is, saying one thing and doing another. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Hypocrisy*—Mt.23:13.) They claimed to be followers of God, to lead men to God...
   - in their ceremony and ritual.
   - in their form of worship and teaching.
   - in their doctrine and preaching.

However, Jesus said that what the religionists were doing was hypocrisy, for religious form is not God's way of salvation.

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt.15:7-9).

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mt.23:13).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit: neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Lk.6:41-43).

"Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Lk.12:56-57).

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Ro.16:17-18).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee" (Pr.23:7).

2. The religionists' hypocrisy was like leaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Leaven*—Lk.12:1).

"Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Mt.16:12).

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philisophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col.2:8).

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace" (Heb.13:9).

The disciples of Jesus were the ones in particular who were to fear hypocrisy. Why? Because they were the teachers, the preachers of righteousness. They were both to proclaim the truth and live the truth.

1. The disciples' deeds were to be exposed. There is nothing covered or hid that will remain so. Every act—whether done behind closed doors, in the dark, placed in a file or deposit box, or written in a book, pamphlet or letter—will be revealed and known.

2. The disciples' words were to be exposed. There is no word that will not be heard and proclaimed for all to hear. Every word—whether spoken in the dark or whispered in the ear of someone or just conceived in the mind—will come to light.

"For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad" (Lk.8:17).

"But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was" (2 Tim.3:9).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"Behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num.32:23).

"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Job 10:14).

"For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?" (Job 14:16).

"The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him" (Job 20:27).

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings" (Pr.5:21).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl.12:14).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).

"Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.32:19).

"I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them" (Ezk.11:5).

"For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" (Amos 5:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:1) **Leaven**: leaven is inserted in dough, and once it is, it does at least four things.

1. Leaven penetrates, seeps, and works its way through the dough. It cannot be seen, but it still works.
2. Leaven spreads. It spreads slowly, but once it is inserted, it cannot be stopped. It continues to spread until the whole dough is leavened.
3. Leaven swells the dough. It puffs dough up, making dough look much larger than it really is. Note: it does not add to the dough. It only changes its appearance.
4. Leaven ferments and sours the dough. It changes the dough's very nature.

3 (12:4-12) **Fear—God, Care of—Unpardonable Sin—Jesus Christ, Son of Man**: the second message was to the friends of Jesus. He told them what to fear.

1. Do not fear men, but God alone. The reason is logical: men can only kill the body. God can cast both body and soul "into hell." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Fear*—Lk.12:4; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28; DEEPER STUDY # 2—5:22.)
2. Do not fear the lack of necessities. Note the word "forgotten." The friend of the Lord is not forgotten, no matter the circumstance. There is something very precious here, yet there is a revelation of power as well.

⇒ There is a preciousness in the thought that every sparrow, no matter how common or forgotten or ignored, is very dear to God.

⇒ There is power in that God knows every single sparrow on the earth, and not a single one falls but what He knows about its injury. The idea is that injury to the sparrow causes pain and hurt which God feels. Suffering is due to the corruption and evil in the world, and corruption and evil always cause pain for God.

a. There is God's providence. God sees, knows, cares, and oversees all the events and happenings on earth—even for the little sparrow that is so common and forgotten.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Mt.6:25-26).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

b. There is God's knowledge (omniscience). God knows every little happening and all that is, even to the most minute detail. He knows when a single sparrow falls to the ground. He knows every hair of a person's head, even the number of hairs.

"Be not ye therefore like unto them [heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him" (Mt.6:8).

"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours" (1 Cor.3:20-21).

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam.2:3).

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding" (Is.40:28).

c. There is God's power (omnipotence). God is able to control the events that happen to the believer, no matter how detailed and minute. He can control and work them out for good to such an extent that there is no need for the believer to fear.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor.12:9).

d. There is God's love. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ and of God.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?....For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:35, 38-39).

3. Fear the spirit of disloyalty, of denying Christ. Note three points.
   a. Men shall be judged before the angels of God. Angels will witness either our acceptance or rejection by God.
   b. The judgment will be executed by the Son of Man Himself. He alone is the One Man who lived and experienced all the temptations and trials of life, yet He never sinned. He alone has been through it all and conquered all. He alone is worthy to judge. He alone knows...
      - what a man is.
      - what a man believes and does not believe.
      - what a man can and can not do.
      - what a man does and fails to do.

      "And before him [Christ] shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).

      "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn.5:22).

      "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick [living] and dead" (Acts 10:42).

      "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man [Christ] whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

      "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).

      "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Ro.14:10).

      "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick [living] and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim.4:1).

   c. The basis of judgment is a man's attitude toward the Son of Man (see note—Mt.8:20).

      ⇒ The man who truly confesses (lives for) Christ before men, shall be confessed (given life) before the angels of God.

      "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

      "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

      "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

      "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

      ⇒ The man who denies (fails to live for) Christ before men shall be denied (not given life) before the angels of God.

      "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).

      "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

      "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

      "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

      "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

      "Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

4. Fear the unpardonable sin. Note two crucial points.
   a. Blasphemy against Christ, the Son of Man, can be forgiven. If a person is guilty of cursing Christ and he really wants forgiveness, he can ask for forgiveness and God will forgive him if he repents.

b. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not forgiven. This sin is not referring to just *speaking* words against the Spirit. It means setting one's mind and heart and life against the Spirit. It means that the words spoken against the Spirit come from a heart set against the Spirit and the work of the Spirit (see note—Mt.12:31-32 for more discussion).

5. Do not fear persecution and trials. Why? Because the Holy Spirit empowers the believer. This point has to do with persecution, whether mild ridicule or physical abuse and martyrdom. The Holy Spirit will give power to the Lord's friend (follower), the strength to bear and the words to speak.

Very simply, God is to be trusted in the hour of trial, trusted for the strength to bear whatever men may do to us. This does not mean we should not be praying and thinking, but it means that God is to be trusted for the defense. There is a reason for this. Only God knows the heart of the persecutors and any others who are present. Thus, He alone knows what needs to be said to touch their hearts or else to serve as a witness against them in the future.

> **"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (Mt.10:19).**
>
> **"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay [refute] nor resist" (Lk.21:15).**
>
> **"Which [spiritual] things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).**
>
> **"Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Ex.4:12).**
>
> **"The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" (Is.50:4).**
>
> **"And I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people" (Is.51:16).**
>
> **"Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jer.5:14).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(12:4) **Fear—Persecution**: fear of man is a terrible thing. It is a subject that needs to be looked at closely. Jesus said that fear can cost a person his eternal destiny, even if the person is a friend, a follower, of His. (Note that Jesus is addressing His "friends," His followers, v.4.)

1. The fear of men causes several things.
   - ⇒ It causes a person to become disturbed within heart and mind: the loss of peace.
   - ⇒ It causes a person to lose fervor: the loss of commitment.
   - ⇒ It causes a person to be either sidetracked from or to give up what he knows to be God's will: the loss of mission and meaning and purpose.

> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).**
>
> **"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn.4:18).**
>
> **"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).**
>
> **"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God" (Is.43:1-3).**

2. There are several reasons why men are not to be feared.
   a. Men can only kill the body, not the soul. Their power is limited; they can go no further. They cannot touch a person's soul or life.
   b. Men can only send us out of this world, not out of heaven. "To be with Christ...is far better" anyway (Ph.1:23; 3:20-21).
   c. Men can only separate us from this world, not from life. We have eternal life. Death is not a part of the experience of the believer, for the believer will not "taste" death. Christ "tasted," that is, experienced, death for the believer (Heb.2:9). The believer has already passed from death to life and lives forever (Jn.5:24). When he faces death, he is merely transferred from this world, from the physical dimension of being, into the next world, the heavenly or spiritual dimension of being (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18).

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in**

bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb.2:9-11; cp. v.12-18).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

d. Men can only cut us off from the unbelievers and believers of this earth, not from the love of God and the saints in glory.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:35-39).

3. There are two *primary* reasons why we should not fear men and persecution.

a. God has given us a great and glorious cause: to reach men for Christ. Very practically some men do not want to be reached; therefore, they rail and react and become our persecutors. But some do want to be saved, and the fact that they can receive eternal life is so glorious that it is worth whatever price we have to pay in order to see them saved.

"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas.5:20).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:6).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 Jn.4:18).

b. God has given us a great hope (see thought—Mt.10:26-27).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:26).

"And [I] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:15-16).

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (Ro.2:7).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor.5:1).

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col.1:5).

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13).

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil [heaven]; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever" (Heb.6:17-20).

"Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

4. There is a remedy to keep us from fearing men: God. God is to be feared (see note—Mt.10:28). Note several things.

a. God can destroy us, both body and soul, and put both "in hell" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22). By "destroy" Jesus did not mean our body and soul would cease to exist, but they would live a worthless existence, be ruined and suffer in ruin forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.10:28).

b. Jesus was speaking to believers in this passage. God is to be feared much more and much sooner than men. The terror of men pales into absolute insignificance in comparison to God's terror. Imagine this one fact alone. Man's terror is but for a short while at most, but God's terror is *forever*. The Bible says it never ends. The point is clear: before caving in to man's persecution, we need to remember the *fear of God*.

c. The destruction of the soul comes from God, not from man. The power to destroy the soul is God's power alone. How fearful we must be of God—even we who are believers (see note—Mt.10:28)!

"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt.10:28).

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Pt.2:17).

"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pt.4:18).

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev.14:7).

"Wherefore now let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts" (2 Chron.19:7).

	M. The Parable of the Rich Fool: The Man of Wealth & What He Should Fear, 12:13-21	17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?	
1 A request for Jesus to give a judicial decision a. Brother's desire for an inheritance & wealth b. Jesus' stern refusal	13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?	18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.	d. The big mistake: Self-indulgence & extravagant living
2 Fear this: Life does not consist in things a. The serious charge: Take heed—beware b. The big sin: Covetousness *DSI* c. The big "I" (6 times, 16-19a): Aggressively self-centered	15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:	20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.	**3 Fear this: The soul may be required & demanded tonight** **4 Fear this: Wealth is not a permanent possession—someone else gets it**

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

M. The Parable of the Rich Fool: The Man of Wealth and What He Should Fear, 12:13-21

(12:13-21) **Introduction**: the man of wealth is often self-sufficient, but there are some things he needs to fear.

1. A request for Jesus to give a judicial decision (v.13-14).
2. Fear: life does not consist in things (v.15-19).
3. Fear: the soul may be required and demanded tonight (v.20).
4. Fear: wealth is not a permanent possession—someone else gets it (v.20-21).

1 (12:13-14) **Worldliness—Materialism**: there was a request for Jesus to give a judicial decision. A man was having a dispute with his brother over the inheritance of his father's estate. The law gave two-thirds to the older son and one third to the younger son. The man felt he was not getting his legal share, so he appealed to Jesus for help in getting his share. It was a common practice for Rabbis to settle legal disputes. Note five things.

1. The man was in the congregation listening to Jesus preach. There is a strong possibility that the man was even a follower of Jesus. This is seen in that Jesus had apparently paused for a brief rest between sermons, and the man knew Jesus well enough to approach Him about the matter in the midst of a huge crowd.

2. What the man wanted was significant. He wanted material wealth, money, and property. Note: he appealed to Jesus for help in getting what had probably been *stolen from him*. More than likely the property was rightfully his anyway. It would have been an act of justice to straighten out the inheritance.

3. Jesus refused rather sternly. He forcefully addressed the man as a stranger: "Man." He treats the man as one who is alien to the Lord and His purpose on earth. Jesus refused to become involved in worldly affairs, in settling property and money disputes.

4. The man exposed a serious flaw in his spiritual life. Jesus had just preached a message on trusting God for the necessities of life, for God cares and will provide. Apparently, the man *had not heard the message*. He was bodily present, but he was too preoccupied with the thoughts of property and money to really hear the Word and receive the message.

> **Thought 1.** Listening to the Word's being preached does not mean that we "hear the Word," nor that we learn from it. The Word, salvation, and spiritual maturity do not *rub off on a wandering mind or on a worldly life*.

5. The contrast between the mind and attitude of the man and of Jesus is significant. The man's mind was set on the things of the earth and the world, on property and money, wealth and selfishness. The Lord's mind was set on the higher and more noble, on salvation and life, on heaven and eternity. The mission of Jesus was not to give man property, but to give man life, both abundant and eternal. Property is nothing without life.

2 (12:15-19) **Fear—Worldliness—Selfishness—Indulgence**: fear—life does not consist in things. Note four points.

1. The charge of Jesus was strong. There was a double warning: "*take heed, beware*." The warning was to be given close attention. The word "beware" (phulassesthe) means to guard oneself from some enemy.

2. The big sin of man is *covetousness* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.12:15; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:1-3 for more discussion). This is the big sin of the world—desiring more and more. However, a man's happiness and comfort, soul and body do not depend upon what he has; *many poor people* are happy and comfortable with healthy souls and bodies. Life does not consist in possessions—a beautiful home, the latest clothes, a new car, property, money, wealth.

3. The *big "I"* shows that the covetous man is *aggressively self-centered*. Note how Jesus gets the fact of man's covetousness across. He shares a parable about a man who was also *aggressively self-centered*. In just three short verses describing his thoughts, the rich man in the parable said, "I" six times and "my" five times. The man's attention was solely upon himself. Now note the parable.

a. The man was blessed materially, tremendously blessed, but he did not *thank God* for his blessing.
b. The man called the fruits of the ground and the possessions he had, "*my fruit*" and "*my goods*" (v.17-18).
c. The man called his soul, "*my soul.*" There is no indication he had given his soul to God.
d. He became *puffed up*, prideful with what he had done. He began to think of *bigger and bigger*, of *I and I*, of *my and my*.

4. The big mistake of man is *selfishness*, self-indulgence, and extravagant living (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.16:19-21). Note the sole purpose of man is to be at ease, to have plenty to eat and drink, and to enjoy life as he wishes. Note several facts about the man in the parable.

a. He thought only of self, of living at ease and in comfort, of indulging self and being as extravagant as he wished. He gave no thought to helping others. He forgot that he lived in a needy world that was lost and dying.
b. He put off living and enjoying life until he got his barns built. The idea is that he was a *workaholic*, who was consumed with the passion to get what he wanted. (How many are just like him when they want something!)
c. Now note the most shocking point: he only *thought* these things. He never did them; they were only thoughts of his heart.

> **"Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God" (Dt.8:11-14).**
>
> **"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty" (Pr.11:24).**
>
> **"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Pr.21:13).**
>
> **"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? And he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? And shall not he render to every man according to his works?" (Pr.24:11-12).**
>
> **"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Pr.28:27).**
>
> **"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" (Is.5:8).**
>
> **"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt" (Eccl.5:13).**
>
> **"And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zech.7:6).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.19:23).**
>
> **"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:42-43).**
>
> **"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).**
>
> **"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).**
>
> **"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:15) **Covetousness** (pleonexia): a craving, a desire for more. It is greediness, a dissatisfaction with what is enough. It includes the cravings for both material things and fleshly indulgence. It is desiring what belongs to others; snatching at something that belongs to others; a love of having, a cry of *give me, give me* (cp. 2 Pt.2:14).

⇒ It is a lust so deep within a man that he finds his happiness in things instead of in God.
⇒ It is a covetousness so deep that it desires the power that things bring more than the things themselves.
⇒ It is an intense appetite for gain; a passion for the pleasure that things can bring. It goes beyond the pleasure of possessing things for their own sakes.

> **"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:19-21).**

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).

"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints....For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph.5:3, 5).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience" (Col.3:5-6).

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:18-19).

"A bishop [minister] then must be blameless....not covetous" (1 Tim.3:2-3; cp. Tit.1:7).

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:7-10).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy" (2 Tim.3:2).

"Let your conversation [behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).

"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (Jas.4:2-3).

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:1-3; cp. v.4-6).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pt.5:2).

"And through covetousness shall they [false teachers] with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (2 Pt.2:3).

"[False teachers] having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:14).

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's" (Ex.20:17).

"If I have made gold my hope, or have said to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; if I rejoiced because mine hand had gotten much....this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above" (Job 31:24-25, 28).

"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth" (Ps.10:3).

"Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps.62:10).

"Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness" (Ps.119:36).

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live" (Pr.15:27).

"The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not" (Pr.21:25-26).

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want" (Pr.22:16).

"Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" (Pr.23:4-5).

"For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" (Pr.27:24).

"Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession" (Pr.28:10).

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent" (Pr.28:20).

"Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me" (Pr.30:8).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).

"Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them" (Is.1:23).

"Yea, they [watchmen, false ministers] are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Is.56:11).

"For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart" (Is.57:17).

"For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely" (Jer.6:13; cp. Jer.8:10).

"But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it" (Jer.22:17).

"O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness" (Jer.51:13).

"In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbors by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezk.22:12).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezk.33:31).

"And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage" (Mic.2:2).

"The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us" (Mic.3:11).

"That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up" (Mic.7:3).

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hath consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul" (Hab.2:9-10).

"Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Hag.1:6).

3 (12:20) **Death—Fear—Judgment**: fear—the soul may be required and demanded tonight. Note several things.

1. It was God who now spoke. It was God who knew the thoughts of the man. It was God who knew the man was to die that very night. The man did not know it, nor did anyone else.
2. The man was to die that night. Everyone has his night (day) to die, and this was his night.
3. The man's "soul" was required. God required and demanded it. His soul was not going to cease existing. It was to exist in another world. Existence was not over for the man. The man's soul was simply to be in another world, in the spiritual dimension of existence.
4. The man was called a "fool" by God. He had lived as a fool, lived entirely for himself. He had refused to think about the truth, about the uncertainty of life. There was a good possibility that he might not live as long as he wished to live.

"And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Lk.12:39-40).

"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death" (Ro.6:21).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Pt.4:7).

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (1 Pt.4:17-18).

"These [the wicked] are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" (2 Pt.2:17).

"Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom [the wicked] is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Ps.9:17).

"For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb" (Ps.37:2).

"For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be" (Ps.37:10).

"I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found" (Ps.37:35-36).

"But thou, O God, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee" (Ps.55:23).

"When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever" (Ps.92:7).

"The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish" (Ps.112:10).

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings. His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray" (Pr.5:21-23).

"And behold at eveningtide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us" (Is.17:14).

"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" (Ezk.18:23).

4 (12:20-21) **Spiritual Dimension—Death—Judgment—Wealth**: fear—wealth is not a permanent possession; someone else gets it. The man left every penny behind. He took nothing with him. Now note why. This is a point seldom thought about. *He could take nothing with him because the strength, the energy, the power, the life of his body had left.* The Bible reveals...

- that the life of a man's body is his spirit.
- that the spirit lives forever.

Note: when the spirit left, the man's strength and energy and power were gone. His body had to lie down. Note something else: *his spirit was spiritual*, of another dimension of being. It belonged to another world, another life. Therefore, all *material* possessions had to be left behind.

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim.6:7).

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb.11:24-25).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:16-17).

"The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath" (Job 20:28).

"Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10).

"Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me" (Eccl.2:18).

"For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirt" (Eccl.2:26).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

"Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes" (Hag.1:5-6).

	N. The Genuine Believer: Worry Not About Necessities, 12:22-34 (Mt.6:25-34)	one of these. 28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much
1 Do not be anxious about food & clothing	22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.	more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? 29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.
a. Illust.1: Life & body—mean more than things	23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.	30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.
b. Illust.2: The ravens—are fed by God	24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?	31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
c. Illust.3: A man's height—is not altered an inch by worry	25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?	32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
	26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?	33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not,
d. Illust.4: The lilies & grass—are clothed by God	27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like	where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

	e. A tragic truth: Little faith[DSI]
2 Do not be wrapped up in seeking food & drink, nor in doubting God's care	
a. Such is worldliness	
b. God knows your needs	
3 Seek the Kingdom of God	
a. God provides necessities	
b. God gives you the kingdom	
c. God gives treasures that do not age, fail, corrupt—nor can they be stolen	
d. God warns: Your heart shall be where your treasure is	

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

N. The Genuine Believer: Worry Not About Necessities, 12:22-34

(12:22-34) **Introduction**: this message is not for the world; it is for disciples, the followers of Jesus. Jesus spoke "to His disciples" (v.22). "Taking thought" (merimnan), that is, worrying, being anxious and overly concerned, is a constant problem among men. It is not to be so among God's people. (See outline and notes—Mt.6:25-34 for more discussion and application.)

1. Do not be anxious about food and clothing (v.22-28).
2. Do not be wrapped up in seeking food and drink, nor in doubting God's care (v.29-30).
3. Seek the Kingdom of God (v.31-34).

1 (12:22-28) **Necessities—Food—Clothing—Body—Life—Birds**: do not be anxious about food and clothing. One of the great sins of men is their desire for better and better things, such as food and clothing, houses and furnishings, position and recognition, property and wealth. The sin is covetousness (v.15). It is so common that Jesus warned His disciples not to be taken in by it. They were not to be anxious and worrying over such things. Jesus drove the point home with four illustrations.

1. The first illustration was that of the life and the body. The life and the body mean much more than the food we eat and the clothes we wear. Think for a moment. What means the most? A steak or one's life? A dress or one's body? The answer is clear. Therefore, a person's concern needs to be his life and his body, not delicious foods and the latest styles in clothes. He needs to give his time, energy, and effort to taking care of his life and body, not the delicious and stylish things of the world. Note two points.
   a. A *healthy body* will extend a person's time on earth, and a *well-kept life* will assure a person of living forever in the presence of God. The life and body are to be the concern of man, not food and clothing. (See note—Mt.6:25 for more discussion.)
   b. Jesus did not say we are not to think and plan for the necessities of life. He said we are not to worry and be anxious over the necessities of life. Everything in life takes some thought and some planning, but nothing should be so coveted that it causes anxiety and worry for us.
2. The second illustration was that of the ravens (crows). They were fed by God. Jesus said, "Consider"—think about the birds. Learn from what happens to them.
   ⇒ They do not sow or reap their food.
   ⇒ They do not store up their food.

⇒ Yet, God provides food for them.
⇒ They are able to pluck up the food that they need.

Learn that the believer is of much more value than the birds.

a. He is a higher being, on a much higher level of creation. He is more noble and excellent, a spiritual being capable of a personal relationship with God (Job 35:11; Jn.3:16).
b. The believer is a child of God. God is the Creator of birds, but He is the Father of believers (Ro.8:15-16; Gal.4:4-6).
c. The believer is an heir of God. He is to receive all that God possesses in that glorious day of redemption (Ro.8:16-17; Tit.3:7; 1 Pt.1:3-4).

Again, however, Jesus was not pampering His followers. He was talking about worrying and being anxious over food and clothing and shelter. God does not put up with laziness and slothfulness, nor with lack of planning and initiative and effort. Jesus planned ahead (Jn.12:6) and preached industriousness (Lk.16:8; cp. 1-10). The Bible is clear about man's faithfully working at his employment, even working for extra in order to have enough to give and to help meet the needs of a desperate world (Eph.4:28). (See note—Mt.6:25-34.)

"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:25).

"Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

"But I would have you without carefulness [anxiety, to be free from care]" (1 Cor.7:32).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Is.26:3).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways" (Hag.1:5).

Thought 1. The believer who truly trusts Jesus Christ shall never be forsaken by God. This does not mean the believer will never suffer nor that the believer will never have to face martyrdom. Suffering is sometimes necessary for the growth of the believer's faith and as a testimony to the world (see notes—Mt.5:10-12; 10:24-25). However, God never forsakes the believer. He takes care of the believer no matter what circumstances confront him. God cares for the believer and feeds him far more quickly than He feeds the ravens of the air.

"And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full" (Mt.14:19-20).

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:11-13).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps.37:3).

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it" (Ps.65:9).

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Ps.68:19; cp. Ps.107:31-38; 114:11-15 for the basis of God's blessings).

"And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit" (Jer.17:7-8).

3. The third illustration was that of a man's height. The word "stature" (helikia) means height, quality, or status gained by growth; but sometimes it also means age. The word "cubit" (pechus) literally means measure of space, or distance (approximately 18 inches); but it can also mean a measure of time or age (Jn.9:21). So the verse can read either "who can add one cubit to his stature" or "one minute to his life span."

The point is striking: worry is senseless—just as senseless as trying to add to one's height or lengthen a minute to one's life span (when it is time for one to pass on). All statures and all bodies are not normal and perfectly formed. The world is corruptible and imperfect (see note—Mt.6:19-20). But there is a glorious hope in God—a hope that acknowledges that God does love and does care and has promised a new heavens and earth that shall be perfect. In that perfect heavens and earth, all bodies shall be normal and perfectly formed. God shall "wipe away all tears" (Rev.21:4; cp. 1-7).

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor.15:49).

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house [body] which is from heaven" (2 Cor.5:2).

"But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Lk.20:35-36).

"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev.7:17).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev.21:4).

Thought 1. Note the rich fool could not add one minute to his life. There was a night (day) appointed for his death, and he could not change that night (cp. Lk.12:16-21).

Very practically, some do have imperfect or abnormal bodies. How do they keep from being anxious and worrying?

1) There is a glorious hope for all (see note—Mt.6:27 for discussion).
2) There is the assuring promise of God to work all things out for good to those who truly love God.

> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).**

3) There is the strong challenge to be content with one's state or lot in life.

> **"But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so ordain I in all churches....Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called....Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God" (1 Cor.7:17, 20, 24; cp. v.7-24).**
>
> **"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:11-13).**
>
> **"Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways" (Jas.1:9-11).**

4) There is the challenge to trust God's care.

> **"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).**
>
> **"It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps.127:2).**

4. The fourth illustration was that of the lilies and the grass. They are clothed by God. Again Jesus said, "Consider"—look at and think about the lilies of the field. Learn from what happens to them.

⇒ Lilies do not toil for money to buy their clothing.
⇒ Lilies do not spin to make their clothing.
⇒ Yet, lilies are more arrayed than Solomon in all his glory.
⇒ Lilies pass away almost overnight, yet God cares enough for them to clothe them.

Learn that you are of much more value than lilies. God will clothe you.

There are three concerns surrounding clothing. (Sometimes the concern becomes so strong it turns into a literal fear.)

1. The concern of popularity. A person fears not having the right clothing necessary to make him popular. Sometimes the concern is so great that he refuses to go to a particular function without the proper clothing.
2. The concern of style and fashion. A person is concerned with the very latest in style and fashion. He cannot accept his clothing's being the least bit outdated.
3. The concern of acceptability. Most adults would fall into this category. Clothing is a matter that actually involves inward feelings. The concern is really there. Time and thought and effort are expended to stay in style, at least enough to be acceptable.

The point Jesus was making is this: fret not, worry not, be not anxious over clothing. But seek ye first—center your life and thoughts and efforts upon God and His righteousness and not upon popularity, fashion and acceptability—and then all these things (clothing) will be added unto you (Mt.6:33).

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Mt.13:22).

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, of gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim.2:9-10).

"While they [husbands] behold your chaste conversation [behavior] coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves" (1 Pt.3:2-5).

"Let thy garments be always white [cleaned, washed]; and let thy head lack no ointment [well-groomed, cared for]" (Eccl.9:8).

"The women shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God" (Dt.22:5).

"Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, the hoods, and the veils. And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty" (Is.3:16-24).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(12:28) **"O Ye of Little Faith"**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.6:30 for discussion.

2 (12:29-30) **Worldliness—Materialism**: do not be wrapped up in seeking food and drink, nor in doubting God's care. Note a significant fact: this is not a challenge; *it is a command*. The believer is to center his mind and life upon the Lord and the work God has given him to do, not upon *making a living and eating and drinking*. There are two reasons Jesus commands this.

1. Being wrapped up in seeking food and drink is worldliness. It is what the nations of the world, the Gentiles, the heathen, the lost, do. They center their whole life around getting more and more of the things of this world. They talk and talk, think and think about food and drink and clothing. It consumes their whole beings. All they know is getting more of what the world has to offer. Life to them is food and drink and possessions (houses, furnishings, position, promotion, recognition, money, the latest styles, keeping up with everyone else). The believer is not to be seeking after these things. He is different. He is to be seeking the Kingdom of God and not doubting God's care and provision.

"For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Mt.6:32).

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul [life]?" (Mt.16:26).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting [self-indulgence, extravagance], and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:2).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).

2. God knows that the believer has needs. The believer is...
   - to know that God knows about his needs.
   - not to have a *doubtful* and *anxious mind*.
   - to trust God and His ability to meet the need for food and clothing (the necessities of life).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 Jn.5:4).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"The LORD hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron" (Ps.115:12).

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Ps.118:8).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Is.50:10).

3 (12:31-34) **Service—Giving—Wealth, True**: seek the Kingdom of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). The believer is not to seek after the things of the world. He is to focus his life upon the Kingdom of God and the work God has given him to do. He is to leave his welfare in the hands of God. Jesus made three great promises and one significant warning.

1. God will provide the necessities of life for the person who seeks God first.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk.11:9-13).

"And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Lk.18:7).

"If ye shall ask [keep on asking, persevering] any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14)

2. God will give the kingdom to His "little flock," those who truly seek God's kingdom first and trust Him to care for them. Note the term "little flock." It tells us two things.

a. The number is small. Only a few really seek God's kingdom first.

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mt.7:14).

"For many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.22:14).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:3).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in" (Mt.25:34-35).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas.2:5).

b. The care of God is sure. He is the Shepherd and His true followers are the sheep of *His pasture*.

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (Jn.10:3-4).

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine....And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:14, 16).

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps.23:1; cp. v.2-6).

3. God gives treasures that do not age, fail, nor corrupt; neither can they be stolen. What Jesus said is revolutionary: "Sell what ye have, and give alms." Very simply, once our needs have been met, we do not need more. We can do nothing more with it...

- unless we waste it.
- unless we store it up.

This is exactly what Jesus preached against so strongly. When we live in a world so full of needs, a world lost and dying, once we have met our own needs, we are to give what is left to meet the needs of others. It does not matter what position or profession or kind of income we have, once we meet our needs, we are to begin meeting the needs of the world. In fact, the believer is commanded to seek the *good professions and jobs* so that he can have *more* to give to the needy

(Eph.4:28). Note the purpose: it is not to hold a reputable position nor to gain wealth. It is for the purpose of seeking God's kingdom, of spreading the love of God by meeting the needs of others.

a. The believer is to fill his bag (billfold, pocket, bank account) with the *gifts or giving* of money and *deeds* of helps. Such will never age.

> **"Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away: (Mt.5:42).**
>
> **"He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (Lk.3:11).**
>
> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak [needy], and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).**
>
> **"As we have therefore opportunity [to give], let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).**
>
> **"...let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**
>
> **"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [give]" (1 Tim.6:18).**
>
> **"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).**

b. The believer is to secure the treasures of God's approval and of souls won in heaven. These treasures will never fail nor corrupt nor be stolen.

> **"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye [saved souls] in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Th.2:19).**

Everything on this earth ages, fails, corrupts, and can be stolen. But the man who uses only what he needs and then gives the rest fills his bag with *real money and real treasure*, money and treasure that shall...

- never age.
- never fail.
- never corrupt.
- never be stolen.

> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**
>
> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).**
>
> **"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18).**

4. Jesus warned His followers: their hearts would be where their treasure is. If their treasure is in the world, if they live indulgent and extravagant lives, their hearts will be in the world.

> **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).**
>
> **"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Mt.13:44).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 Jn.2:15-17).**

	O. The Parable of the Faithful & Unfaithful Steward: A Strong Warning—Be Prepared, 12:35-48 (Mt.24:37-25:30)	him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?	**steward (manager)**
		42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?	a. There was Peter's question b. There is a faithful & wise steward 1) He is a steward
1 The charge: Be watching—be ready for the Lord's return	35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;	43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.	2) He is a servant 3) He is found "doing": Serving faithfully
a. Because the Lord is returning	36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.	44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.	4) He is to be rewarded: Made a ruler
b. Because you shall be served by Christ Himself	37 Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.	45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;	c. There is an unfaithful & unwise steward (manager) 1) He says there is "plenty of time" 2) He does his own will, his own thing
c. Because you shall be blessed	38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.	46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.	3) He is to be judged with the unbelievers
d. Because Christ shall come suddenly, unexpectedly	39 And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.	47 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.	d. There is the unfaithful steward identified 1) The 1st class of unfaithful stewards: Sinned deliberately—knew the Lord's will
e. Bc. Christ shall come when least expected	40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.	48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.	2) The 2nd class of unfaithful stewards: Sinned in ignorance—did not know the Lord's will 3) The principle of judgment: Having much requires giving much
2 The parable of the	41 Then Peter said unto		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

O. The Parable of the Faithful and Unfaithful Steward: A Strong Warning—Be Prepared, 12:35-48

(12:35-48) **Introduction**: Jesus was still dealing with the subject of men who want things—wealth and riches and plenty. He was still dealing with covetousness (Lk.12:13-21; 12:22-34). The believer's mind is to be upon purity of life and service, not upon possessions and cares of this world. Jesus strongly warned: be prepared.

1. The charge: be watching—be ready for the Lord's return (v.35-40).
2. The parable of the steward (manager) (v.41-48).

1 (12:35-40) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the charge—be watching, be ready for the Lord's return. Jesus shared a striking illustration. The picture was that of a Lord who had gone off to attend a great marriage celebration. His servants had been left behind to look after the household and to wait for his return. The servants should be full of joy and rejoicing for their master's privilege in celebrating the marriage. They may not be, but they should be, and they should be looking after everything with all diligence until he returns. Jesus took the picture and applied it to Himself and His disciples.

The believer is to be in a state of readiness. He is always to be prepared, always watching and waiting for his Lord's return.

⇒ He is to be fully dressed, even to having his belt tight around his waist. This refers to personal preparation: purity of heart and life and keeping one's body ready to move and meet the Lord. In the East men wore robes that had to be tied with a belt at the waist or else the loose robes hampered movement and work. It was impossible to move quickly and freely without the belt being tight.

⇒ The Lord's servant is to have the lights burning, never allowing them to go out. Keeping the lights burning refers to serving and laboring for the Lord. He is to keep the lights of labor burning by faithfully serving and working for the Lord.

The idea with both the belt and the light is, of course, *readiness*: being prepared in body and labor, being pure and faithful. The believer must never lie down or slumber, never be caught off guard or unprepared. Jesus gave six reasons for living in a state of readiness, of purity and faithfulness.

1. The believer is to stay ready because the Lord is returning. He is the Head of the house; He owns the property. He did not desert the house and the property. He left to attend a great marriage feast. He will be returning to *His home and His property* (world). Note: the words "your" (v.35) and "you yourselves" are emphatic. No matter what others may do, "your loins...your lights" must be prepared. You must be like men who wait and stay awake and look and are prepared for their Lord. You must be *ready* to open the door *immediately* when He knocks, for He is going to return and knock. His return is an absolute certainty (cp. Jn.14:2-3; Tit.2:12-13).

> **"But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mk.14:61-62).**
>
> **"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Lk.21:27).**
>
> **"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).**
>
> **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Th.4:13-18).**
>
> **"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).**

Thought 1. There is a message on salvation here as well. A person must be ready to open the door of his heart immediately when Jesus knocks.

> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**

2. The believer is to stay ready because he will be served by Christ Himself. This is a most precious and wonderful promise, a most unusual promise. Imagine the Lord of the universe *serving* us at a banquet, yet it is the promise made by Jesus! Why would such a promise be made to the believer?

God has only one Son, and God loves His only Son *so much* that He promises to elevate to the highest position any man who honors His Son. Any man who honors God's Son will be highly honored by God.

> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me: and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**

The person who honors God's Son is adopted as a child of God's, and that person becomes a brother to Christ and an heir of God.

> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal.4:4-7).**
>
> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Ro.8:15-18).**
>
> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).**
>
> **"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).**

The believer is to stay ready because the very thing for which he has been working is Christ's return. When Christ gathers us all together, His heart will be so overflowing with love and joy (as will ours) that He will begin serving us immediately: conforming us to His image, explaining and discussing everything with us, assigning us our eternal duties.

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).

"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Th.3:13).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).

3. The believer is to stay ready because he will be blessed. The word "blessed" (makarioi) means to pronounce a person happy or blessed. The idea is that Christ is going to make the believer happy and blessed. Happiness and blessedness will become a state of being, the constant experience of the believer. But note two points.

a. It is conditional. The believer must be watching and ready for the Lord's coming (pure and faithful) if he is to be blessed.

b. The Lord is not returning in the first watch. His return is going to be in the second or third watch. The night was divided into four watches by the Romans and into three watches by the Jews. The point is the importance of being ready: the hour of His return is unknown, but He is returning. It may be immediately; it may be later. The idea is that no one knows the time, but be ready—be prepared—if you wish to be blessed.

"Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (Ph.4:5).

"Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas.5:8).

"Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).

4. The believer is to stay ready because Christ will come unexpectedly. The parable is clear: the hour of the Lord's return is not known; His return is going to be unexpected. The believer...

- must not be careless: get tired of waiting up, get sleepy, be caught off guard, begin to disbelieve. (All of this can happen to a houseowner waiting on a burglar.)
- must watch: secure, sit up, stay awake, listen, look, take notice of all noises and sights (signs). (The burglar always comes in an unexpected hour.)

The believer must watch and be prepared as much as a houseowner would watch and prepare if he knew a burglar were coming.

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:27).

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Mt.24:36).

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning" (Mk.13:35).

5. The believer is to stay ready because Christ will come when *least* expected. Jesus could not have stated it any clearer; He could not have spoken any plainer. "When ye think not," He will come. He will be coming when we least expect Him to come. "Be ye therefore ready."

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Mt.24:44).

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Mt.25:10-13, cp. v.6-9).

"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Th.5:2).

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev.3:3).

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev.16:15).

2 (12:41-48) **Steward—Dedication—Faithfulness vs. Unfaithfulness—Rewards—Punishment, Degrees**: the parable of the steward.

1. Peter wanted to know if the message on *watching and readiness* was for the disciples only or did it apply to the world as well. Jesus answered by giving a parable known as the parable of the steward.

2. There was a faithful and wise steward. Jesus said four things about this steward.

a. He was a steward. A steward was just what Jesus said he was: a man who was made ruler over his Lord's household. He was the manager of the Lord's estate, responsible for all of it.

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man [Christ] travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" (Mt.25:14-15).

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:13).

b. He was a slave (doulos), a bond-slave, a man under the Lord's will entirely. He was possessed by the Lord and his very life depended upon doing everything the Lord said (see note, *Slave*—Ro.1:1).

c. He was found "doing," that is, serving faithfully when the Lord returned. The Lord found him *doing exactly* what he should have been doing (1 Cor.4:2).

⇒ He was overseeing the Master's household.

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb.13:17).

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Tim.6:20).

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (2 Tim.1:14).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Pt.5:2-3)

⇒ He was feeding the Master's family faithfully.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs" (Jn.21:15; cp. v.16-17).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim.4:16).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).

d. He was to be rewarded, made *ruler* and *promoted over all* that the Lord had. The idea is that the faithful and wise believer will be placed as highly as he can be placed. He will be given all that the Master and Lord has, that is, a complete estate to manage (see notes—Lk.16:10-12; 19:15-23; 22:28-30).

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt.25:34).

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Lk.6:35).

"And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities" (Lk.19:17).

"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me" (Lk.22:28-29).

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:17).

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge [rule, have authority over] the world?" (1 Cor.6:2).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (Rev.1:5-6).

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev.20:4).

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.22:5).

3. There was an unfaithful, an unwise steward (manager). Jesus said three things about this steward.
   a. The unfaithful steward said there is *plenty of time*. Why? Because the Lord had delayed His coming; therefore, the steward thought the Lord's return was a long way off. Note: he did not doubt the Lord's return. He knew the Lord was returning, but he did not think it would be soon.

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25).

"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jas.4:13-14).

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Pr.27:1).

"Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Is.56:12).

   b. He did his own will, his own thing. He mistreated and abused others, both male and female, using and misusing, deceiving and taking advantage as he willed. And he lived a worldly life, indulging in the fleshly pleasures of partying and carousing, eating and drinking.

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk.16:10).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim.3:1-4).

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit.3:3).

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas.5:5).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [carouse, party, indulge] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land" (Dt.24:14).

"Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps.62:10).

"How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?" (Ps.82:2).

"Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways" (Pr.3:31).

"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoreth him hath mercy on the poor" (Pr.14:31).

"He that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and he that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want" (Pr.22:16).

"If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they" (Eccl.5:8).

   c. He was to be judged with the unbelievers. The Lord was very clear about this.
   ⇒ The unfaithful steward shall be caught by the Lord, caught *unaware*, "in a day when he looks not for the Lord."

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Lk.21:34-35).

"For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them" (Eccl.9:12).

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew

not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:38-39).

⇒ The Lord will "cut the unfaithful steward in sunder." This means he will be condemned to death, cut off from among the living, exiled from eternal life. Most tragic, he shall be *cut asunder, cut off* from God's presence.

⇒ The Lord will appoint the unfaithful steward his portion with the unbelievers. Why? Because he was not genuine. He was a hypocrite.

"And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.24:51).

"When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating....The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath. This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God" (Job 20:23, 27-29).

"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps.11:6).

"This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood. Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear. I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee" (Jer.13:25-27).

4. There was the unfaithful steward identified. Note that Jesus answered Peter's question in these two verses. He was speaking to both believers and unbelievers. Who is to be watching and living in a state of readiness? Who is to be served by Christ and greatly blessed? The answer is clear: the faithful steward, not the unfaithful steward. Who then is the unfaithful steward? There are two classes named:

a. Class 1: the *servant* who knew the Lord's will and did not prepare himself (v.35), nor did he do the Lord's will (cp. 1 Jn.3:23). This servant's judgment is tragic, for he knew God's will, but deliberately rejected it. Therefore, he will be beaten with many stripes, that is, due much more judgment and punishment.

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46; cp. v.25-45).

"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mk.3:29).

"...he [Christ] will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable" (Lk.3:17).

"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile" (Ro.2:8-9).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Th.1:7-9).

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people" (Heb.10:29-30).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:15).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

b. Class 2: the men who did not know the Lord's will; therefore, they were not able to prepare themselves as they should have, nor were they able to faithfully serve the Lord.

However, note a critical point. Even the stewards committed things worthy of punishment. Therefore, they will be judged and condemned as well, but not as severely (cp. Ro.1:20f; 2:11-16).

The principle of judgment is perfect justice: having many gifts and possessing much wealth means a person is to serve and give much. A person is to use and give all he is and has—holding nothing back. Note that degrees of rewards and punishment are being taught. (See Master Subject Index, *Rewards*.)

	P. The Three Gross Misconceptions of Man, 12:49-59	people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.	**Messiah has not yet come** a. Truth 1: People discern the weather, i.e. earthly events
1 Misconception 1: The Messiah was to bring peace on earth a. Truth 1: He came to bring judgment, v.49 b. Truth 2: He came to suffer & die c. Truth 3: He came to bring division	49 I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! 51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: 52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. 53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.	55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. 56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? 57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?	b. Truth 2: People do not discern the signs of the times, the Messianic age c. Truth 3: People do not discern spiritual matters
2 Misconception 2: The	54 And he said also to the	58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison. 59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.	**3 Misconception 3: Men have no need to make peace with God** a. Truth 1: People have a bad case before God, the Judge. b. Truth 2: The time is urgent—"give diligence" c. Truth 3: The surety of payment, that is, judgment

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

P. The Three Gross Misconceptions of Man, 12:49-59

(12:49-59) **Introduction**: forcibly, Jesus covered three gross misconceptions of man.

1. Misconception 1: the Messiah was to bring peace on earth (v.49-53).
2. Misconception 2: the Messiah has not yet come (v.54-57).
3. Misconception 3: men have no need to make "peace with God" (v.58-59).

1 (12:49-53) **Peace—Judgment—Jesus Christ, Work—Sin**: the first misconception is that the Messiah came to bring peace on earth. Men usually think of Christ as having brought the message of peace to earth, and He did. He brought *peace with God* to a man's heart and the *peace of God* to a man's life (see note, *Peace*—Jn.14:27). But note three significant truths about what Christ says in this point.

1. Christ brought not only peace but fire on the earth, that is, judgment. Fire is usually the symbol of judgment (cp. the term *hell fire*). This is the clearest meaning here, for Christ was talking about His death (v.50).
   a. The word "what" (ti) can be and probably should be translated *how*,: "how I wish the fire were already kindled." Christ was wishing that the cross was already over with. The judgment as the *sin-bearer* of the world was almost too much for Him to bear (cp. Lk.22:39-46, Gethsemane).
   b. It was Christ's death that brought the fire of judgment to the world.

⇒ His death judged (condemned) sin in the flesh.

> **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

⇒ His death judged (condemned) the prince of this world.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:31-32).**
>
> **"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (Jn.16:11).**

⇒ His death caused men to judge themselves to be sinners, sinners who were spiritually dead to God.

> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not hence-**

forth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

⇒ His death caused men to judge themselves in the flesh, that is, to judge their flesh as being weak and subject to sin. The flesh of men needs to be controlled and denied and brought into subjection to Christ.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Ro.7:18-20).

"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor.11:31).

"Knowing this, that our old man is [was, Greek] crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin....For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members [body parts] as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:6, 10-13).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

2. Christ came to suffer and die, that is, to be baptized with the judgment of death and to be separated from God. The term "a baptism to be baptized with" refers to Christ's death. He was to be immersed, placed into a state of death, of separation from God *for man*. His suffering in bearing the judgment of God was to be beyond imagination. Note that He used the metaphor of both *fire and baptism* to describe His death. Note also that He was *straightened*, pressured to get the ordeal of the judgment over, to have the judgment accomplished and man's salvation completed.

"And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, saying, Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again....But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Mk.10:32-34, 38).

3. Christ came to bring division to the earth. (See outline and notes—Mt.10:34-37 for more discussion and application.) Note three things.

a. It is Christ who *sets* a family member against his family. It is important to see this. Christ calls a person out of the world: to be separate from the world and to go about correcting the sin and evil of the world. If a family continues to live in sin and to walk ever onward toward the grave without turning to God and a life of righteousness, two things usually happen.
   1) The believer struggles to witness to his loved ones, no matter the cost and opposition he may face.
   2) The family members often rebel against the righteousness and efforts of the believer.

b. The believer is called to a life of righteousness and to a warfare against sin and evil. If a member of his family is engaged on the side of evil, there is *a natural conflict* between the believer and the family member.
   1) The family member is still of the earth and living primarily to satisfy his earthly desires. The thought of God is repressed and subdued so that he can pursue his physcal and material desires.
   2) The believer is of the earth, but he is also of heaven. He is physical and spiritual, and more importantly, he is living primarily for God and His righteousness, to reach men with the glorious gospel of Christ.

      The two natures differ drastically. They are diametrically opposed to one another. The person of the world primarily talks about the world and lives for the pursuit of the world. The person of the spirit makes God the primary force of his life: he talks about God and the things of righteousness, and he pursues God and His righteousness.

c. A believer is to love his family, but he is to love God first and foremost. Our first loyalty is to God. Two terrible things happen when we put our family before God.
   1) Our families cannot be what they should be without God. No family can reach its full potential without God. There will be a lack of spiritual growth and strength, of conviction and commitment, of confidence and assurance, of purpose and meaning, of life and God—a lack of all—it will be for eternity. There will be no sense, no assurance of anything beyond this life.
   2) Our families cannot be looked after by God unless God is given His rightful place in the family. If the family takes control over its own life, ignoring God and His control, then what happens to the family is in its hands. God is put off to the side, excluded and shut out. He has no say so over the welfare of the family. The family is left all to itself, and all kinds of trouble usually follows. There is certainly a lack of spiritual strength to face the trials and crises that confront every family during life.

What these two facts teach is this: we must love God supremely, putting Him before all—even before our families. When we do, our families are assured of being everything they should be and of being looked after and cared for by God (Mt.6:33). Therefore, a man's decision to follow Christ, no matter the sacrifice to his family, is a wise decision; in fact, it is the only reasonable decision.

> **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Mt.10:34-37).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Mt.22:37-38).**
>
> **"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).**
>
> **"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:5).**
>
> **"What doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).**

2 (12:54-57) **Messiah—Unbelief—Incarnation**: the second misconception is that the Messiah has not yet come. People in Jesus' day did not believe that He was the Messiah, and people today do not believe that He is the Messiah. Jesus stated two truths to all unbelievers.

1. People discern the weather, that is, physical matters of the world. Man's natural senses can be very discerning and sharp. He is skillful in studying and experimenting and in drawing conclusions from the natural world. Weather is the example Christ used; but the subject could be finances, medicine, society, or any other earthly subject. Jesus said people are very capable in discerning the material and physical matters of their world.
2. People do not discern spiritual matters. When it comes to the spiritual senses, man is dead and undiscerning. He does not take time to observe nor to experience the spiritual world, not really.

a. People had *failed to discern the time*, that is, the coming of the Messiah. The signs that pointed to Jesus being the Messiah were visible. A thoughtful and genuinely spiritual person could see the signs, and some had seen them such as Simeon and Anna (Lk.3:25f). Some of the signs were as follows:

⇒ The sceptre, that is, the lawgiver had actually come from Judah in the person of Jesus Christ (Mt.1:2).

⇒ The weeks and ages predicted by Daniel were closing out (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.24:15).

⇒ The prophet Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, had come and proclaimed the Messiah to be Jesus (Mt.3:1-12).

⇒ The baby Jesus had been born in Bethlehem (Mt.2:1).

⇒ Many throughout the world were expecting the coming of some great person, some Messiah (Mt.1:18).

⇒ Many godly Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah, God's great Deliverer of Israel (Lk.2:25f).

⇒ The message and works of Jesus were great evidence, phenomenal miracles given by God to substantiate His claims (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:11).

In addition to these what greater signs could God give than the signs which change lives, radically change them? Unbelief is without excuse. The problem is that men want signs of their own choosing, not the signs which God has chosen to give. Men are always wanting God to deal with them through some...

- spectacular sign
- brilliant sight
- astounding truth
- irrefutable argument
- miraculous experience
- unbelievable deliverance

God's great concern is not *signs from heaven*, not signs outside man. God's great concern is meeting people in their lives, within their hearts, where they really need help. People must discern the times if they are to live abundantly while on this earth and live eternally in the next world. God wants to meet people in their sickness and sorrow and lostness. Meeting man in the areas of his need are irrefutable signs given to every generation.

b. They *failed to discern and judge what was right*. This was one of the most honest, thought-provoking, and revealing questions ever asked of man. It takes a man who is honestly open—a man who is willing to have his heart exposed for what it really is—to answer the question. "Why...judge ye not what is right?"

Thought 1. Why do men not discern, not judge what is right?

1) Why do men not discern that God *is*, that He exists?

"In the beginning God" (Gen.1:1).

"Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth thee" (Neh.9:6).

"The LORD he is God; there in none else beside him" (Dt.4:35).

"The LORD our God is one LORD: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:4-5).

"That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth" (Ps.83:18).

"For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone" (Ps.86:10).

"I am the LORD; and beside me there is no savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God" (Is.43:11-12).

"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Is.44:6).

"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else" (Is.45:18).

"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mk.12:29-30).

"We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one" (1 Cor.8:4).

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph.4:4-6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 Jn.5:7).

2) Why do men not discern that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Mt.14:33).

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk.1:1).

"And I [John the Baptist] saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

3) Why do men not discern that righteousness is the way for men to live and the way for communities and the world to conduct their affairs.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Tim.6:10-12).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:9-14).

Jesus was saying that the signs of the times—the signs of every generation—the signs of nature itself—are enough to point toward God in all His love and righteousness. "Why...judge ye not what is right?"

3 (12:58-59) **Messiah, Misconception—Man, Need**: the third misconception is that men have no need to make *peace with God*. Jesus used an earthly illustration to stress three truths.

1. Men have a bad case before God, the Judge.
2. When a man has a hopeless case with an adversary, the best thing for him to do is to hasten for *settlement out of court*.
3. Otherwise, he is going to be judged in court and have to *pay every penny*.

So it is with God. The hour is urgent. Man needs to make peace with God; he needs to give all diligence to the effort immediately. If he fails to make peace, then he will have to pay the most severe penalty, to the very last mite.

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt.23:33).

"And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" (Ro.2:3).

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Th.5:3).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb.12:25).

"Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered" (Pr.11:21).

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished" (Pr.16:5).

"Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them" (Jer.11:11).

"Woe unto you [false professors] that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" (Amos 5:18-20).

"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down" (Amos 9:2).

	CHAPTER 13	fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?	1) Did not suffer because they were greater sinners
	Q. The Truth About Suffering and Sin: The Great Need for All to Repent, 13:1-9 (cp. Mt.21:18-21; Mk.11: 12-14, 20-26; Is.5:1-7)	5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.	2) *All* must repent or perish
1 Men do not suffer because they are greater sinners than others[DSI] a. Event 1: The latest news of a horrible murderous event 1) Did not suffer because they were greater sinners 2) *All* must repent or perish b. Event 2: The latest news of a terrible tragedy	There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.	6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.	**2 Men must bear fruit or else they will perish** a. The fig tree's privilege: In the vineyard b. The fig tree's purpose: To bear fruit c. The day for reaping came 1) Found no fruit 2) Found that the tree was using up space on the ground & producing nothing d. The mercy of God 1) Gave another chance 2) Fertilized & fed e. The judgment was based on fruit
	2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?	7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?	
	3 I tell, you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.	8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:	
	4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam	9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.	

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

Q. The Truth About Suffering and Sin: The Great Need for All to Repent, 13:1-9

(13:1-9) **Introduction**: one of the world's most perplexing problems is, why do men suffer? Some say that men suffer because they are greater sinners. The result, too often, is that many who suffer feel this is true; consequently, they end up with all sorts of guilt and emotional problems. They think their suffering is due to some great sin they have committed and that God is punishing them because they have been such great sinners. It is this subject that is dealt with in this passage.

1. Men do not suffer because they are *greater sinners* (v.1-5).
2. Men must bear fruit or else they will perish (v.6-9).

1 (13:1-5) **Suffering—Sin—Repentance**: men do not suffer because they are *greater sinners* than others. Jesus used two of the latest news events of His day to teach this lesson.

1. Some shared with Jesus the latest news of a horrible massacre. Some Galileans were in the temple in the midst of worship, offering their sacrifices to God, when Herod had them attacked and slaughtered by his soldiers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.13:1-5). The crowd was being harsh and making a very harsh judgment. They were saying the Galileans were murdered because they were *great sinners*. The crowd was responding to what Jesus had taught, that men must make peace with God before it is too late (Lk.12:58-59). They were saying the Galileans were swept down upon, just like Jesus had described; therefore, they must have been great sinners.

Jesus was pointed and clear in refuting their thoughts. Note: the people had not spoken their thoughts; they had *only related* the story. However, the thought in their minds was that the Galileans had suffered such a horrible death because they were great sinners, or to express it as it is so often stated: suffering is due to sin.

Jesus said, "No! But except you repent, you shall all likewise perish!" Such an argument has its basis in self-righteousness. The point is unmistakable: all men must repent of sin, for all men are sinners, just as sinful as the Galileans.

2. Now note: the subject is so important and men need to grasp its lesson so much that Jesus referred to another late-news event—the terrible tragedy of a tower's falling on eighteen construction workers. It is significant that Jesus used a tragedy as a second illustration instead of an event similar to the murderous act just discussed. His point is unquestionable; suffering is not necessarily due to sin or to degrees of sin. If suffering were due to sin, then there would be no life whatsoever. Why? Because *all men are so sinful* that they are worthy of only the most horrible suffering—death itself. Thus, Jesus made His point: all men must repent or else perish. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.5:23; note—Jn.9:1-3.)

Note what Jesus had said.

1. Suffering is not always due to *greater sins*.

> **"Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?" (Mt.7:4).**
>
> **"And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance sufffereth not to live" (Acts 28:4; see outline and notes—1 Cor.1:3-11; 1:3-4 for more discussion and verses).**

2. All men are guilty of great sin, sin great enough to perish.

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes" (Ro.3:10-18).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).

3. All men are doomed to perish.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:6).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezk.18:20).

4. There is only one way to keep from perishing: repent.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:1-5) **Suffering—Galileans—Construction Workers**: Who were the Galileans slaughtered by Herod and the construction workers upon whom the tower fell? There is no sure record of either group other than what is given here. The best *guesses* are these.

Two suggestions are made about the Galileans. First, they were followers of Judas of Galilee who opposed taxation imposed by the Romans (Acts 5:37). Herod either knew that some of Judas' followers were in the temple worshipping or mistook some group of Galileans as his followers and had them slaughtered. This much is known. Pilate set out to build a new water system for Jerusalem. It was a huge construction project, and to finance the work, Pilate had to insist that the money be taken from the temple finances. This of course enraged the Jews, for the temple monies were gifts to God and belonged to God. The Galileans were an inflammable people; therefore, they were usually in the forefront of trouble. Second, some commentators think that the slaughtered Galileans were revolutionaries who had moved into the city to carry out terrorist acts against the government. Herod knew about it and caught them off guard while they were worshipping. Note they were caught so much by surprise that their blood actually flowed and mingled with the blood of the animal sacrifices they were offering to God.

The construction workers are thought by most to have been repairing one of the towers which served as part of the fortifications on the walls of Jerusalem. It is thought to have been near the pool of Siloam.

2 (13:6-9) **Fruit-Bearing**: men must bear fruit or else they shall perish. Jesus wanted to drive home the need for repentance by sharing the parable of a man's seeking fruit. The man represents God; the vineyard dresser represents Christ; the vineyard represents either the world or Israel. Note these facts about the fig tree.

1. The fig tree was greatly privileged. It was *in the vineyard*, which meant several things.
   a. It was planted (born) by the vineyard keeper (God or Christ) himself. God causes every man to be born into the world. He stands behind every person as that person's Creator and Lord.

"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28).

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).

"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps.100:3).

"And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth" (Is.51:13).

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Mal.2:10).

b. It was planted in the vineyard itself, right where there were other trees bearing fruit. It had the same soil, nourishment, rain, and sun from heaven. This is true of all persons who are born in nations where the gospel is freely preached.

"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country" (Mt.21:33).

2. The fig tree's purpose was to bear fruit. It had been *planted* to bear fruit and it *existed* to bear fruit. It was by nature a *fruit* tree; therefore, it was supposed to bear fruit. It had no other purpose for existing. So it is with man (Lk.10:27; Gal.5:22-23. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8.)

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:8).

"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard" (Mt.20:1).

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

3. The day for reaping came. Jesus said five things about the day of reaping.

a. The vineyard owner, God Himself, was the One who came looking for fruit. The reaper was not someone else; it was God Himself.

⇒ He planted the tree to get fruit (God put man on earth to bear fruit).

⇒ He expected fruit, for He was the One who had planted the tree.

"Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Mt.7:17).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

b. The vineyard owner found no fruit. The tree was bare.

⇒ It failed in its purpose. (So many have all the privileges, yet so few ever honor God or bear fruit as they should.)

⇒ The investment in the life of the tree was wasted.

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Mt.13:22).

"And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes" (Is.5:2).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

c. The vineyard owner had waited a long time. He had come time after time looking for fruit.

⇒ The tree had plenty of time to bear fruit if it were ever going to bear fruit.

⇒ The Owner's patience was extremely long-suffering.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

d. The tree was wasting and misusing space. The purpose of the vineyard, the very reason for its existence, was to produce fruit for the Owner.

⇒ All space was needed for fruit.

⇒ No space could be allowed to be wasted, not forever.

⇒ The tree was hurting the production of the vineyard. The example of false believers affects the whole vineyard. They cheapen the vineyard (world, church), causing others not to want its fruit.

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

"Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law *dishonourest thou God*? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (Ro.2:23-24).

"And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Pt.2:2).

e. The tree was to be cut down. The Owner pronounced judgment.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:7-8).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).

4. The mercy of God. The vineyard dresser interceded for the unfruitful tree. He asked for another year, one last chance for the tree.

⇒ God granted one last chance, one last opportunity.

⇒ Next year, however, was to be the last chance, the last opportunity for the tree.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also *maketh intercession for us*" (Ro.8:34).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he *ever liveth to make intercession* for them" (Heb.7:25).

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots" (Lk.23:34).

"For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste" (Dt.32:32-35)

5. The judgment was based upon fruit (see outline and notes—Jn.15:1-8; Gal.5:22-23).

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

	R. People vs. Religion: Which is More Important? 13:10-17	and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.	a. He became angry with the people b. He corrupted God's Word[DS2] c. He rejected Christ
1 Jesus taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath	10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.	15 The Lord then answered him, and said, thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?	d. He was hypocritical 1) He placed animals above people[DS3]
2 The woman was a worshipper of God a. She was worshipping b. She had a curvature of the spine	11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.	16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?	2) He placed religion above people
c. She was seen & called by Jesus	12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.	17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.	**4 The effect of Jesus' works & words** a. The opponents: Were humiliated b. The crowds: Rejoiced
d. She received Jesus' word & touch e. She glorified God first	13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.		
3 The ruler (religionist) was a worshipper of God[DS1]	14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day,		

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

R. People vs. Religion: Which is More Important? 13:10-17

(13:10-17) **Introduction**: one of the great tragedies of religion is that religion is so often placed before man and his needs. Jesus met this problem head-on.

1. Jesus taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath (v.10).
2. The woman was a worshipper of God (v.11-13).
3. The ruler (religionist) was a worshipper of God (v.14-16).
4. The effect of Jesus' works and words (v.17).

1 (13:10) **Jesus Christ, Worship of**: Jesus taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Three significant facts need to be seen in this point.

1. This was the last time Jesus was ever in a synagogue as far as we know. From this point on He was such a controversial figure that no synagogue would allow Him in the pulpit.
2. This healing miracle took place on the Sabbath, and healing was not allowed on the Sabbath. It was considered work unless it was a matter of life and death. The fact that Jesus broke the Sabbath law was what caused the present dispute.
3. Note that both the woman and the religionist were worshippers of God (v.11-16).

Thought 1. Jesus was worshipping on the Sabbath, doing exactly what He should have been doing.

Thought 2. There is a difference between worshippers. This is seen in the woman and the man (v.11-16). She sought to draw near the Lord for deliverance, whereas the man only practiced his ceremony and ritual.

2 (13:11-13) **Salvation—Worship—Jesus Christ, Heals—Compassion**: the woman was a worshipper of God. Note five things about her.

1. She was worshipping. It was her habit to worship, to seek the face of God in looking after her life. Therefore, she was where she was supposed to be on this particular Sabbath: in worship. And because she was there, she was to receive a very special touch from God. She did not know it yet, but she was. Why her? Because she was sincere, ever so sincere in seeking God and His care.

"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Mt.4:10).

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jn.4:24).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Ps.23:6).

"LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Ps.26:8).

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple" (Ps.27:4).

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Ps.65:4).

"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Ps.84:2).

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps.84:10).

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Ps.122:1).

2. She had a curvature of the spine. This sounds like some form of arthritis where the joints of the spine fuse together. Luke, the physician, gives the medical description of his day for the disease. She had been deformed for eighteen yars. Two facts need to be noted.

a. She had been afflicted with "a spirit of infirmity." Jesus said the spirit was an *evil spirit of infirmity*: "[She was] a daughter...whom Satan hath bound" (v.16). Thus, the woman needed spiritual healing as well as physical healing.

b. She was in worship *despite* her deformity, and note her deformity was severe. She was all bent over and unable to rise up. The pain was sometimes severe. Yet, her habit was to attend worship and to seek the favor and help of God upon her life.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not afar from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).

"Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).

3. She was seen and called by Jesus. The woman's faithfulness in the worship of God, despite deformity and pain, attracted Jesus. He knew both her condition with all its pain and inconvenience and the great sacrifice she made to worship God. He was moved with compassion. Note: she did not have to call to Him for help; Jesus called her *to Him.*

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (Lam.3:22).

4. She received Jesus' Word and touch. This was crucial. Jesus had called her to come "to Him." She had to respond to His call; He could not come for her. She had to take the step of coming herself. When she obeyed, Jesus spoke the Word, the *good news* to her: "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity." (Keep in mind that her problem had been both spiritual and physical.) Jesus reached out and touched her, and she was "made straight." She stood upright. *She experienced both the power of Jesus' Word and touch.* But note: it was because she came when Jesus called, and she was able to hear Jesus' call because she was worshipping God, seeking His grace and care.

Thought 1. The Lord alone can heal those who are bowed down.

"The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous" (Ps.146:8).

Thought 2. Souls that are bent or bowed down can be lifted up by Jesus, no matter what it is that has caused the bowing:

⇒ humiliation and shame
⇒ sin
⇒ lack of education
⇒ loss of everything
⇒ accident
⇒ disease
⇒ appearance and looks
⇒ personality

"I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me" (Ps.38:6-10).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Mt.8:16-17).

"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk.5:31-32).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

"For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall" (Is.25:4).

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Is.53:4).

5. She glorified God first. Note the word "immediately."

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:57).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor.9:15).

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.5:20).

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

"Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people" (1 Chron.16:8).

"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps.9:11).

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High" (Ps.50:14).

"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps.67:3).

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Ps.68:19).

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High" (Ps.92:1).

3 (13:14-16) **Religionists—Tradition—Hypocrisy**: the ruler (religionist) was a worshipper of God. He was the head of the synagogue (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.4:23; 9:18-19). He was a different kind of worshipper than the deformed woman. Whereas the woman sought God *through her need and dependency* to favor and help her personally, the ruler sought God *through form and ritual*, ceremony and rules. There is a vast difference between the two approaches. The one thing God teaches is that a man has to approach Him as a child, dependent and needy. Note four faults or sins of the religionist. (See outline and notes—Mt.12:1-8; 12:9-13 for more discussion and application.)

1. The ruler got angry with people. In fact, the very people with whom he became angry were his neighbors, the very persons who sat in worship with him every week. He allowed his temper to get out of control. The people were merely seeking help, for they were in desperate need, especially the woman; and he knew it. However, because he differed with them, he flared up against them.

Thought 1. How many have hot tempers! How many strike out when they differ! How few control themselves!

Thought 2. Note two things.

1) The man lost his temper in the presence of Jesus. Every flare-up is seen by God, and He knows the sin being committed.

2) The man was really upset with Jesus as well as the people. However, he *feared* to take Jesus on, for he felt Jesus was stronger and more able than himself. So he struck out against the weaker persons. How like the *angry* person!

2. The ruler misunderstood and corrupted God's law (Sabbath). In his mind, Jesus had committed a serious crime. He had healed on the Sabbath day (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Lk.13:14 for discussion).

3. He refused to acknowledge the Messiah, God's Son, who actually stood right before him (see outline and notes—Ro.11:28-29; 1 Th.2:15-16 for discussion).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

4. He was hypocritical. He placed both animals and *man-made* religious rules above people. He allowed tradition and ritual, ceremony and rules to become more important than meeting the basic needs of human life: the need for God and the need for spiritual, physical, and mental help—all were to take a back seat to religious form. The religionist's offense was serious. Note the woman was...

- a "daughter of Abraham," a professed believer in God.
- a woman who had a spiritual need. She had been bound by Satan.
- a woman who had suffered for eighteen years.

"But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Mt.12:7-8).

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:36-39).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:25-28).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mk.7:6-9).

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk.6:46).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col.2:8).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Tit.1:13-14).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him" (1 Jn.3:16-19).

"For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hos.6:6).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:14) **Sabbath Law—Religionists**: the crime committed by Jesus was "breaking the sabbath law," that is, *working* on the Sabbath day. This was a serious matter to the orthodox Jew. Just how serious can be seen in the strict demands governing the Sabbath. Law after law was written to govern all activity on the Sabbath. A person could not travel, fast, cook, buy, sell, draw water, walk beyond a certain distance, lift anything, fight in a war, or heal on the sabbath unless life was at stake. A person was not even to contemplate any kind of work or activity. A good example of the legal restriction and the people's loyalty to it is seen in the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion. Despite their enormous love for Him, they would not even walk to His tomb to prepare the body for burial until the Sabbath was over (Mk.16:1f, Mt.28:1f).

It was a serious matter to break the Sabbath law. A person who broke the law was condemned, and if the offence were serious enough, the person was to die.

This may seem harsh to some. But when dealing with the Jewish nation, one must remember that it was their religion that held them together as a nation through centuries and centuries of exile. Their religion—in particular their beliefs about God's call to their nation, the temple, and the Sabbath—became the *binding force* that kept Jews together and maintained their distinctiveness as a people. It protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other people through intermarriage. No matter where they were, they met together and associated together and held on to their beliefs. A picture of this can be seen in the insistence of Nehemiah when he led some Jews back to Jerusalem (Neh.13:15-22; cp. Jer.17:19-27; Ezk.46:1-7).

All the above explains to some degree why the religionists opposed Jesus with such hostility. Their problem was that they had allowed religion and ritual, ceremony and liturgy, and probably position, security, and recognition to become more important than the basic essentials of human life: personal need and compassion, and the true worship and mercy of God. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10. This is an important note for more discussion on this point.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(13:14) **Religionists—Word of God**: the religionists (Jewish teachers) corrupted God's Word. There are two ways this is done (Rev.22:18-19; Pr.30:6).

1. By taking away from the words of God's Scripture. A person takes away from God's Word by denying sections that he does not like or understand, by neglecting to live the whole counsel of God, and by interpreting some commandments too loosely.
2. By adding to the words of God's Scripture. A person adds to God's Word by interpreting and living too strictly. Such exalts the flesh and is nothing more than extreme discipline and self-control. Of course, both discipline and self-control are commendable and are qualities demanded by God's Word, but they are not an end in themselves.

God's Word is practical and leads to an abundant life, to real living. It is not cold, harsh, restrictive, monastic, unrealistic, or impractical. God did not give His Word for a select group (clergy); He gave it for the common man. "His commandments are not grievous" (1 Jn.5:3).

The Sadducees were especially guilty of taking away from God's Word, whereas the Pharisees and Scribes were especially guilty of adding to God's Word (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 23:8; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2).

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev.22:19).

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Dt.4:2).

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Dt.12:32).

"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Pr.30:5-6).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(13:15-16) **Man, Deceived**: the ruler became angry with Jesus, but he camouflaged it by attacking the people over a religious tradition. His life had become so routine that it was warped: he showed more concern for animals than he did for human beings. Jesus' frontal rebuke indicates that the man had probably never even thought of his plight. If he had, Jesus would probably have tried to stir him to a proper decision.

4 (13:17) **Jesus Christ, Impact**: the effect of Jesus' work and words was the humiliation of those who opposed Him and the rejoicing of those who were open to Him.

	S. The Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven: The Kingdom of God, 13:18-21 (Mt.13:31-33; Mk.4: 30-32)	tard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.	a. It is planted by God 1) As a seed 2) In His garden b. It grows to be great[DS2] c. It is lodging for all
1 The Kingdom of God illustrated	18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?	20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?	**3 It is like leaven's working in bread**[DS3,4] a. It is taken & placed in meal b. It works until the whole is changed
2 It is like a mustard seed[DS1]	19 It is like a grain of mus-	21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.	

DIVISION V

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE I): HIS MISSION AND PUBLIC CHALLENGE, 9:51-13:21

S. The Parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven: The Kingdom of God, 13:18-21

(13:18-21) **Introduction**: Jesus was still in the synagogue teaching. Some had rejected Him; others had accepted Him (v.17). This stirred His mind to think about the Kingdom of God, a subject that people needed to understand fully.

1. The Kingdom of God illustrated (v.18).
2. It is like a mustard seed (v.19).
3. It is like leaven's working in bread (v.20-21).

1 (13:18) **Kingdom of God**: the Kingdom of God illustrated. Jesus stirred thought about the kingdom by asking two questions.

1. What is the Kingdom of God like?
2. To what shall the Kingdom of God be compared?

2 (13:19) **Kingdom of God—Christianity, Growth of—Mustard Seed**: the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. Jesus said three things about this particular mustard seed.

1. The mustard seed was planted by God. The man in the parable is God or Christ. Note the word "took" (labon, having taken). It means to deliberately take, to take with purpose and thought. The seed was not planted by chance; it did not just happen. With purpose and thought, God planted and nourished the seed (kingdom).
   a. He planted it as a small seed (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Mustard Seed*—Lk.13:19 for discussion).
   b. He planted it in His garden. God's garden is the world, the creation of His own hand.

> **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen.1:1).**
>
> **"Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee" (Neh.9:6).**
>
> **"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands" (Ps.102:25).**

2. The mustard seed grew to be great. This is really the major point of Luke, to show how the kingdom was to grow from a few persons into a great movement. Imagine the scene. There stood Jesus in the synagogue with only a few persons who truly believed that He was bringing the Kingdom of God to earth. In fact, most of the ones sitting before Him did not believe in Him at all; they opposed Him. But He knew something. God was planting the kingdom on earth through Him; therefore the kingdom was destined to grow and succeed. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Christianity*—Lk.13:19.)

> **"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).**
>
> **"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Acts 28:28).**
>
> **"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name" (Ro.15:9).**
>
> **"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal.3:14).**
>
> **"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs [with Jewish believers], and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph.3:6).**
>
> **"There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth" (Ps.72:16).**
>
> **"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:7).**

"For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited" (Is.54:3).

"Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee" (Is.55:5).

"Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee" (Is.60:5).

"A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time" (Is.60:22).

3. The mustard bush provided lodging for the birds of the air. The birds' flocking to the tree is a picture of the people and nations of the earth seeking refuge in the covering of Christianity.
   a. Some say the birds are those in the world who find their lodging in the kingdom—the kingdom (the church, Christianity) that had so small a beginning but is now growing into a stately movement. Many in the world, believers and non-believers alike, have found help and safety under its branches. To a large extent laws and institutions of mercy, justice, and honor have evolved from this magnificent movement. This interpretation relies heavily upon the picture painted by the Old Testament. A great empire is said to be like a tree, and conquered nations are said to be like birds who lodge under its shadow (Ezk.17:22-24; 31:6; Dan.4:14).
   b. Others say the birds are the children of the evil one who see the lodging facilities and protective covering of the kingdom and seek lodging therein.

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it" (Lk.16:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:19) **Mustard Seed**: the mustard seed was not actually the smallest seed known in Jesus' day, but the seed was small and the mustard bush grew as large as some trees. It has been reported that a rider on horseback could find shade under its branches. The fact that such a small seed could produce such huge results caused people to use the mustard seed as a proverbial saying to describe smallness.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:19) **Christianity—Kingdom of God**: there are several facts that show just how small the beginning of the kingdom or of Christianity really was.
1. It began in the soul of a single person. Jesus launched the movement all by Himself. The idea, the dream, was in no one else's soul but His. He moved out alone—in God's strength.
2. It was born in the soul of a carpenter from an obscure village, Nazareth, and from an obscure and despised nation, Israel (see note—Mt.8:5-13; Lk.7:4-5).
3. It was carried forth by men with no position and no prestige. There were no mighty, no noble, no famous persons among its early followers. They were but common folk, some from honorable professions such as the fishing industry (Mt.4:18-21), and some from despised professions such as tax collecting (Mt.9:9). (Cp. 1 Cor.1:26.)
4. It grew from just a few persons who had very *little faith* (cp. Mt.14:31; Lk.12:32).
5. It was formed as a church and numbered only one hundred and twenty in the very beginning (Acts 1:15).

3 (13:20-21) **Kingdom of God—Christianity—Leaven**: the Kingdom of God is like leaven's working in bread. Quickly note what Jesus said: the Kingdom of God is like leaven which is placed in meal (the world) until the whole (world) is changed. Note two major points.
1. The leaven (kingdom) is taken and placed into the meal (world).
   a. The kingdom or gospel is deliberately taken and placed into the world. The kingdom and the gospel of God are not by chance (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, pt.1, *Kingdom of God*—Lk.13:19).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).

"He [Jesus Christ] is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Is.45:22).

b. The purpose of the kingdom is to leaven, that is, to change the whole of an individual and of society itself.
⇒ It seeks to leaven individuals: to penetrate them with the gospel until the *whole* being is transformed.
⇒ It seeks to leaven society as a whole: to penetrate society with the gospel until the whole of society is transformed.

> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal.6:15).**
>
> **"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:23-24).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

c. Leaven has a changing, transforming, fulfilling, and satisfying power (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Lk.1:21 for discussion).

2. The leaven (kingdom) works until the whole (world) is changed. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Leaven*—Lk.13:21 for discussion.)

> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" (Jn.6:32-33).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**
>
> **"I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:48-51).**
>
> **"This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:58).**
>
> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph.3:19).**
>
> **"Who [the Lord] satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Ps.103:5).**
>
> **"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(13:21) **Leaven—Transformation—Gospel—Kingdom of God**: leaven changes and transforms bread. Bread made from water is hard, dry, and not too nourishing; but leaven, mixed in with dough, changes and transforms bread tremendously. It does at least four things for bread.

1. Leaven makes bread soft, no longer hard. The leaven of the gospel does the same: it penetrates the heart of man and softens the hardness of his life. Thereby the man becomes much softer toward the Lord and toward the needs of others. He becomes a more caring and giving person. Softness is definitely one of the trademarks of a transformed person.
2. Leaven makes bread porous and moist, no longer dry. The leaven of the gospel does the same: it penetrates the dryness of a man's heart and life. Thereby the gospel penetrates, creates pores in his life, and moistens his heart so that he can grow into a moist or fruitful person.
3. Leaven makes bread satisfying, no longer dissatisfying. Again, the gospel does the same for the man who lives a dissatisfied life with no purpose, meaning, or significance. The gospel leavens, that is, transforms a person's heart and life, giving purpose and joy and hope—all the satisfaction a person could ever desire.
4. Leaven makes bread nourishing, no longer of little benefit. The leaven of the gospel does the same thing for the man who seems to accomplish so little in life. The gospel not only gives *purpose* but it *inspires*, *commissions*, and causes a man to *feed others*. A person transformed by the gospel is able to feed the truth to the world. The gospel is able to explain the reasons for the emptiness and loneliness of the human heart and God's provision for such.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(13:21) **Leaven**: note several important facts about how leaven works.

1. Leaven works quietly and silently. It works without fanfare and the spectacular. There is a thoughtful lesson here on how the gospel should be presented (see outline and notes—Mt.4:5-7; 12:38-40).

> **"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (2 Tim.2:24-25).**
>
> **"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" (Tit.3:2).**

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" (Jas.3:13).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

2. Leaven finishes its work. Once it is inserted into the dough, nothing can stop it or ever pluck it out. It will transform the dough. This is a great lesson on the security of the person who genuinely allows the gospel to penetrate his heart and life.

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:28).

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Th.3:3).

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:5).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24-25).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen.28:15).

"The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (Ps.121:5-8).

3. Leaven works slowly and gradually, yet consistently. It takes time for it to leaven the whole lump. The believer can learn at least two lessons from this fact.

a. It will take time for him to personally grow in the gospel. Just as a child grows physically through proper nourishment, so the believer will grow spiritually if he receives proper nourishment. His spiritual growth will take time; but it will be consistent and sure.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).

b. It will take time for his own witnessing and work to produce bread. Yet his leavening (service and ministry) will leaven the lump of meal (people) he handles and works.

4. Leaven changes the quality, not the substance, of the dough. It is still dough, yet it is changed. A man who receives the gospel remains a man; but he is a changed man, a man of quality, a man of God.

5. Leaven changes the whole lump. It permeates every pore of the dough's being. So it is with a man. Once the gospel honestly penetrates, it permeates and affects all of his life (cp. 2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15; Eph.4:23-24; Col.3:10).

	VI. THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10	and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:	
		26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.	**4 The saved are not the citizens of so-called Christian nations nor members of certain fellowships**
	A. The Saved Discussed, 13:22-30	27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.	**5 The saved shall be separated from the lost & the lost shall see them enter God's Kingdom**[DS1,2]
1 Jesus journeyed toward Jerusalem a. Taught in the cities & villages b. Along the way someone questioned Jesus about salvation	22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.	28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.	
2 The saved strive to enter the narrow gate	23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,	29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.	**6 The saved will come from all nations & classes of society**
3 The saved act soon enough: A man can move too late	24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. 25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us;	30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.	

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

A. The Saved Discussed, 13:22-30

(13:22-30) **Introduction**: Who are the saved? Will many be saved? Christ answers these questions in this passage. However, He does not answer the questions to satisfy curiosity. He answers them to challenge us so that we will make sure we are saved.

1. Jesus journeyed toward Jerusalem (v.22-23).
2. The saved strive to enter the narrow gate (v.24).
3. The saved act soon enough: a man can move too late (v.25).
4. The saved are not the citizens of so-called Christian nations nor members of certain fellowships (v.26).
5. The saved shall be separated from the lost and the lost shall see them enter God's Kingdom (v.27-28).
6. The saved will come from all nations and classes of society (v.29-30).

1 (13:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Cross—Salvation**: Jesus journeyed toward Jerusalem. This is the second stage of Jesus' great journey to the cross. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:51; cp. Lk.17:11.) Note: as He travelled along, He taught wherever He was. He kept on doing what God sent Him to do, not slacking off nor forgetting His call and mission. Whether he was in a large city or a small village, it did not matter; He reached out to as many as He could reach.

Somewhere along the way, someone asked Him point blank: "Lord, are there few that be saved?" The man was not asking how he might be saved but if the saved would be many or few. His question was probably one of two things. It was a question of curiosity, a question often discussed among people: Are most people saved or lost? However, it could have been a legitimate question asking for clarification. The Jews taught that all would be saved just because they were Jews by birth and circumcision. But Jesus taught that nationality and ritual had nothing to do with salvation, and He was always stressing that many are called, but few are chosen. Perhaps the man was asking how to reconcile the two teachings. Note: Jesus used the occasion to speak "unto them" all, the whole multitude.

Thought 1. Many are curious, but not curious enough to really seek after the Lord for personal salvation. They are ready and willing to discuss *religious subjects* but unwilling to deny themselves and to diligently seek after God.

Thought 2. Birth and ritual are not enough to save a person, not even if the ritual is circumcision (for the Jew) or baptism (for the Christian). Baptism no more saves a person *born within Christian circles* than circumcision saved a Jew *born within Jewish circles*.

2 (13:24) **Salvation—Narrow Gate—Jesus Christ, Mediator—Seeking**: the saved strive to enter the narrow gate. Note three significant facts.

1. The entrance to salvation is a *narrow gate*. This means at least three things.
   a. The way to salvation is specific, very specific.

b. The way to salvation is the only way. There are not many ways to be saved; there is only one way.

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
>
> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).**
>
> **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).**
>
> **"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb.12:24).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).**

c. The way to salvation is straight. It is not crooked in direction or purpose or morals. It is the straight way.

2. A person has to "*strive*" (agonizesthe) to be saved. The word means to agonize, struggle, contend, exert to the fullest, labor fervently. *Whole-hearted dedication and effort* are required. But note a critical point: the idea is not that a person works for his salvation, but that he *diligently seeks* God. He casts himself totally upon the *belief that God is*, that God actually exists (cp. Heb.11:6). It is the spirit, the attitude, the heart that sets itself upon God, refusing to be diverted or to be committed to anything else. It is the total commitment of one's life to God for salvation.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27; cp. v.24-28).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).**
>
> **"For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).**

3. Many will seek to enter the door of salvation but "shall not be able." The reason is what Jesus said. One must "*strive*" to enter and few are willing to pay the price of self-denial. It costs too much for them to give up the world (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**

3 (13:25) **Salvation—Decision—Accepted Time**: the saved act soon enough; a man can move too late. The parable is simple and clearly understood. Note three things.

1. The person who strives *now* can enter salvation. This is seen in the words "will seek" (v.24). The words are in the future tense; that is, it is in the future that many "will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Right now, all who "strive" to enter salvation can be saved.

> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**
>
> **"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah" (Ps.32:5-7).**
>
> **"But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation" (Ps.69:13).**
>
> **"For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice" (Ps.95:7).**

"Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth" (Is.49:8).

2. The Master shall rise up and shut the door to salvation. There is a time limit to salvation. The door will not always be opened.
   a. It is shut at a person's death. No man who is presently living has yet had the door shut; but for some, the door will be shut within the very next minute, the next hour, the next day (Heb.9:27).
   b. It is shut when the Lord returns and the great day of judgment takes place. The age of grace and the day of salvation will be closed for the whole world, for every man and woman and child who is of responsible age.
3. Many shall rise up and knock at the closed door and beg to enter. This is the scene painted by Christ: men's rising up and crying for mercy and salvation after it is too late. Once a man dies, it is too late. Once Christ returns, it will be too late.

"For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:29-30; cp. v.24-30).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:41-46).

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" (Heb.12:17).

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer.8:20).

4 (13:26) **False Profession—Heritage—Christian Nation**: the saved are not the citizens of so-called Christian nations nor members of certain fellowships or churches. Note the exact words of men when they stand before Christ in that day:

1. "We have *eaten* and *drunk* in thy presence." They were...
   - where He was, in His very presence (in church, in the presence of believers).
   - where His Word was taught.
   - where His works were performed.
2. "Thou hast taught in our streets."
   - They were citizens of nations which allowed His teaching.
   - They allowed His teaching in their own streets, neighborhoods, cities, and homes.

However, they are *only professing believers*; they are not genuine believers. They are people who had all the privileges of the gospel; some are even baptized church members and moral persons, but they never dedicated their whole beings to *strive* after salvation (see outline and notes—Jn.1:12-13; Ph.3:7-11). They continued to live worldly and unrighteous lives, seeking the comforts and possessions of this world.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of your hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk.6:46).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).

"And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer" (Ps.78:35).

"And they come unto thee [the prophet, preacher] as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not" (Ezk.33:31-32).

5 (13:27-28) **Judgment—Lost, Rejected by God**: the saved shall be separated from the lost, and the lost shall see them enter God's kingdom. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24.) Note several tragic facts.

1. The Master will not know the lost nor from where they came. They had lived in a different life and realm, a different world of thought and behavior than He had. They will have come from a different background entirely than the Master. Therefore, He will not know them nor from where they came.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3; cp. Mk.10:15).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" (1 Cor.6:9; cp. Gal.5:19-21; cp. v.22-23).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27).

2. The Master will have to reject the lost, because they have been "workers of iniquity" (cp. Ps.6:8).

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).

"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).

"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (Mt.13:49).

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Mt.24:40-41; cp. Lk.17:34-36).

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Mt.25:11-12).

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).

"And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk.16:26).

3. The lost will weep and gnash their teeth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Lk.13:28). Note the reason: they will actually see their fathers, godly men from whose roots they came, enter God's kingdom; but they themselves shall be thrust out. Note: the lost are able to see believers in heaven, in God's kingdom (see note, pt.2—Lk.16:23-31).

Thought 1. How many will see godly parents, children, friends, neighbors, and acquaintences enter God's kingdom and find themselves shut out? There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in that tragic day. Why? Simply because they (the lost) would not "strive" to enter salvation. They would not deny themselves (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:28) **Weeping**: loud grief, mourning, groaning, wailing, floods and floods of tears.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(13:28) **Gnashing** (brugmos): grinding; biting in hostility and bitterness and indignation; spitefully snapping the teeth; rage, fury, and despair because nothing can be done. A person's state is permanently determined (cp. Is.51:20).

6 (13:29-30) **Gentile, Conversion—Salvation, Universal—Reward**: the saved will come from all nations and classes of society. This is a prediction of the great Gentile revival and conversion to take place. We are, of course, in the midst of this great revival today. Note three facts.

1. The saved will come from the four corners of the world. Salvation is not from one corner nor from one nation of the earth. It is of God, who rules over all the earth, and it is by faith, by *striving* to enter God's kingdom (see notes—Ro.4:11-12. See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25.)

"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage" (Mt.22:9).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Is.45:22).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

2. The saved will sit down in the Kingdom of God. The picture is that of the great marriage supper of the Messiah. (See outline and notes—Lk.14:15-24; Mt.22:1-14 for discussion.)

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).

3. The saved come from all classes, even from those who are classified as "last" by men. *Classes* do not matter to God. He is no respecter of persons. He saves any man who *strives* to enter salvation. Thus, many who are first (safe and secure) in the minds of themselves and others shall be last (lost), and many considered as last shall be first.

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

"But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God" (Ro.2:10-11).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

"God accepteth no man's person" (Gal.2:6).

"He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (Lk.1:52).

"Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (Lk.6:25).

	B. The Tragic Rejection of Jesus, 13:31-35 (Mt.23:37-39; cp. Lk.19:41-44)	the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.	c. His death must be diligently pursued in Jerusalem
		34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!	**3 The rejection by the religionists & the people** a. They killed God's prophets & messengers b. They rejected the Messiah's salvation
1 Some Pharisees warned Jesus about a plot to kill Him **2 The rejection by political leaders** a. His ministry will be perfected, that is, completed	31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. 32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.	35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.	**4 The warning to all those who reject Jesus** a. They will be forsaken by God b. There will be a day when Jesus will return & rule supremely
b. His walk today, tomorrow, & the day after "must be"	33 Nevertheless I must walk to day and to morrow, and		

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

B. The Tragic Rejection of Jesus, 13:31-35

(13:31-35) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ has always been rejected and opposed by men. He has been and still is opposed by the ordinary man, the religionist, and the ruler. There is not a single class of men who flocks to Christ, not in *true* belief. The opposition to Jesus ranges from ignoring Him to trying to stamp out His witness through His followers. Some people ridicule and abuse the followers of the Lord, while others persecute and kill them. This passage deals with persons who rejected Jesus Christ.

1. Some Pharisees warned Jesus about Herod's plot to kill Him (v.31).
2. The rejection by political leaders (v.31-33).
3. The rejection by the religionists and the people (v.34).
4. The warning to all those who reject Jesus (v.35).

(13:31-35) **Another Outline**. Some Unusual Things About Jesus.

1. Some Pharisees cared for Jesus (v.31).
2. Herod plotted against Jesus (v.31).
3. Jesus used sharp language: "That fox" (v.32).
4. Jesus knew the duration of His life (v.33).
5. Jesus knew the place of His death (v.33).
6. Jesus deliberately walked into the murderous trap set for Him (v.33).
7. Jesus lamented over those who rejected Him (v.34).
8. Jesus foretold a future day of Godly supremacy (v.35).

1 (13:31) **Pharisees**: some Pharisees warned Jesus about Herod's plot. This verse shows that some Pharisees respected Jesus and were not hostile toward Him. Apparently, the vast majority did reject and stand against Him, but there were a few who *truly* loved and believed God. Therefore, they would never think of plotting to kill a man, much less to kill Jesus. When they looked at Jesus, they felt He was a good man—perhaps a prophet, maybe even the Messiah. We do know that some Pharisees did accept Jesus as the Messiah (Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17). It was probably some of these who warned Jesus against Herod.

2 (13:31-33) **Jesus Christ, Rejection**: the rejection by political leaders. Herod plotted to kill Jesus. This is a fact seldom considered, but the plot was real and dangerous. The Lord's words to Herod show this (v.32). Remember the scene. Jesus was in Herod's territory, Galilee, and thousands were following Him throughout the whole area. The whole country was aroused with the rumor of the Messiah. And when the subject of a Jewish Messiah arose, the authorities paid close attention. Usually when a man claimed to be a Messiah, an uprising of some sort took place. Herod was bound to be paying close attention and keeping watch over Jesus and His movements.

> **Thought 1.** The Pharisees who warned Jesus bucked the tide. What they did was not popular among their peers, but they did what they knew to be the right thing. They *stood up for Christ*.

Another factor is known about Herod. He had reacted against the righteousness of John the Baptist and had him killed. Herod fell sway to what so many political leaders experience:

⇒ The fear of the people's *first* loyalty going to God instead of the state. (Government leaders often fail to see that Christ's kingdom is not of this earth and that God demands loyalty to the state. See notes—Lk.20:19-26; Mt.22:15-22; 17:24-27.)

⇒ The fear of the teaching of Christ: the responsibility of men to God.

⇒ The fear of *true* righteousness and justice and love. (Such virtues often run contrary to what government leaders really want.)

It is for these reasons that men try to stamp out the witness of Christ. Note that Jesus called Herod "that fox." The *fox* was a symbol of…

- a sly man
- a crafty man
- a destructive man
- a subtle man
- a treacherous man
- a worthless man
- a base man

Men will attack the witness of Christ by being…

- sly
- crafty
- destructive
- subtle
- treacherous
- worthless
- base

Jesus said three revealing things about the attack against His witness.

1. His ministry and witness will be "*perfected*" (teleioumai). The word means completed and finished. His ministry of delivering men spiritually and physically (casting out evil spirits and healing) will not be stopped by any man, even rulers such as Herod.

The words "the third day I shall be perfected" mean that His witness and delivering power will be completed and finished. There is a *definite time* for it, then His witness will stop. It will be no more. But until that day, nothing can stop His ministry and witness. This is, of course, a reference to Jesus' death and His resurrection on the third day. Note that His resurrection is the perfection of His ministry. It is by arising from the dead that death is conquered and man's salvation is completed.

> **"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:14-15).**
>
> **"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).**
>
> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**
>
> **"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (1 Cor.15:20-23).**
>
> **"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).**
>
> **"But for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:14).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).**

2. His walk today and tomorrow and the day after "*must be*." The word "must" (dei) means necessary, being necessary by the very nature of the case. The witness of Jesus was a divine necessity overseen and ordained by God, and it could not be stopped. Jesus' walk and witness were directed by God.

> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24. See DEEPER STUDY # 3, Determinate Counsel—Acts 2:23.)**
>
> **"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).**

Thought 1. Note two critical questions.

1. How many of us know the *divine necessity* of God to witness?
2) How many of us walk *today and tomorrow* under the direction (divine necessity) of God?

3. His death *must be in Jerusalem*. Jerusalem was the capital of the nation, the symbolic center of the people's government, religion, and hopes. It was there that their temple stood and that their ruling body (the Sanhedrin) governed and judged the nation. If a prophet were to die, the decision for death was made in Jerusalem. Therefore, Jesus was saying this about His death:

⇒ When the people kill Him (God's Son), He must be killed in the place that symbolized all the hopes and activities of man (government and religion). Why? Because He was to die for all men everywhere: for all their corruptions in government and religion and for all their injustices in both. They did not understand the reason yet, but they soon would.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

3 (13:34) **Jesus Christ, Rejection**: the rejection by the religionists and the people. When Jesus looked upon Jerusalem, He wept. He wept because he saw the city as the symbol of all formal religion and of all men who rejected His witness. (See note, pt.3—Lk.13:31-33.) It is because of this that this passage is known as Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (see outline and notes—Mt.23:37-39 for more discussion).

1. The religionists and people rejected, ridiculed, abused, persecuted, and killed God's prophets and messengers. Something needs to be remembered by people who abuse God's messengers. God holds His messengers very dear to His heart; and He is extremely protective of them. To ridicule and abuse one of His true followers is a very serious offense. Jerusalem and the people of Israel were guilty of many sins, but it was this sin that Jesus pointed out as the *most condemning*. In conjunction with this thought is the fact that it was primarily the *grumbling* of Israel in the wilderness against Moses and God that caused God to judge that generation so severely.

Scripture says:

"Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master [the Lord] he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4). (See note, Jews, Sins of—Mt.23:37 for a list of the prophets abused by the people.)

2. The people rejected the Messiah's salvation.
   a. Note the enormous patience of God. Despite continued rejection and even murder of the godly, God kept after the people.
   b. Note the continued patience and love of Christ. "How often would I have gathered [you]." He would have saved the people time and again, for He desired to save them, not to condemn them.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).

   c. Note the tragic words, "Ye would not." He would save them, but they would not be saved. The people had every privilege and opportunity imaginable. They heard Christ and learned of Him, yet they rejected Him. Their rejection was a *deliberate decision*.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (Jn.5:43).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

4 (13:35) **Jesus Christ, Exaltation—Judgment—Rejection**: the warning to all those who reject Christ is twofold.

1. They and their house are to be forsaken by God. The house may be a literal house, a nation, a religious body, a city, a local group—it does not matter—if they reject Christ time after time, reject the privileges they have, God will leave them all alone. They will be deserted, left without the presence of God. And a place without the presence of God is like a wilderness or a desert—deserted and left all alone to waste away. (See outlines and notes—Mt.23:38-39; Ro.1:24-32.)

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).

"Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven [cp. astrology]" (Acts 7:42).

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenentbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Ro.1:24-32).

"For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam.3:13).

"And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see" (2 Chron.30:7).

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Ps.81:11-12).

"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Pr.1:28-33).

"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos.4:17).

2. There is to be a day when He will return and rule supremely. This is a definite reference to Jesus' return to earth (cp. Ps.118:26). Note: every one who rejected Jesus Christ will see Him return, but then it will be too late. He will be returning in judgment, to bow the knee of all those who rejected His supremacy.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mk.16:19).

"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" (Lk.22:69).

"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (Jn.3:31).

"Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (Jn.13:13).

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Ro.14:19).

"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor.15:25).

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).

"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever" (Rev.5:11-14).

	CHAPTER 14		
	C. The Religionists & Their Error, 14:1-6 (cp. Mt.12:9-13)	3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?	**3 The religionists made religious form more important than healing men**
		4 And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed	**4 The religionists refused to confess the truth taught by Jesus**
1 The religionists watched Jesus critically	And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him.	him, and let him go; 5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull	**5 The religionists failed to see the inconsistency of their belief & behavior**
2 The religionists overlooked what was really needful	2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.	him out on the sabbath day? 6 And they could not answer him again to these things.	**6 Conclusion: The religionists were silenced**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

C. The Religionists and Their Error, 14:1-6

(14:1-6) **Introduction**: a chief Pharisee invited Jesus to a meal on the Sabbath. Some commentators think the invitation was deceptive, a plot to entrap Jesus into breaking the Sabbath law and to disqualify Him in the eyes of the people as a lawbreaker. However, we are not told this; and usually when the religionists were trying to entrap Jesus, the gospel writer said so. This much is known: Jesus was sitting at the meal surrounded by religionists, and He saw a unique opportunity to point out the errors of the religionists. The same errors are common to every generation of religionists.

1. The religionists watched Jesus critically (v.1).
2. The religionists overlooked what was really needful (v.2).
3. The religionists made religious form more important than healing men (v.3).
4. The religionists refused to confess the truth taught by Jesus (v.4).
5. The religionists failed to see the inconsistency of their belief and behavior (v.5).
6. The conclusion: the religionists were silenced (v.6).

1 (14:1) **Religionists, Error—Denial**: the religionists "watched" Jesus with critical eyes. The word "watched" (parateroumenoi) means to observe with a sinister purpose: to look for something wrong, to search for the incorrect, to watch for error. It means to look with critical and cynical eyes. The religionists sat there watching Jesus, looking for some mistake, some wrong He might do.

Thought 1. Men should be trying to learn of Christ, but too often they search for ways to deny Him. They seek for error in His Word and for wrong in His behavior in order to deny His claim upon their lives. They feel that if they can disprove His Word and Person, they are then free to live as they wish.

"And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him" (Mk.3:2).

"And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor" (Lk.20:20).

"The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him" (Ps.37:32).

"All that watch for iniquity are cut off" (Is.29:20).

"For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him. But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten. But, O LORD of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins of the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of the evildoers" (Jer.20:10-13).

2 (14:2) **Religionists, Errors of—Need**: the religionists overlooked what was really needful. The man with dropsy was not an invited guest; he just appeared. He either came on his own, hoping for help from Jesus, or he had been planted there by the religionists to see if Jesus would break the Sabbath law. In either case, a real failure of the religionists is seen. They did not see the *need* of the man. He was a reject, an abnormal person who was *down and out* in society, a man who was in desperate need. However, the religionists failed to see his need and to reach out to help him. If they had planted him, then their failure was even more severe, for they were using him for their own purposes instead of reaching out to help him.

Thought 1. There are two serious failures seen in this event.

1) The failure of going about one's business and not reaching out to help the needy. In this case, it was the religionists who were going about their religious business.

2) The using of the needy for one's own purpose. The purpose may be to show that one is benevolent, or to ease one's conscience, or to add to one's statistics by bringing them into church. Whatever the case, the motive is impure and regretful.

Thought 2. This point forces several critical questions that should touch the heart of every person who has had a roof over his head and a hot meal in the last twelve hours.

1) How many within the church ever *see* the needful? How many *overlook* the needful? How many of the needful, of those who are *down and out*, walk into the church and have others *sit away* from them? How many have come to church for help and been sent away empty?
2) How many churches sit empty for days upon days and are not in use while so many walk the streets cold and freezing? Are they being overlooked deliberately? Or are the churches just ignoring and neglecting them?
3) How many believers and churches have nice houses and buildings and plenty of food, yet their own communities or cities are full of needy people who are hungry and unclothed and unsheltered?
4) How many ever think about a world full of teeming millions who are desperately needful? Who are suffering and lost, never having heard the gospel?

> **"Is it not [your purpose] to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" (Is.58:7).**
>
> **"[Religionists] which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day" (Is.65:5).**

3 (14:3) **Religionists, Errors of—Ritual—Ceremony—Need**: the religionists made their religious form more important than *healing* men. Note: the man stood "before" Jesus, and Jesus was touched by the man's needs. Jesus knew it was the Sabbath, the day when the Jews allowed no work whatsoever (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sabbath*—Lk.13:14). He saw a unique opportunity to teach a much needed truth: the truth that healing and helping a needy man is much more important than religious form and ceremony, than religious ritual and rules.

Note the question of Jesus: "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?" The law said absolutely not. No work whatsoever, not even the healing of a man could be done on the Sabbath. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.13:14; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.12:10 for a clear understanding of this discussion.)

What Jesus did was show that the very purpose of God is the *healing of man*. God is seeking to save man, to reconcile man unto Himself. Therefore, the very object of true religion becomes the *healing of man*, not form and ceremony, not ritual and rules.

Thought 1. Religionists are always putting their *form and practices* of religion before meeting the healing needs of men. People can be desperately in need within a few miles of a church, yet the religionists...

- will shelter their religious services for only a few hours each week (no matter the cost) while so many never have shelter.
- will feed their own flocks three meals a day while so many eat less than one meal a day, and multitudes starve to death every day of the week.
- will clothe their own flocks in the latest fashion while so many go cold, some even freezing to death.
- will fill their own religious buildings with the finest facilities and warmth while so many are so desperately needful.
- will preach and teach the man, exalting messages of self-help and social improvement, while so many are dying without ever hearing of God's personal salvation for the human soul.
- will observe their worship and ritual, their rules and ceremonies without ever reaching out to help those who surround them and are in such desperate need.

> **"But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Mt.12:7-8).**
>
> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mk.7:9).**
>
> **"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:16-17).**

Thought 2. A religionist will observe his religious worship and form without ever repenting of his sin and turning to God in complete surrender and self-denial. Too often he places his trust in his baptism, religious ceremony, church membership, worship attendance, rules, and regulations instead of in Christ Himself.

4 (14:4) **Religionists, Errors of—Church, Problems**: the religionists refused to confess the truth taught by Jesus. Jesus had asked if it were lawful to heal a man on the Sabbath day. "They held their peace." They said nothing in reply to

Jesus' question. No matter how they answered the question, they would offend a large number of people and run the risk of losing their loyalty. Therefore, they said nothing.

⇒ They could have agreed with Christ and said "Yes, it is lawful to help a man before keeping one's religious rule." But if they had answered "Yes," other religionists would have charged them with disloyalty and with being loose with the law.

⇒ They could have said, "No, it is not lawful to help a man on the Sabbath, unless he is dying, no matter how serious his case." This answer would have caused honest and thoughtful people to charge them with being *hard and indifferent* to human suffering.

Therefore, the religionists said nothing. They sat there ignoring Jesus. It seemed ridiculous, for Jesus was there, and He had just asked a question of them. Yet they refused to answer lest they entrap themselves. After a long silence and some pause in activity, Jesus apparently took the man into His arms and healed him.

Thought 1. There are reasons why the religionist refuses to confess the truth taught by Jesus, reasons why religious form and the present order of things are put before man and the meeting of his real needs.

1) Too many of us slip into a routine, a way of doing things, and just continue in it because it is comfortable.
2) Too many of us fear change lest we lose some people and their support.
3) Too many of us fear the loss of position and security.
4) Too many of us fear failure, the weakening of what we already have, of losing the loyalty of our followers to our own religious position and practices.

Thought 2. Nothing should keep us from meeting man's needs, from putting him and his needs first, before all religious ritual and form.

1) It is the only way the heart of man can be reached and satisfied (Col.2:9-10; Jn.10:10).
2) It is the only way we can stop the loss of people who are being lost by the droves. As the saying goes: they come in the front door and leave just as quickly by the back door. Why? Their needs are not being met.

   Something else needs to be asked of our hearts. Are that many really coming? Are people really accepting Christ by the droves? Why not? Did not the Lord say the fields are white unto *harvest*? Could it be we are so steeped in *religion* that we are putting religion before meeting the real needs of men?

Thought 3. Man's basic need is to know and worship God in a personal way. Yet we put worship and form and order and ritual before trying to reach out to man and actually meeting his need. Too often, we act as though...

⇒ man exists for religion, instead of religion's existing for man.
⇒ man exists for worship services, instead of worship services' existing for man.
⇒ man exists for maintaining the organization, instead of the organization's existing for man.
⇒ man exists for the rules and rituals instead of the rules and rituals' existing for man.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

5 (14:5) **Religionists, Errors of—Needs**: the religionists failed to see the inconsistency in their belief and behavior. The illustration by Christ was powerful. A man would set aside his religious rule to help his oxen out of a ditch. His oxen or personal property was quickly put before his religious rule. Why then should a man who was in need not be put before religious rules?

Thought 1. The world reels with teeming millions' dying from starvation and disease, from the elements of nature and war, from spiritual ignorance and eternal death while religionists who profess belief in God...

- build newer buildings to be used for only a few hours a week.
- stress attendance to church services instead of stressing Christ.
- preach and teach physical well-being instead of spiritual salvation and peace of heart and mind.
- covet the latest styles in cars and clothing, hairdo's and furnishings.
- desire better houses and positions, more pay and security.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness" (Ezk.33:31).

6 (14:6) **Religionists, Errors of—Guilt**: the conclusion is that the religionists were silenced. What can any of us say against what Christ has just taught if we are truly honest and thoughtful?

	D. The Importance of Humility, 14:7-14		2) Is rewarded with a higher position 3) Is honored by all
1 Jesus attended a banquet a. He noticed some choosing the chief seats b. He shared a parable	7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,	11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.	**3 The parable's point** a. Self-exaltation abases b. Humility exalts*DSI*
2 The parable: The ambitious guest a. The first man: Seeks the place of honor 1) Is displaced 2) Finds all other seats already taken 3) Has to take the lowest seat 4) Is embarrassed b. The second man: Takes the lowest place of honor 1) Is acknowledged	8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; 9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend,	12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. 13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.	**4 The demonstration of humility** a. Humility is not serving those who can repay b. Humility is serving those who are needy & cannot repay c. Humility shall be rewarded

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

D. The Importance of Humility, 14:7-14

(14:7-14) **Introduction**: the importance of humility is the thrust of this passage.

1. Jesus attended a banquet (v.7).
2. The parable: the ambitious guest (v.8-10).
3. The parable's point (v.11).
4. The demonstration of humility (v.12-14).

1 (14:7) **Jesus Christ, Social Life**: Jesus was still at the banquet of the chief Pharisee (v.1). It was time for everyone to be seated for the meal, and Jesus noticed how some guests scrambled for the chief seats. Today we usually place the names of the most honored guests at the plates. However, in Jesus' day the highest seat of honor was on the right of the host and the next highest on his left, and so the ranking continued alternating back and forth until the lowest ranked person sat the farthest away from the host. Very simply, the closer one sat to the host, the higher the honor. When Jesus saw how some quickly moved up close to the host, He saw an opportunity to teach the great importance of humility. The phrase "the chief rooms" (tas protoklisias) means the chief seats.

2 (14:8-10) **Ambition—Self-Seeking—Parable**: the parable is that of the ambitious guest. Jesus spoke directly to the man of ambition, the man who wants more recognition, honor, and position. Jesus said something that is very practical and should be clearly seen even by the ambitious man: the ambitious man should not sit in a seat that is higher than his position or capability lest a man more honorable enters and replaces him. If the ambitious man takes a higher seat, four things are likely to happen.

1. He will be displaced.
2. He will then find all the other seats taken.
3. He will have to take a lower seat.
4. He will be embarrassed.

What the ambitious man should take is the lowest seat and place of honor. Three things happen when he does.

1. His presence is acknowledged by the host.
2. He is rewarded, moved up to a higher seat and position.
3. He is recognized and honored by all, no matter how high or how far from the top the position is.

The point of the parable is twofold: self-exaltation abases and humility exalts.

3 (14:11) **Self-Exaltation—Pride—Arrogance—Self-Seeking—Ambition**: the parable's point is clearly contrary to the ambitions and behavior of most men. The man who exalts himself shall be abased. It is not just a possibility; he *will* be abased. Jesus said so.

1. The man who exalts himself does at least four things.

a. He debases others. He has to treat others as less and lower than himself in order to exalt himself.
   ⇒ He degrades others: downplaying their ability or person, position or performance, appearance or acceptance.
   ⇒ He demeans others: trying to wound and injure, shame and humiliate.
   ⇒ He debases others: trying to tear down, hurt, lower, and damage.

b. He acts self-sufficient. He may not be self-sufficient, but if he is going to exalt himself, he is forced to act...
   - in control
   - in charge
   - very capable
   - independent
   - above others

   Note: the great problem with being self-sufficient is that a person feels he does not even need God in his life. He may be religious, but he does not live a changed life that demonstrates a true trust and dependency upon God for salvation and life.

c. He corrupts morality and justice. The man who exalts himself governs all things by whatever moves him ahead and gives him the greatest position and recognition. True morality and justice may be thought about, but they are set aside if needed. The ambitious man who exalts himself often has to...
   - lie
   - steal
   - cheat
   - abuse
   - ridicule
   - shame
   - not give due recognition
   - hold others back or down
   - hurt, damage or kill

d. He lives a life of struggle. He always feels torn within to maneuver and outdo others in order to get the highest seat or recognition possible. He seldom knows peace within, no matter the appearance given.

2. The man who exalts himself is to be abased. As mentioned above, it is not just a possibility; it is a sure thing. He shall be abased. The likelihood is that he will be abased in this life, but if not, then he will be abased by God in eternity (cp. v.14). Four things will happen to him.

a. He will be displaced. He will be removed from his seat of position and recognition. It probably will happen in this world, for people can be fooled and misused for only so long. Eventually they catch on and react. More tragically, the self-exalting (prideful) man will be displaced by God. He will lose his place in heaven and be put out of heaven.

b. He will find all other seats and positions already taken. There will be no room for him. This often happens in business when a man is demoted or released. A suitable position cannot be found to match his ability and true worth. The same will happen in heaven. If a man has exalted himself, he will find all available seats taken. His name will not be written by any seat in heaven. He will move farther and farther down the line, finding no empty seat.

c. He will have to take the lowest seat. Note: this man was invited to the feast and he responded. He walked in the midst of all the guests. But he had a problem. He exalted himself, so he had to be moved down to the lowest seat. The lowest seat was the place of the least recognition and honor, doomed to be the seat for all hypocrites (cp. Mt.25:41. See note, pt.3—Lk.12:41-48.)

d. He will be embarrassed and shamed by being debased.

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (Ro.12:16).

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:16).

"Thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down" (2 Sam.22:28).

"The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined" (Ps.10:2).

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" (Pr.11:2).

"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom" (Pr.13:10).

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Pr.16:18).

"A high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin" (Pr.21:4).

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).

"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat" (Pr.28:25).

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).

"The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish" (Is.24:4).

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him" (Hab.2:4).

"In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain" (Zeph.3:11).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:11) **Humility—Exaltation**: the man who humbles himself shall be exalted. Exaltation is a certainty, and a man can ask for nothing more than to be assured that he will be exalted.

Humility (tareinophrosune) means lowliness of mind. It is a word that was coined by Christianity. Before Christ, a humble man was looked upon as a coward: a cringing, unappealing, effeminate type of person. However after Christ, humility was elevated to the most praise-worthy level. When men looked at Christ, they saw the strength of humility through the influence of One Who was perfect in meekness and lowliness of heart. Humility means five things.

1. To *walk* as a servant to others, always ready and willing to help (cp. Ph.2:8).
2. To *behave* in an unassuming manner, not being showy or pretentious, prideful or haughty, arrogant or assertive.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).**
>
> **"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).**

3. To *assume* a spirit of lowliness and submission, of oneness and identification with others, not showing conceit or superiority or being boastful.

> **"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:25-28).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:25-26).**
>
> **"Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews" (Acts 20:19).**
>
> **"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pt.5:5-6).**

4. To *possess* a sense of lowliness and unworthiness, to have a modest opinion of oneself, knowing that others are just as significant and valuable.

> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**
>
> **"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph.4:1-2).**
>
> **"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering" (Col.3:12).**

5. To *come* to God on a regular basis and confess one's spiritual need and unworthiness.

> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**

Humility is a problem to most men. Why? Because the world looks upon humility as a sign of weakness and cowardice. They see a humble person as a person who cowers and cringes before others, as a person who the world takes and...

- uses and misuses.
- overlooks and bypasses.
- ignores and neglects.
- enslaves and abuses.
- shuns and despises.

Men fear humility. They fear humility will make them the object of contempt and abuse, causing them to be passed over. However, the very opposite is true. Humility leads a person...

- to Christ and to conversion.
- to realize his full potential.
- to evaluate himself and to work at improving himself.
- to become all that he can and should be.
- to develop more healthy relationships with people.
- to a stronger and more productive community and world.

When men consider others (humble themselves), they win friends and influence people. They build and strengthen everyone and everything involved.

The results of humility are threefold.

1. The humble man will be acknowledged. Both men and God will notice his spirit and energy in serving others, no matter how lowly his position. His putting others first, whether person, project, work or company, will not go unnoticed for long. His dedication to serving and working and helping others will be seen and acknowledged.
2. The humble man will be rewarded. He will be approached; and his presence, energy, and effort will be desired and promoted and placed where he can serve to the maximum.
3. The humble man will be honored by all. He will have lived to serve and help others; therefore, when he is exalted, all will rejoice with him.

> **"By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life" (Pr.22:4).**
>
> **"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Pr.29:23).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**
>
> **"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).**
>
> **"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Lk.18:14).**

Humility comes from three things. (These ideas come from William Barclay in his *Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians,* Eph.4:1-3.)

a. Humility comes from measuring ourselves against the Lord Jesus. When a man measures himself against Christ, he measures himself against Perfection, for Christ was without sin (Jn.8:46; 2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 7:26; 1 Pt.1:19; 2:22). When measured against other men, a man may be morally good, but God demands that every man measure himself against the perfection of Christ. Against such a One and such a demand, there is no room for pride. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20.)

b. Humility comes from a continued consciousness of God's presence. No man has anything, not in reality: not air, not food, not clothing—nothing. All we have and all we know deteriorates and decays, even our own bodies. And all that crosses our path is held but for a short time, for the end of all things comes ever so quickly. We are completely dependent upon God who has given all and controls all and, in the end, shall take all. Before Him we can only walk humbly.

c. Humility comes from knowing ourselves, just who we really are. It comes from an honest appraisal of ourselves. It takes courage to look at ourselves and it takes honesty to see ourselves as we really are: basically self-centered, a bundle of self-admiration and self-love. We tend to dramatize ourselves. We tend to see ourselves through rose-colored glasses. We see ourselves...
   - at the center of action.
   - as the hero of some spectacular rescue.
   - as the great politician marching to victory.
   - as the reknown sportsman saving the game in the last second or bagging a record catch.
   - as the beauty queen dazzling the crowds.
   - as the laborer of brilliance.
   - as Prince Charming or Cinderella sweeping others off their feet.

   We are always at the center of the picture. Humility begins to come when we honestly face ourselves and admit our self-centeredness. Self-centeredness weakens and limits and destroys relationships and achievements. Humility reaches its height when we lose our lives in the cause of Christ and welfare of others.

4 (14:12-14) **Humility—Ministry—Service—Needy, The**: the demonstration of humility was clearly stated by Jesus. He addressed His words to the chief Pharisee, the most proud and ambitious man present. What He said was forceful; it served as a strong warning, for no man can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without true humility.

1. Humility is not serving or centering one's life around those who can repay. Jesus used the banquet as an illustration. If the host courts the presence of those who can repay him for his favor, then the host has received his reward. He will receive their favors, but that is all he will receive. He will not have God's favor; he will be left with only human favor.

Note: Jesus was not downgrading normal social life and Christian fellowship. He was saying that the host had not shown humility and lowliness of mind, the giving of himself and his goods to those who really needed his gifts and services. The host served only those who could repay by adding to his welfare. He had not humbled himself to help anyone who really needed help.

2. Humility is serving those who are needy and cannot repay. Now, if a man serves the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind—that man demonstrates humility. His motive is pure; he has a lowly spirit, a spirit willing to get down with a needy person and help him. By "*host*" Jesus means any man who is able to help others because he has the health, position, or finances. When he gives himself and his goods to help those who need help, he is demonstrating humility. Man lives in a world full of desperate needs; therefore, a man should live being kind and giving generously. But note the crucial point: he should not be giving to receive back, but rather to help and to encourage and to build others up.

> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Lk.6:38).

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Pr.19:17).

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble" (Ps.41:1).

"He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he" (Pr.14:21).

"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Pr.28:27).

"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday" (Is.58:10).

3. Humility shall be rewarded. Note when: at the resurrection of the just.
   a. A humble person is a *just* and righteous person, a person who does what is right.
   b. A humble person shall be raised from the dead to live eternally with all the other just persons and, of course, with God Himself who is the very embodiment of righteousness. (See note, pts.2, 3—Lk.14:11.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Mt.5:24-25).

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"And [I, Paul] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"If by any means I [Paul] might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:11).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Th.4:16-18).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

	E. The Parable of the Great Supper: The Invitation and Man's Excuses, 14:15-24 (cp. Mt.22:1-14)		b. Excuse 2: Too wrapped up in new purchases c. Excuse 3: Too wrapped up with family
1 Jesus was still at the feast of the chief Pharisee (v.1) a. A Pharisee's joy b. Jesus' parable: A great supper	15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.	21 So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.	**4 The Lord becomes angry at the busy guests who reject** **5 The Lord sends invitations to outsiders—quickly**
2 The invitation to "God's Great Supper" goes out to many guests	16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.	22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.	a. He has a difficult time filling the kingdom even then
3 The invited guests make excuses a. Excuse 1: Too involved in business	18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have	23 And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.	b. He demands a double, strenuous effort **6 The guests who rejected are excluded**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

E. The Parable of the Great Supper: The Invitation and Man's Excuses, 14:15-24

(14:15-24) **Introduction**: this passage gives a clear picture of the Lord's great invitation to mankind and the flimsy excuses men give for not accepting His invitation. The scene is known as *The Great Supper of God*. The Great Marriage Feast of Matthew should be compared with this passage. There are some similarities, but the differences are many (see outline and note—Mt.22:1-14).

1. Jesus was still at the feast of the chief Pharisee (v.15).
2. The invitation to God's Great Supper went out to many guests (v.16-17).
3. The invited guests make excuses (v.18-20).
4. The Lord becomes angry at the guests who reject (v.21).
5. The Lord sends invitations to outsiders—"quickly" (v.21-23).
6. The guests who rejected are excluded (v.24).

1 (14:15) **Great Supper of God**: Jesus was still at the feast of the chief Pharisee (v.1). When Jesus mentioned the resurrection (v.14), all of a sudden one of the Pharisees broke forth in joyful praise: "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (v.15). What the Pharisee meant was the Jewish picture of the great Messianic Feast. The Feast was to be given by God for His people when He set up His kingdom on earth.

The Pharisee saw himself and the Jewish nation only as being invited to God's Great Supper. No outsider, no Gentile or serious sinner, would ever be an invited guest. Jesus knew what was in the mind of the Pharisee, so He sets out to correct his misconception of the Great Supper of God. Note three things.

1. *The Great Supper of God* will be held. The Pharisee was right in his picture of a great gathering and feast in "the resurrection" (v.14).
2. *The Great Supper of God* will include guests from the highways and hedges of the world, not just Jews. The Pharisee was wrong about this. It was this that Jesus set out to correct.
3. The parable can apply to Israel in verses 16-22 and to the Gentiles in verses 23-24. However, the parable has a strong personal message to all men everywhere: men are saved by responding to God's invitation, and they are lost by making excuses. Note something else of significance: God is planning a *Great Supper* where all who accept His invitation will be gathered together. Once the guest list is filled, time will be no more; all things will end. The doors to His banquet hall will be closed forever.

2 (14:16-17) **Invitation—Decision**: the invitation to *God's Great Supper* goes out to many. Note four things.

1. "All things are now ready" (v.17). Christ has purchased salvation for every man through His death and resurrection. The provisions for God's Great Supper have now been secured and are waiting for the guests to accept.

2. The invitation is to "many." The many are those who hear the gospel...
   - in church
   - from a preacher
   - from a witnessing believer
   - over television or radio
   - by reading
   - through conscience

The many are all those who hear, see, or read the gospel and who sense a personal invitation to join God at His great feast.

3. The invitation is given more than once; it comes in the future as well as in the past. This is seen in v.16-17. The invitation was sent out to inform people of the upcoming Supper. Then it was followed up as soon as "all things were ready." (See note—Mt.22:3-7 for application to Israel.)

4. The invitation is accepted by all. Note this, for this is a most critical point. The servant was sent "to them that were bidden [invited before]." They had already accepted; now they were being told to come, for the day of the Supper had arrived. The point is this: these claim to have accepted God's invitation, but they have only professed. They are not preparing to attend, not cleaning up or getting dressed (Tit.3:5; 2 Cor.5:21).

"For many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.22:14).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

3 (14:18-20) **Excuses—Decision**: the invited guests make excuses.

1. Excuse 1: one man said he was too involved in business. The man had bought a piece of ground and needed to look after it. A man can become too involved in any business, not just the business of developing property and farming. A person's business, profession, and affairs must not be allowed to consume his life. God is to be the center of a person's life, and God is to be the one around whom all else revolves.

"For what is man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mt.16:26).

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:14).

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:4).

"Surely every man walketh in a vain show: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them" (Ps.39:6).

"Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labor which I took under the sun" (Eccl.2:20).

2. Excuse 2: another man said that he was too wrapped up in new purchases. The oxen had just been purchased. They were a new possession, and the owner wanted to *try them out*. So it is with new purchases such as houses, lands, cars, bikes, records, books, radios, televisions, and a host of other material things. However, this is the point: things should never keep us from God.

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:12).

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"...thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation" (Dt.32:15).

"They are enclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly" (Ps.17:10).

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:8).

"They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge" (Jer.5:28).

3. Excuse 3: still another man said that he was too wrapped up with his family. This man had just been married, and it is true that marriage is ordained by God. However, it is not to be put before God. The man should have prepared for *The Great Feast* before marrying. Nothing—family, friends, or important social functions—should be put before attending *The Great Supper of God*.

> **"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath [friends, family], he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).**
>
> **"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith to him again the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he saith unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:15-17).**
>
> **"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.10:12).**
>
> **"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth" (Josh.24:14).**

4 (14:21) **Jesus Christ, Rejected—Response**: the Lord becomes angry at the *busy* guests who make excuses. Note three things.

1. The guests who rejected showed both unconcern and contempt for the invitation.
   a. They showed unconcern over the *great cost* to God in preparing and providing "all things" (Christ's death, v.17). The great cost and price He paid was of little, if any, concern to them.
   b. They showed contempt in that they deceived the Lord. They accepted the first invitation, but they never began to clean themselves nor to dress properly for the feast.
2. The Lord had reason to be angry. The guests who had rejected His invitation had deceived and shown the utmost contempt, giving no thought to the great price He had paid for them.
3. Note a critical fact. Not a single one of the guests who rejected His invitation were allowed to *taste of His supper* (v.24).

> **"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:5-6).**
>
> **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (Ro.1:18).**
>
> **"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath" (Ro.2:8).**

5 (14:21-23) **Evangelism—Witnessing—Decision—Invitation**: the Lord sends invitations to outsiders *quickly*. Note several facts.

1. The Lord will not allow His plan to be halted. He has planned a feast and no one will be allowed to stop it.
2. The Lord is going to fill His banquet hall quickly. Note: He sends His servant forth saying, "Go quickly." (What a challenge to all believers! God wants the job done quickly. What excitement to think of being with Him at *The Great Supper* soon!)
3. The Lord's servant is to "go out" into the streets and lanes of the city. He is to leave the homes of the rich and luxurious, the self-sufficient and worldly-minded, the religionists and self-righteous. He is to "go out" from among the acceptable and established to reach out to the people of the streets and the highways.
4. The Lord's servant is to go to those who will need assistance in order to come; he is to go to those who know and readily admit that they need help. Note the servant is to "bring in" these to whom he is now sent.
   a. He is to bring in the poor, those who will need new and appropriate clothing. Some of the poor will accept the clothing.

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:3).**

   b. He is to bring in the maimed and the halt, those who will need to be supported and perhaps carried to the banquet hall.
   c. He is to bring in the blind, those who will need to be guided and directed.

Note: some of these know their need. Their need is evident, and they readily *confess their need and accept the help*.

Now note two critical points.

1. The Lord's servant still has a difficult time in getting enough people to accept the invitation. Some of the poor, maimed, halt, and blind care nothing about coming. They are too prideful or bitter, too embarrassed or ashamed, too self-centered or self-pitying to receive help or to accept an invitation that is being rejected by so many.

2. The Lord demands a double, strenuous effort. He sends His servant into the highways and hedges to invite whomever he can find. Note three facts.

a. This refers either to the Gentiles or to the greatest of sinners, depending on how a person is approaching the passage.

b. The Lord says, "compel them." This does not mean to compel by physical force but by the force of preaching and persuasion, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

> **"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" (2 Cor.5:11).**
>
> **"For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many" (2 Cor.9:2).**
>
> **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).**
>
> **"As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.10:7).**
>
> **"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (Mt.10:27).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:60).**
>
> **"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).**

c. The Lord says, "My house shall be filled." Remember the command "go quickly." Connect the command to this promise, and the time frame seems to be soon. However, we must keep in mind that a thousand years is as one day to the Lord (2 Pt.3:8).

> **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).**
>
> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

6 (14:24) **Judgment—Salvation, Rejected**: the rejecters are excluded. This is a tragic pronouncement, but a very deserving verdict. The Lord says that not a single rejecter "shall taste of my supper." There is no second chance.

> **"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (Mt.25:10).**
>
> **"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mk.10:15).**
>
> **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:9-10).**
>
> **"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).**
>
> **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27).**
>
> **"Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you" (Jer.5:25).**
>
> **"My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations" (Hos.9:17).**

	F. The Cost of Discipleship, 14:25-35 (cp. Mt.5:13; cp. Mt.10:37-39; Mk.9:50)	30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.	
1 Huge crowds followed Jesus & He challenged them	25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,	31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?	b. Illustration2: A king at war—must count the consequences
2 A man must put Christ first: Before family & even before himself	26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.	32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.	
3 A man must bear the cross of death: Death to self	27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.	33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.	c. The point: A man must pay the ultimate price—forsake all
4 A man must give thought to discipleship: Count the cost & the consequences	28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?	34 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?	**5 A man must have the salt of discipleship: The salt of self-denial** a. A half-hearted choice 1) Is worthless 2) Is to be cast out
a. Illustration 1: A builder—must count his resources	29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,	35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.	b. An invitation: Hearing is a choice

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

F. The Cost of Discipleship, 14:25-35

(14:25-35) **Introduction**: Christ is not interested in cheap invitations and discipleship. Too often the call to discipleship is to receive the great benefits and advantages offered by God. There are eternal benefits and advantages, but salvation and discipleship involve much more. They involve an unbelievable cost, the supreme sacrifice. A person must pay the ultimate price, all that one *is and has* to follow Christ. Just what does it cost to follow Christ? This is the all important subject of this passage.

1. Huge crowds followed Jesus and He challenged them (v.25).
2. A man must put Christ first: before family, even before self (v.26).
3. A man must bear the cross of death: death to self (v.27).
4. A man must give thought to discipleship: count the cost and the consequences (v.28-33).
5. A man must have the salt of discipleship: the salt of self-denial (v.34-35).

(14:25-35) **Another Outline**: *The cost or conditions of discipleship* might be outlined as follows.

1. Renunciation (v.26).
2. Self-denial (v.27).
3. Thoughtfulness—counting the cost (v.28-32).
4. Forsaking all (v.33-35).

There are three other *conditions for discipleship* given by Christ elsewhere.

1. Love to others: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:35; cp. 34).
2. Stedfastness: "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed" (Jn.8:31).
3. Fruitfulness: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).

1 (14:25) **Discipleship**: huge crowds were following Jesus. The cross and the desperate needs of the world were upon His mind (v.27). The enormous sacrifice and cost it was going to take to reach the world consumed His thoughts. He must have followers who would sacrifice themselves totally if the message of salvation were to be carried to the world. He could not have second best. God would not accept any place other than first place in a man's life. He must make clear what it meant and what it cost to be His disciple.

2 (14:26) **Family—Self-Denial—Dedication—Discipleship**: a man must put Christ first, even before his family and himself. (See outline and note—Mt.10:35-37.) The words "hate not" (ou misei) are strong. They mean not showing preference, indifference, aversion, disregard (cp. Gen.29:31, 33; Dt.21:15). Christ was not saying that one's family and

one's self were to be literally hated. The true believer is to love *even* his enemies (Lk.6:27). What then did Christ mean? Very simply...

⇒ Christ is to be *first* in a person's life: before family, even before self.
⇒ Christ is to be put before family: even if one's family opposes his decision to follow Christ.
⇒ Christ is to be put *first*: before the companionship and comfort and pleasure of family and home.
⇒ All—even family and self—are to be put behind Christ and His mission. All must be denied and put behind a person's love and devotion to Christ and His cause.

> **"Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, We have left all, and have followed thee" (Mk.10:28).**
>
> **"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him" (Lk.5:11).**
>
> **"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, follow me" (Lk.5:27).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

3 (14:27) **Self-denial**: a man must bear the cross of death—to self. (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; Mt.16:24 for discussion and application.)

4 (14:28-33) **Decision—Discipleship—Thought—Mind**: a man must think and give thought to discipleship; he must count the cost and the consequences. Christ used two parables to get His point across.

1. A man who wants to build a tower, first sits down to *think* about the project and to count the cost. Does he have *sufficient resources*, enough of what it takes to finish the task? He has to make sure, or else he will not be able to finish the task and will end up being mocked. The point is clear: before a person begins to follow Christ, Christ wants that person to think about it. He wants the person to be sure, absolutely sure. Can he afford to follow through; does he have what it takes to build the tower (life)? Why? Because a false profession damages the Kingdom of God.

A false profession causes...

- the world to mock and charge true believers with being hypocritical.
- prospective believers to turn sour.
- believers to be hampered and hindered in their ministry.
- some believers to become discouraged.

2. The second parable concerned two kings at war. The king being attacked had only ten thousand soldiers, whereas the king marching against him had twenty thousand soldiers. The defending king sat down and thought long and hard about his resources and the consequences. He was forced to think about the loss of life and property even if he did win. Note: this king had to make a decision. He was being invaded. He had to decide to fight against the invading king or to surrender. He had to *think through the consequences both ways*, the consequences of fighting or surrendering. (Cp. the invading king to Christ and the defending king to the individual.)

The point of the two parables is clear: a man must pay the ultimate price. He must forsake all, renounce and give up all that he *is and has*; or else "he cannot be my disciple." When a man counts the cost of following Christ, he needs to think about two things.

1. It will cost him *all he is*. The man must be willing to center his life around Christ and His mission to reach a world lost and full of desperate needs. It will cost the man...

- his heart: total devotion and commitment.
- his mind: being permeated and controlled by Christ.
- his eyes: watching what he looks at.
- his ears: watching what he listens to.
- his hands: watching what he touches and picks up.
- his feet: watching where he goes.
- his mouth: watching what he eats and drinks and says.
- his desires: watching, controlling, and changing his urges and desires.
- his energy: committing his strength, initiative, and will to Christ.
- his effort and work: dedicating and centering all in Christ, using his efforts and work in the cause of Christ.

> **"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Ro.12:1).**
>
> **"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).**
>
> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (1 Cor.10:24).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col.3:3).

2. It will cost him *all he has*. The man must be willing to give everything he has to Christ, without watering down the cost. It is this point that will cause so many to be lost and doomed (see outline and notes—Lk.18:18-30; Mt.10:16-22). To really follow Christ will cost...

- family: being put after Christ.
- friends: being put after Christ and centered around Christ.
- home: all the comforts and extravagances.
- job: being centered around Christ and being used to earn enough to give to those who do not have (Eph.4:28).
- cars: not being extravagant, so as to have more to give to a needful world.
- investments: using for God's cause.
- money: taking care of personal necessities and then using the rest for God's cause.

Whatever a person has, it will cost him. He must surrender it to Christ, which is to say, he must be willing to use it in the Lord's mission, the mission of helping a world lost and reeling under the weight of enormous needs.

When a man counts the cost of following Christ, he must think about the consequences of both fighting against Christ and surrendering to Christ. If the man chooses to reject Christ, to struggle against Him, the man will...

- never experience abundant life, deep satisfaction (Jn.10:10).
- never know God, His love and care, on a daily basis.
- never have an *eternal sense* of purpose, meaning, and significance.
- never know nor have the assurance of eternal life.
- never be free from the uncertainty of life.
- never be free from the dread and fear of death.
- never be free of some sense of judgment and of what lies ahead.
- never be freed from a sense of false security.

The consequences of surrendering to Christ are, of course, the very opposite of the above.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21; cp. Lk.18:22).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Lk.12:33-34).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:33).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).

5 (14:34-35) **Decision, Half-hearted—Dedication**: a man must have the salt of discipleship which is self-denial, renunciation, the sacrifice and giving, of all one is and has. (See notes—Mt.5:13; Mk.9:50 for more discussion.) Christ said three very pointed things.

1. A half-hearted choice is worthless. It *cannot season or penetrate*; it cannot help anything or anyone.

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).

2. A half-hearted choice is to be cast out. Salt that is worthless and useless is always cast out, for it is good for nothing.

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"Then said the King to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.22:13).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity" (Lk.13:27).

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:6-8).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb.10:38-39).

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (2 Pt.2:20).

3. A man with ears needs to hear the invitation. Hearing spiritual truth is a choice which a man must make. He chooses whether to hear or not to hear the truth.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:24-27).

"The good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:15).

"And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Lk.16:31).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th.2:13).

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (Jas.1:23-24).

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise" (Pr.15:31).

	CHAPTER 15		
	G. The Parable of the Lost Sheep: The Lost Sinner Out in the World, 15:1-7 (cp. Mt.18:11-14)		
1 Tax collectors & sinners drew near Jesus	Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.	one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?	**because of self**
a. The religionists: Grumbled against Jesus associating with "sinners"	2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.	5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.	**4 The sheep was lost "in the wilderness"**
b. Jesus: Shared a parable	3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,	6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.	**5 The sheep was sought until found**
2 The sheep was lost[DSI]	4 What man of you, having	7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.	**6 The sheep, once found, brings great joy**
3 The sheep was lost	an hundred sheep, if he lose		**7 The sheep represented a repentant sinner**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

G. The Parable of the Lost Sheep: The Lost Sinner Out in the World, 15:1-7

(15:1-7) **Introduction**: Chapter 15 is one of the most important chapters in all the Bible. It includes three of the most famous parables ever told. The parables deal with the lost sinner and the great love of God in seeking and receiving the lost sinner when the sinner repents and returns home. The first parable is that of the Lost Sheep in the wilderness of the world.

1. Tax collectors and sinners drew near Jesus (v.1-3).
2. The sheep was lost (v.4).
3. The sheep was lost because of self (v.4).
4. The sheep was lost "in the wilderness" (v.4).
5. The sheep was sought until found (v.4).
6. The sheep, once found, brought great joy (v.5-6).
7. The sheep represented a repentant sinner (v.7).

1 (15:1-3) **Separation—Spiritual Hunger**: tax-collectors and sinners drew near Jesus. Note they "all" drew near to Him. This shows two things.

1. They were hungry for His message. They were not coming out of curiosity, nor to observe, nor to seek physical blessings; they were coming out of a spiritual need, out of the need to receive His message of salvation.
2. They acknowledged their great need. Publicans, that is, tax-collectors, worked for the Roman government, the nation that had conquered Israel. Therefore, they were considered traitors to both Israel and God. Consequently, they were despised by the people and were cut off and shut out by the religionists. Sinners were the rank immoral and unjust who did not keep the law, such as harlots (cp. Mt.21:32), liars, thieves, murderers. All these were *sinners*, traitors to both God and man, and they knew it. So when Christ came along preaching deliverance from sin and hope of the Kingdom of God, they flocked to Him.

The attitude of the religionists was tragic. They grumbled against Jesus because He associated and ate with such terrible sinners. They felt it was beneath the dignity of any respectable person to associate with such vile sinners. Note an important point: Christ was not *of the world*, but He was *out in the world* trying to reach men for God. It is this that is often overlooked by both the liberals and the separatists.

⇒ The true believer is to "come out from among them [the worldly] and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18). He is not to be out in the world with sinners doing worldly things and carrying on worldly conversation (Eph.4:29; Col.4:6).

⇒ The true believer is to "go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature [sinner]" (Mk.16:15). The believer *goes*; he does not sit back and wait on sinners to come to him and the church. He goes out where the sinners are.

Thought 1. If the *whole gospel* were preached today in power and authority, how many would be flocking to hear...

- the gospel of salvation from sin and death?
- the gospel of the hope for the Kingdom of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24)?

Christ answered the religionists by sharing three great parables. The first parable is one of the most-loved stories ever told, the parable of the lost sheep.

2 (15:4) **Sheep**: the sheep was lost. The sheep represents the unbeliever, the sinner who wanders out in the wilderness of the world, the person who has gone astray and is lost to God. Note the meaning of the word "lost" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Lost*—Lk.15:4).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(15:4) **Lost (apollumi)**: to perish, to destroy, to lose, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.

3 (15:4) **Sheep, Lost—Man, Lost**: the sheep was lost because of self. A sheep loses itself in one of five ways.

1. The sheep is attracted by something out "in the wilderness," away from the flock of the shepherd. What the sheep sees is more attractive and appealing. It tempts and seduces him, and he lusts after it ("the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes," 1 Jn.2:16).
2. The sheep is aimless, not paying attention to what is going on. It aimlessly wanders off, and while it is *getting lost*, the sheep does not know it is losing its way. The sheep is already lost when it discovers it has lost its way.
3. The sheep refuses to heed the warnings of the shepherd and the example of the other sheep ("the pride of life," 1 Jn.2:16).
4. The sheep is not attached enough to the shepherd or to the other sheep. There is not the bond or union there should be. Therefore, he stays off by himself, eating and resting and working alone until eventually he wanders off without anyone's knowing it, including himself (Heb.10:25).
5. The sheep does not trust the shepherd. It does not think the shepherd will take care and see that there is satisfying food. It goes astray in search of *greener pasture and more satisfying food* (see note—Mt.18:14 for the help of others needed by the shepherd to care for the sheep).

"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead" (Pr.21:16).

"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place" (Pr.27:8).

"They have wandered as blind men in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments (Lam.4:14).

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer.2:13).

"Thou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting" (Jer.15:6).

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt.24:12).

"If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Pt.2:15).

"Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame: wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13).

4 (15:4) **World—Worldliness—Wilderness—Lost**: the sheep was lost in the wilderness. The wilderness had an excitement about it. The unknown and the risk aroused the emotions; but once the sheep ventured out into the wilderness, he found its terrain rugged, full of narrow ridges and deep ravines and crevices. It was rough going, heavy with thick underbrush, pricking thorns, dangerous footing; and, if the way out were never found, it would sap the sheep's strength and age him ever so rapidly. Eventually the wilderness would take its life.

The wilderness and thrills of the world do attract a person. The world has much to offer.

1. The world gives a man...
   - occupation and purpose
   - lifestyle and acceptance
   - ego and self-esteem
   - recognition and privilege
   - more and more honor
   - position and image
   - plenty and wealth
   - opportunity and satisfaction
   - authority and power
2. The world stimulates and arouses a man, causing...
   - his blood to rush
   - his heart to beat faster
   - goose bumps
   - butterflies
   - desires
   - cravings
   - escape
   - relaxation

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication [pre-marital sex], uncleanness, lasciviousness [all forms of immorality], idolatry, witchcraft [sorcery], hatred, variance [strife], emulations [jealousy], wrath, strife, seditions [divisions], heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).

"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place" (Jer.50:6).

"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Ezk.34:6).

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt.9:36).

5 (15:4) **Ministry—Seeking Lost**: the sheep was sought until found. Note four things.

1. The lost sheep was sought (v.4). The shepherd left the ninety-nine to seek the one lost sheep. The ninety-nine were safe; they were already in the shepherd's fold. But the one sheep was lost. It was the one that needed to be sought. It was this sheep that needed the attention of the shepherd and was to occupy the time, energy, and effort of the shepherd. As long as the sheep was lost, seeking it was the primary purpose and reason for the shepherd. (What a lesson for the church and ministers!)
2. The search was urgent. The shepherd *went after* that which was lost (v.4). He was gripped with concern. He went after the one lost sheep as though it were the only one. Note the shepherd's dedication and commitment to seeking the lost.
3. The shepherd sought until he found the sheep. He did not seek complacently or slowly, as though there were plenty of time. Nor did he give up, despite the difficulties that lay along the rough terrain and the weariness of the long hours and the tediousness of running into dead end after dead end. He sought and kept on seeking until he found the lost sheep. He never slackened, never backed off, never gave up.
4. When the shepherd found the sheep, he embraced the sheep and threw it over his shoulders. He received it...
   - with arms wide open.
   - embracing it.
   - rejoicing in heart.
   - supporting and carrying it to his home (v.6).

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:4-6).

"Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:25).

"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments" (Ps.119:176).

6 (15:5-6) **Salvation, Results**: once found, the sheep bought great joy. Note what the shepherd did.

1. He called all his neighbors together. He wanted everyone to know that the lost sheep had been found. Everyone had been so concerned—praying, hoping, waiting. They wanted to join in the rejoicing.
2. Everyone rejoiced because the shepherd's labor was not in vain.
3. The shepherd tenderly called the lost sheep "*my sheep*"—"my sheep which was lost." It was his, no matter how dirty, filthy, unclean, destitute, depraved, ugly or lost it had been. It was still the shepherd's sheep.

Note that God did not send an angel as a servant, but He sent His Son to seek the lost (cp. Is.53:4-6, 10-12).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:24-25).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

7 (15:7) **Repentance**: the sheep represents a repentant sinner. A sinner must repent (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).

	H. The Parable of the Lost Coin: The Lost Sinner Within the Home, 15:8-10
1 The coin was lost	8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she
2 The coin was lost because of others	lose one piece, doth not light
3 The coin was lost in the house	a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?
4 The coin was sought until found	9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and
5 The coin, once found, brought great joy	her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.
6 The coin represented a repentant sinner	10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

H. The Parable of the Lost Coin: The Lost Sinner Within the Home, 15:8-10

(15:8-10) **Introduction**: this passage is often preached and taught right along with the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Lk.15:1-7). The lost sheep was lost out in the wilderness of the world, whereas the lost coin was lost in the house. Note the points are the same for each parable, but the application is different.

1. The coin was lost (v.8).
2. The coin was lost because of others (v.8).
3. The coin was lost in the house (v.8).
4. The coin was sought until found (v.9).
5. The coin, once found, brought great joy (v.9).
6. The coin represented a repentant sinner (v.10)

1 (15:8) **Lost—Coin**: the lost coin represents the unbeliever, the sinner who is lost within the house, the family member who has gone astray and is lost both to God and to the mother. Note two facts.

1. The coin was silver, of extreme worth, and greatly desired.
2. The coin was lost and doomed to be lost forever if not found (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Lost*—Lk.15:4 for discussion).

2 (15:8) **Lost—Family—Witnessing**: the coin was lost because of others. This is a striking picture of the responsibility family members have for one another. A coin (person) within the home is lost in one of four ways.

1. Ignoring the coin. It is set aside and forgotten. Once it has been brought into the house, little if any thought is given to it. Being too busy, not knowing its value, and confusing priorities can cause a coin to be ignored.
2. Neglecting the coin. A person can know the coin is there and know its value, yet neglect it. He can just fail to pay attention to the coin for such a long period of time that he forgets where it is.
3. Carelessly handling the coin. It is badly handled, dropped, and lost.
4. Unconsciously placing the coin someplace. Placing the coin can be unplanned; therefore, little attention is given to it. A person just goes about his daily affairs without ever planning any use for the coin. Eventually, it is forgotten.

> **"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit.2:4-5).**
>
> **"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs" (Jn.21:15).**
>
> **"Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (2 Cor.12:14).**
>
> **"And thou shalt teach [God's Word] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).**
>
> **"And ye shall teach them [God's Word] your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.11:19).**
>
> **"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr.22:6).**
>
> **"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts" (Is.28:9).**

"The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth" (Is.38:19).

"Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him [God] for the life of thy young children" (Lam.2:19).

3 (15:8) **Lost—Family—Witnessing**: the coin was lost in the house. Note three points.

1. The coin, although lost in the house, was lost in the dust and dirt of the floor. It was not clean like the other nine coins sitting on the dresser. The dust and dirt was slowly covering and tarnishing it in its filth.
2. The coin's experience, although in the house, was terrible. Being lost, it was...
   - useless: unable to contribute to family needs.
   - helpless: unable to fulfill its purpose.
   - gone: not present to participate in family functions.
   - bypassed: not seen, it could not be polished and cared for.
   - stepped upon and walked upon: down upon the floor covered with dust and dirt, it was not seen; therefore, it was misused and abused.

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Pr.29:15).

"And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living" (Lk.15:12-13).

"And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger" (Mt.14:8).

"For I have told him [Eli] that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam.3:13).

"And his [Samuel's] sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (1 Sam.8:3).

"And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his fahter, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (1 Ki.22:52).

"He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counselor to do wickedly" (2 Chron.22:3).

"But have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them" (Jer.9:14).

"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.20:18-19).

3. The coin was not aware it was lost. Note three things.
   a. A family member may have no consciousness or sensation of being lost. There may be no discomfort, distress, or anxiety; however, there is still personal responsibility. Everyone, no matter who he is, is responsible for his own life and salvation. He cannot blame his parents, mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter. The family member who sins is responsible for his own behavior. He is the one who is lost in the dirt of the earth.
   b. There is no excuse for following peers and stronger personalities. There is no excuse for being passive, weak, or easily misled. A family member is eventually responsible for his own life.
   c. The other family members may not know the *truth* about the love of God and Christ, about the privilege of being saved and having one's sins forgiven and inheriting eternal life. Therefore, a family member is responsible to get out and seek the truth from those who do know the truth.

"All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Mt.23:3).

"Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee" (Dt.12:30).

"And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them" (2 Ki.17:15).

"Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked" (Amos 2:4).

4 (15:9) **Witnessing—Lost, Seeking**: the coin was sought until found. There are several significant facts in this point.

1. The woman changed the whole atmosphere of the house. She lit a candle, for the houses of that day were very dark. Most had only one small window less than two feet across. The woman's only hope of finding the coin was to secure light.

The light represents Christ, the Light of the World (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12). The woman turned to Christ to bring light to her dark house. Note she used the light in her search, looking behind every door, under every table, in every drawer, and everywhere else. She went nowhere without the Light. (The light also represents the light of her life, that is, her trust in the righteousness of God. See notes—Mt.5:14; DEEPER STUDY # 5—Jn.12:35:36.)

2. The woman swept throughout the house. She swept all the loose and clinging dirt and filth out of her house (cp. sin in the house). She knew two things.
   a. As long as there was loose dirt and filth in the house (sin), she might never find her precious coin.
   b. If she did not clean out all the loose dirt and filth (sin), she might lose another coin.
3. The woman searched for the coin immediately and urgently. The longer the coin stayed lost...
   - the dirtier it became.
   - the more scarred it became.
   - the more it settled in the dirt.
   - the harder it was to find.
4. The woman searched diligently for the coin until she found it. There was great loss felt, as though there were no other silver piece. There was no comfort in knowing the other pieces were safe. So much depended upon finding this one lost coin.

The coin's very purpose and usefulness in life depended upon being found and saved from the dirt of the earth, so one thing was set: she would not give up until she had found it.

⇒ She *willed* to find the coin: dedicated and committed her life to finding it, always praying for God's direction and trusting Him for His help.

⇒ She *labored* diligently: poured all the thought and energy and effort of her being into seeking her lost coin. Seeking the coin became the focus of her life until she found it.

⇒ She *endured*: the work was tedious and hard, for it involved sweeping away the dirt and filth under everything and in every little corner and unseen place.

She looked and prayed while walking upright, bowing, bending, and kneeling. Despite the inconvenience and difficulty, she shifted, removed, and rearranged all the furniture in order to clean and reach out to unnoticed areas—all in an attempt to reach and find the lost coin.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (Jn.5:14).

"They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (Jn.9:34-35).

"And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:19-20).

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:13-14).

"Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he want his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him" (Lk.8:39).

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Ro.9:3).

5 (15:9) **Salvation—Joy—Witnessing**: the coin, once found, brought great joy. Note several things.

1. The woman's prayers and efforts payed off. She found her lost coin. Such prayer and diligence are rewarded by God.
2. The woman called her friends and neighbors together for a glorious celebration. Her lost coin had been found. It was a joyous moment, and she wanted those dearest to her to share in the joyful moment.
3. This is critical to remember. Note her words, "the piece which *I had* lost." She had been the one who had lost the coin. Why had she lost it? Note that the candle had not been lit. The house had only natural light shining through a small man-made window. The light of the candle (Christ) did not shine throughout the house.
4. The woman could now rejoice because...
   - she had secured light (Christ)
   - she had swept all the dirt and filth out of her house
   - she had prayed and sought diligently for her lost coin
   - her efforts and prayer led her to the coin

6 (15:10) **Repentance**: the coin represented a repentant sinner. Note two simple but profound points.

1. The sinner who is found is a man who repents (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30).
2. God and all the angels rejoice greatly when one sinner repents.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

	I. The Parable of the Prodigal Son: The Wayward Son, 15:11-24	have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!	a. Thought of his father & his enormous provision
		18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,	b. Thought of his plight c. Thought of humbling himself: 1) Of repenting 2) Of confessing his sin & unworthiness
1 He said, "Give me"	11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:	19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.	
a. My inheritance[DS1]	12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.	20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.	**4 He arose & returned to his father** a. He repented—turned from his sinful life b. He was accepted even before he confessed c. He confessed
b. My independence	13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.	21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.	
c. The result: He wasted his life in riotous living			
2 He met the day when he suffered & was in want a. He suffered being destitute	14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.	22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:	**5 He was accepted when he returned to the father** a. The father restored him
b. He suffered natural disaster	15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.	23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:	b. The father fed the son & celebrated his son's return
c. He suffered humiliation[DS2]		24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.	c. The father proclaimed his son's new life
d. He suffered hunger	16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.		
e. He suffered the loss of friends			
3 He came to himself & snapped out of his insanity, back to reality	17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's		

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

I. The Parable of the Prodigal Son: The Wayward Son, 15:11-24

(15:11-24) **Introduction**: the parable of the Prodigal Son is the greatest and most-beloved story ever told in human language. God loves and reaches out to the most prodigal of men, and He runs to embrace any prodigal son who *repents and returns home*. God forgives His prodigal son and restores him, no matter how terrible the sin and failure of the prodigal.

1. He said, "Give me" (v.11-13).
2. He met the day when he suffered and was in want (v.14-16).
3. He came to himself and snapped out of his insanity, back to reality (v.17-19).
4. He arose and returned to his father (v.20-21).
5. He was accepted when he returned to the father (v.22-24).

1 (15:11-13) **Selfishness—Hardness—Independence—Self—Stubborn—Worldliness**: the prodigal said, "Give me." Note the son was a child of the father's by birth. He belonged to the estate (world) of the father's by natural birth. But it is clear from what follows that the son did not belong to the father *in heart*, *mind*, or *spirit*. The prodigal wanted two things.

1. He said, "*Give me* my inheritance." He wanted money and the things and possessions of the estate (world) which he was to inherit. He wanted to get all the Father would give him so that he could enjoy it now.
   a. He had not earned it, not yet; therefore, he did not deserve it.
   b. He was selfish and self-centered, rude and unkind. He said, "Give me," not "Please" nor "May I have." The effect upon his father and the estate was of little, if any, concern to the prodigal. The father could be hurt and the estate could suffer from the loss of the money and goods; it mattered little to the prodigal.

> **"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).**
>
> **"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:9-10).**

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves" (2 Tim.3:1-2).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).

"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself" (Hos.10:1).

"From the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness" (Jer.6:13).

"And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zech.7:6).

2. He said, "Give me my independence." This is what the prodigal was really after, the right to his own life. He was tied down to the father's property and was held responsible for the care of the property. He wanted to *cut loose—to be away* from the father and to be relieved of the responsibility of the property. He wanted to live his own life, to do his own thing (Lk.15:12).

The prodigal rejected and turned from the father and his way of life because he felt the father would...

- demand and require too much work.
- curtail and limit his freedom.
- disallow and restrict his fun and pleasure.
- be unfair and not understand.
- control and discipline too much.
- keep an eye and hand upon him.

Note a crucial point: the father gave the son his freedom and possessions. The son was able to do what he wanted with his life and goods (abilities, talents, money, things). All was placed into the son's hands. He could use his life and what he had as he wished without any interference from the father. Since he was an adult son, he wanted to be free from the father and the father respected his adulthood. The father could do nothing about the choice of life chosen by the son. He had to let him go and live as he wished.

"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).

"But chiefly them [the wicked] that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government [authority]. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities [authority]" (2 Pt.2:10).

"I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiffnecked people" (Ex.32:9).

"He sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the LORD; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear" (2 Chron.24:19).

"Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the LORD, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the LORD your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you" (2 Chron.30:8).

"To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Is.28:12).

"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not" (Is.30:15).

"Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee" (Ps.32:9).

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness" (Is.46:12).

"I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass" (Is.48:4).

"And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction" (Jer.32:33).

"As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee" (Jer.44:16).

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zech.7:11).

"If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart" (Mal.2:2).

3. The prodigal wasted his life in riotous living.
   a. He left his father—he rebelled and revolted and journeyed to a *far country*. He chose a country that was drastically different from his father's, a country that was full of carousing and drunkenness, partying and immorality, selfishness and greed, sin and shame, death and hell.
   b. He lived a worldly, fleshly life—living for the pleasure of this life only. "Riotous living" means loose, reckless, wild, extravagant living. It means...
      - careless spending
      - carousing in the forbidden bed
      - drunkenness
      - being loose
      - cursing
      - telling off-colored jokes
      - gluttonous eating
      - drinking
      - partying
      - dressing to attract
      - having a foul mouth

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry" (Lk.12:19).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies" (Gal.5:19-21).

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves....lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim.3:1-2, 4).

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another" (Tit.3:3).

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas.5:5).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party, revel, carouse] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"One sinner destroyeth much good" (Eccl.9:18.)

"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children" (Is.47:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(15:12) **Inheritance**: by law the younger son received one-third and the older son two-thirds of a father's estate when the father died. However, if the father wished, he could make gifts to his children throughout his life. The prodigal son was asking for a huge gift amounting to what his final inheritance would be.

2 (15:14-16) **Worldliness—Sin—Enslavement—Bondage—Suffering—Friends—Dissatisfaction—Emptiness—Destitute—Spiritual Poverty**: the prodigal son met the day when he suffered and was in want. He suffered five things.

1. He suffered being *destitute*. He "spent all." He squandered and wasted and misused...
   - his money
   - his property
   - his talents
   - his purpose
   - his opportunities
   - his mind
   - his thoughts
   - his hands
   - his body
   - his soul

He misused all these in the lust of his flesh. Note: all these things, ranging from his money to his soul, came from God. They had been given to the son from the Father, either through nature at birth or through a direct gift. The son owed everything to the Father. He should have been working to hold up the name of the Father, serving and repaying the Father for all His marvelous gifts. But instead, the son became a rebel, a prodigal and "spent all" upon "riotous living."

The point is this: the prodigal had nothing on earth to help him. He had wrapped his life up in the pleasure and security of the world; but now, when they were all gone, there was nothing left to help him. He stood *bare*, *empty*, *alone*, and *destitute*. All that he had based his life upon was now gone. He now knew that the world was corruptible and that it passed away. Note: he had cut himself off from his Father (God), so he had no security from God. He was completely void of the confidence and spiritual strength that God would look after him and help him recover. He had not looked to God nor trusted and honored God with his life and goods. Therefore, he was destitute of all spiritual help, left out in the world all alone, having "spent all."

"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death....For the wages of sin is death" (Ro.6:21, 23).

"...he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death" (Pr.11:19).

"At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).

"And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water" (Is.1:28-30).

"O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return. Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God" (Jer.5:3-4).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12).

2. He suffered *natural disaster*. A famine struck. This refers to all the severe trials and disasters in life because of the very nature of the world. It may be storm, sickness, accident, death. Whatever it is, it is disastrous and causes great loss. Again, the prodigal son was all alone without God's presence; therefore, he had to face the disaster without God's care and help.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor.3:13).

3. He suffered *enslavement and humiliation* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.15:15 for discussion).

4. He suffered *hunger*. The world's garbage (riotous living) will always leave a man empty and hungry. The world, its pleasures and wealth and styles, will please the body but leave the soul empty. The world cannot permanently...

- satisfy
- fill
- nourish
- provide
- supply
- please

The world will leave a man (deep within, within his soul)...

- dissatisfied
- unfulfilled
- unnourished
- empty
- unsupplied
- displeased

In contrast, only the man who hungers and thirsts after righteousness will be filled and bear the fruit of God's Spirit (see outlines, notes, and DEEPER STUDY # 5,6—Mt.5:6; Gal.5:22-23).

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water [earthly water, pleasures] springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:13-14).

"And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread" (Mt.4:3).

"And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all" (Rev.18:14).

"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor.6:13).

"He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand" (Job 15:23).

"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (Eccl.6:7).

"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul" (Is.44:20).

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2; cp. Is.29:8; 65:13).

5. He suffered *the loss of friends*. The *so-called friends* who surrounded him when he had plenty were now gone. Note two things.

a. When he had plenty and was able to maintain the same social class as his friends, they were all glad to call him friend. But when he was not able to *keep up* with their standard of living, he was not welcomed. They were *above* him, and he was *below* them. He was, in fact, an embarrassment to them. They did not want him around lest others associate them with a person who was unsuccessful and a failure.

b. The friends, at least some of them, were feeling the pinch of the famine as well. Note the selfishness of the world: "no man gave unto him." How like the vast majority of people today! And so many have so much that could be given!

"All my inward friends abhorred me: and they whom I loved are turned against me" (Job 19:19).

"My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off" (Ps.38:11).

"I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop" (Ps.102:7).

"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Ps.142:4).

"Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide" (Mic.7:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(15:15) **Sin**: a Jew was forbidden by law to be attached to a Gentile, a man of a "far country." But even disregarding this prohibition, the humiliation of cleaning hog pens was a horrible pain for a formerly fine rich young man to suffer. There are three pictures here.

1. The picture of being spiritually and emotionally and mentally drained. He ran out of spiritual strength, spent his inheritance.
2. The picture of attaching himself and becoming enslaved to a person of a "far country." Being spiritually drained, he sought refuge with a man of a "far country," a man away from God.
3. The picture of sin's leading and enslaving a man to the "hog pens" of the world.

> **"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn.8:34).**
>
> **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Ro.6:16; cp. Ro.6:21).**
>
> **"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind [which tells me better], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Ro.7:23).**
>
> **"While they [the wicked] promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Pt.2:19).**
>
> **"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim.2:21).**
>
> **"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins" (Pr.5:22).**
>
> **"Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst" (Is.5:13).**

3 (15:17-19) **Sin—Repentance—Thinking**: the prodigal came to himself, snapped out of his insanity, back to reality. Note the words "came to himself." Jesus considers a person away from God to be *mad, insane, living in an unreal world.*

> **"This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead" (Eccl.9:3).**

Two things are indicated about repentance.

⇒ Repentance is the beginning of sanity and reality, the very basis for building a sound life.
⇒ The beginning of repentance is thought, thinking about one's need to repent and turn back to God.

Note the words, "When he came to himself, he said"; that is, he began to think to himself. He thought long and hard upon these things.

1. He thought upon his Father (God) and His enormous provision.
   a. The Father's "many servants" would be the believers, the children of God.
   b. The Father's "bread" was enough to feed all, and then there was even more to spare.

The prodigal remembered how his father had been able to provide for all. He remembered the sense of belonging, of being a family and of fellowshipping together among all the servants of God, the great provision of love and joy and peace, of purpose and meaning and significance. His father had it all and more to spare.

2. He thought upon his plight: "I perish" (v.17). The meaning is both now and future.
   a. He was perishing now: empty, lonely, unhappy, humiliated, destitute, without purpose, meaning, or significance, without family or friend.
   b. He was doomed to perish eternally (Jn.3:16; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).
3. He thought about humbling himself. Humbling himself would involve two significant steps.
   a. Repenting. Note the prodigal would have to "arise," that is, turn from and leave the far country, and go to his father. These are the steps involved in repentance...
      - arising, getting up.
      - turning away from one's sinful life.
      - turning toward and moving toward God.

      Note that repentance is simply a changed life, a life that turns from sin to righteousness, from self to God, from this world to heaven, from the temporal to the eternal.
   b. Confessing. The prodigal would have to confess...
      - his sin.
      - his unworthiness to be called God's son.

Thought 1. Note that the prodigal was only thinking of these things, not doing them—not yet. However, the desire and longing to return to his father was gnawing at his heart deeply.

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6; cp. Lk.6:21).**

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land" (Ps.143:6; cp. Ps.42:2; 38:9; 63:1; 119:174).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

4 (15:20-21) **Repentance—Confession—God, Seeking Men—Contrition**: the prodigal arose and returned to his father. This was the greatest of moments for the prodigal, the most momentous event in the life of any sinner. It is the summit of human experience. The prodigal returned to God: he sought reconciliation with his Father.

1. He repented: he did get up and turn from his sinful life and go to his Father. He was no longer just thinking about it; he was now repenting and going to the Father.

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mt.5:4).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21; cp. Ezk.18:31).

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Ezk.33:11; cp. Joel 2:12).

"Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.1:3; cp. Mal.3:7).

2. He was accepted even before he confessed. This is a significant point to note. Repentance is the sign that we are sincere when we confess, and God knows we are sincere when He sees us actually turn from our wicked ways. He forgives when we repent, when we truly want Him to forgive. This is the reason the Father runs to meet His son. The son had turned away from the far country and *had come* to the Father. Note:

⇒ the Father's eyes were merciful: no matter what He had seen, He wanted to have mercy.
⇒ the Father's heart was merciful: He wanted to reach out in compassion to the sinning son.
⇒ the Father's feet were merciful: He wanted to run and meet and *escort* the sinner home.
⇒ the Father's arms were merciful: He wanted to embrace the prodigal son and weep with him.
⇒ the Father's lips were merciful: He wanted to welcome the prodigal son home with all the tenderness of a true Father.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).

"Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious" (Ps.66:2).

"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).

3. He confessed. He needed to confess his terrible evil: that he had rebelled, rejected, and sinned against the Father. He had sinned against heaven, all that heaven stood for in all its righteousness and godliness; and sinned in the sight of God, going against all that the Father stood for and knew to be best.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (Ezra 10:11).

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

"He [God] looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light" (Job 33:27-28).

5 (15:22-24) **Forgiveness—Restoration**: the prodigal was accepted and restored. But note: he would not have been accepted and restored if he had not returned. The key to being accepted by God is *repentance*. We must always remember this fact, a fact which determines our eternal destiny.

1. The father restored him.
   a. The "*robe*" restored him to a position of sonship and honor. It symbolized being clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
> **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Ro.13:14).**
> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

   b. The "*ring*" restored him to a position of authority. The son was now to represent the father and his kingdom.

> **"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal.4:6-7).**
> **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).**
> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).**
> **"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).**

   c. The "*shoes*" immediately restored and elevated him above servanthood, which means he became a *free man*. The son was now shod with shoes to carry the gospel of peace wherever he went.

> **"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:32).**
> **"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Ro.6:18).**
> **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Ro.8:2).**
> **"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor.3:17).**
> **"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (1 Cor.8:9).**
> **"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal.5:13).**
> **"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph.6:15).**
> **"As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God" (1 Pt.2:16).**

   d. The "*celebration*" pictures reconciliation, full acceptance, and the great joy of the occasion.

> **"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).**

2. The father fed the son and celebrated his son's return. Both facts are important. All that the son needed was fed to him. He was fully accepted into the family; therefore, all the food of heaven was laid out before him. It was there to nourish him. But even more: there was celebration and great joy over the son's return. The whole household celebrated in joy.

> **"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:7).**
> **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).**
> **"And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.1:14).**
> **"Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness" (Pr.8:18).**
> **"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Pr.10:22).**

3. The Father proclaimed His son's new life.
   a. He "was dead and is alive again."

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).**
>
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**

   b. "He was lost and is found."

> **"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).**
>
> **"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost....And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost" (Lk.15:6, 9).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:24-25).**

	J. The Parable of the Elder Son: The Self-Righteous Religionist, 15:25-32	29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:	**3 Fault 3: He was self-righteous** a. He claimed to be religious b. He claimed to be moral & just c. He felt he deserved more, that he was not recognized enough
1 Fault 1: He was in the field away from home	25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.	30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.	**4 Fault 4: He lacked compassion & the understanding of sinners**
	26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.	31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.	**5 Fault 5: He failed to see two critical facts**
	27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.	32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.	a. He had the same blessings available b. His brother was truly saved
2 Fault 2: He shut himself out	28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.		

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

J. The Parable of the Elder Son: The Self-Righteous Religionist, 15:25-32

(15:25-32) **Introduction**: this passage is about the second son of the father (v.11, 25). The elder son represents the self-righteous religionist—the moral, the just, the good—the man who has never committed gross and visible sin. He is religious and does religious works; therefore, he feels and believes he is acceptable to God. In this parable Jesus pointed out five faults with the self-righteous religionist. (See outlines and notes—Lk.11:37-54; 18:9-12; Ro.2:17-29 for more discussion.)

1. Fault 1: he was in the field away from home (v.25-27).
2. Fault 2: he shut himself out (v.28).
3. Fault 3: he was self-righteous (v.29).
4. Fault 4: he lacked compassion and the understanding of sinners (v.30).
5. Fault 5: he failed to see two critical facts (v.31-32).

1 (15:25-27) **Religionists—Errors of**: the first fault of the religionist is his tragic position. He was "in the field" away from the house. He was in the field of religion, but not in the house of salvation. He was unaware of his father's affairs (v.26-27).

1. The elder son was *in the field* of his father. He was working diligently, looking after the responsibilities of the field. So it is with the religionist. He is working diligently at the field of religious things: services, rituals, ceremonies, ordinances, prayers. He even uses religious talk and terms in his daily conversation. He attends services and prays and talks as much as he needs to satisfy his conscience.

The point is this: the religionist is "in the field" of religion. He professes to know God and to be a follower of religion. Just how much religion he practices depends upon how much religion he needs to salve his conscience and to feel acceptable to God. Most men want to feel acceptable to God, so they do whatever amount of religion makes them feel acceptable.

Thought 1. How much religion does a man need to salve his conscience and make him feel acceptable to God?
1) Some men sense the need for *very little religious activity*.
2) Other men sense the need for *a great deal of religious activity*, even to becoming professional ministers.

2. The elder son was in the field, not in the house of his father.
   ⇒ He did not know what was going on in the house (of salvation and repentance), only what was happening in the field (of religion).
   ⇒ When he looked at the *celebration* of repentant sinners, he questioned. He did not understand.
   ⇒ He had to ask what the celebration meant (what the celebration of repentance and salvation meant).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim.3:5).

"Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees [religionists], hypocrites! for ye pay tithe...and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Mt.23:23).

"Ye observe [rituals] days, and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal.4:10-11).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

"[God] who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:9).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).

2 (15:28) **Religionists—Jealousy—Unbelief**: the second fault of the religionist is his tragic rejection of God. He shuts himself out. Note the son in the field became angry at the repentant son who was now in the father's house. He did not understand repentance, how a man who had been so immoral, dirty, and unclean could change so much. The claims of being safe and secure and the sound of celebration and testimony disturbed the son from the field. So it is with the religionist. He does not understand such claims as...

- being saved.
- being saved *by God Himself.*
- being filled with power
- being filled with joy.
- being delivered *immediately* from enslaved habits (such as alcohol, smoking, immorality, cursing, covetousness, selfishness).
- being healed.
- being indwelt and given power by the Holy Spirit.

The religionist reacts against such claims. How? He wants nothing to do with such a *house of repentance and salvation.* He shuts himself out. Sometimes he even talks against and criticizes such a celebration and house.

"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Mt.23:13).

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men....the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid" (Is.29:13-14; cp. Mk.7:6).

"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.2:7-8).

Note a significant fact: the religionist *shut himself out.* God does not shut him out. The *father* "came...out and intreated him" to come in. The father does even more for the religionist in that he comes seeking him, whereas the prodigal had to return home before the father could run out to meet him. The father came out and begged the religious son to understand repentance and salvation and to come in. (The religionist is already in the field of religion and close to the gospel, whereas the prodigal son is out in the field of the world far removed from the church and the gospel.)

Note the terrible jealousy and envy in the heart of the elder son. He was jealous of the treatment, of the fruit and blessing's being given to the prodigal son. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Fruit-bearing*—Jn.15:1-8; cp. Gal.5:22-23 for more discussion.)

3 (15:29) **Religionists—Self-righteousness**: the third fault of the religionist is his tragic self-righteousness. Note the elder son claimed three things.

1. He claimed to be religious: "I serve thee." A religionist does serve God through religious things: he worships, prays, tithes, witnesses, reads his Bible, and teaches.
2. He claimed to be moral and just: "Neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." He never committed immorality, not any other dirty or unclean act that could be visibly or publicly seen. He never stole, cheated, lied, or cursed. He was obedient to his parents and responsible in his work and duties both to God and man.
3. He felt he deserved more, that he was not recognized enough: "Thou never gavest me a kid," that is, the spiritual food of power, love, joy, peace, confidence, joy, and the absolute assurance of heaven and eternal life. He felt he did not get enough, that he deserved more than those who were now filled with so much spiritual food and celebration.

Note what the religionist lacks: *faith* (Mt.23:23). He just does not *trust* the Father's love and judgment, His plan of salvation and repentance *for all.*

"Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned" (Jer.2:35).

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess" (Mt.23:25).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

4 (15:30) **Self-righteousness—Compassion, Lack of—Hardness—Pride**: the fourth fault of the religionist is his tragic lack of compassion and the understanding of God's spiritual feast. Note three things about the elder son.

1. He did not call the prodigal son his brother. He said with arrogance, "*thy son*." He felt *above* and *better* than the prodigal son, despite the change of heart and life that existed within the repentant son. He felt no compassion or joy whatsoever. But note something: his statement was true. The repentant son was *God's true son*.
2. He focused on the prodigal's faults, especially his immoral past. He ignored the prodigal son's repentance, his return home, and the glorious reunion. He ignored God's...
   - great love
   - great forgiveness
   - great joy
3. He did not understand God's spiritual feast. The fatted calf would symbolize the spiritual food God gives to the repentant sinner.
   a. There was the food of absolute assurance of salvation and eternal life.

> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

   b. There was the food of love, joy, and peace.

> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**
>
> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).**
>
> **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**

5 (15:31-32) **Religionists—Blindness—Unbelief—Rejection**: the fifth fault of the religionist is his tragic blindness. He fails to see two critical facts.

1. The religionist has the same privileges as the repentant prodigal. Note the words, "All that I have is thine." He has the worship, the Word, the promises, the preaching, and the teaching. He has constant exposure to all that is God's (see outline and notes—Ro.9:4-5 for more discussion). He can enter God's "house of salvation" anytime. All he has to do is repent, turn from trusting the field of religion, and enter God's house. He simply needs to believe in and trust the love of God. He is to stop opposing God's love to the prodigal sinner and come in himself.
2. The salvation of the repentant prodigal was real.

⇒ This thy brother was dead, and is alive.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).**
>
> **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**

⇒ This thy brother was lost, and is found.

> **"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).**
>
> **"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost....And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost" (Lk.15:6, 9).**
>
> **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:24-25).**

	CHAPTER 16		
	K. The Parable of the Unjust Steward: Man and Money, 16:1-13		
1 The unjust steward a. He was charged with embezzlement, with wasting the Lord's goods b. He was required to prepare a final accounting c. He knew he was guilty & was unwilling to change & cry for mercy d. He decided what to do: He would forget the Lord & court the favor & rewards of men*DSI*	And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. 2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward. 3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. 4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. 5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? 6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.	7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. 8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. 9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.	**2 The worldly are more wise in their material pursuits than God's people are in their spiritual pursuits** **3 The Christian is to use material wealth for good** a. Wealth will fail—at death b. Giving will be reciprocated **4 The Christian is to be faithful in handling possessions: Will determine what he will be trusted with eternally** a. Money is the least trust b. Unfaithfulness disqualifies one from true, heavenly riches c. Unfaithfulness disqualifies one from all he would receive **5 The Christian cannot serve two masters: Must choose God or riches**

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

K. The Parable of the Unjust Steward: Man and Money, 16:1-13

(16:1-13) **Introduction—Unjust Steward**: this passage is looked upon as one of the most difficult passages in all of Scripture to understand. Verse eight is the primary reason. In studying the passage, two overall approaches can be taken. A person can read the parable and the comments about the parable made by Christ and take it only for what it says, that is, without adding any comment or seeing any application in it. However, a person can also see application in the parable as well as in the points taught by Christ. To help those interested in the latter approach, some application is given to the points of the parable.

The steward was a trusted slave who was put in charge of the landowner's estate. He was highly regarded and esteemed, considered to be completely trustworthy. The term "*steward*" is applied to ministers (1 Cor.4:1) and to believers in general (1 Pt.4:10; Lk.16:1). (See note, pt.2—Lk.12:41-48.)

1. The unjust steward (v.1-7).
2. The worldly are more wise in their material pursuits than God's people are in their spiritual pursuits (v.8).
3. The Christian is to use material wealth for good (v.9).
4. The Christian is to be faithful in handling possessions: how he handles his possessions will determine what he will be trusted with eternally (v.10-12).
5. The Christian cannot serve two masters: he must choose God or riches (v.13).

1 (16:1-7) **Parable, Unjust Steward**: in the parable itself Jesus said four things about the unjust steward.

1. The steward was charged with embezzlement, with *wasting the Lord's "goods."* The steward was in charge of the Lord's property, of all the Lord's goods. Therefore, it was easy for him to use the goods for his own purposes just as he desired. The point is, God has given every man some "goods": life, talents, house, property, money, duty, a sense of re-

sponsibility, conscience, family, and a host of other goods. Every man is charged with embezzlement, with misusing the goods to some degree

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey" (Mt.25:14-15; cp. Ro.12:6-8; 1 Cor.12:7f).

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:13).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).

2. The steward was required to prepare a final accounting. Two facts are important in this point.
   a. The Lord hears that the steward has been misusing His "goods." Note: the Lord had only *heard* about the embezzlement. The full evidence against the steward was not yet fully known. The Lord gave the steward a chance to prove his trust and faithfulness. The accounting did not mean that the steward would be dismissed from the Lord's estate (heaven, Kingdom of God), only that he must prove his trust and faithfulness. Of course, if the steward had not been faithful in looking after the Lord's goods, then he would be dismissed: "Thou canst no longer [ougardunei] be steward."
   b. The final accounting is at death (Heb.9:27). If the steward is found to have been untrustworthy, he will be *dismissed and discharged* from the Lord's estate (kingdom, heaven, eternal life. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24.)

   Thought 1. Death will take us away from all our earthly goods. If our accounting justifies us, then we shall be given a much greater responsibility, an eternal responsibility, for the Lord.

   "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants" (Mt.18:23).

   "And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it" (Mt.21:34).

   "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" (Mt.25:19).

   "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading" (Lk.19:15).

   "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

   "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

   "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (1 Pt.4:4).

3. The steward knew he was guilty and was unwilling to change or ask for mercy. Note two things.
   a. The words "What shall I do...?" The steward knew he was guilty and that the Lord was going to dismiss him.
   b. The steward thought over what he should do. He reasoned out two courses of action.
      ⇒ He could dig. However, he was not willing to dig, not willing to be demoted to a field laborer and to serve in such a low capacity.
      ⇒ He could beg. However, he was *too proud* to leave the Lord and openly beg. He would be ashamed.

Now note something not mentioned. He was too proud to beg forgiveness of the Lord, too proud to be known as a repentant embezzler (sinner). This is the dominant point, although not mentioned. Begging for forgiveness was the steward's only hope. He considered every course of action but this one.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Is.29:15).

"Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin" (Is.30:1).

4. The steward decided what to do: he would forget the Lord and court the favor and returns of men. He did what he could to secure the acceptance and favor of men.
   a. He led them to be dishonest, to dismiss and lower their debts to the Lord. They were led to *embezzle and hold back* some of their goods. Note: the steward was in a responsible position (a religionist) and misled others.

   Thought 1. How many religionists mislead others through false teaching, causing so many not to use their lives and gifts for God.

   b. This act *stole* from the Lord; it stole the goods (life and gifts) of others from the Lord.

c. The steward misled others to benefit himself, to secure his position and livelihood. And he did it in a most shrewd way, a way that was pleasing and profitable to the debtors. Anyone of them would gladly help the steward when he needed their support. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.16:6-7.)

"But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law" (Mal.2:8).

"...judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(16:6-7) **Measure—Oil—Wealth**: a measure of oil (botos) was about 8 3/4 gallons. Therefore, the payment was a sizeable 800 gallons. The measure of wheat (koros) was about 10 bushels. This too was sizeable, about 1,000 bushels.

2 (16:8) **Dedication—Worldly—Materialism**: the worldly are more wise in their material pursuits than God's people are in their spiritual pursuits. Note two points.

1. Jesus said the unjust steward did "wisely."
   ⇒ He looked out for himself, his personal welfare. In this he was very wise.
   ⇒ He was dedicated and sold out to taking care of his future.

Jesus was not commending the steward for his cunning deceit. He commended him for his concern about the future and his dedication and energy. The steward was *sold out* to pursuing a goal, and that part of his life was commendable. His mistake was being sold out to pursuing material wealth and comfort instead of Christ.

2. Jesus said the worldly are wiser "in their generation" than believers. Why? Because they dedicate so much energy and effort to caring for their earthly welfare.

The point is clear. Every disciple should be just as dedicated and sold out in spiritual pursuits as the worldly are in their material pursuits. The disciple is not to be outdone in the exertion of energy and dedication.

Thought 1. Note how much more initiative and energy this man of the world exerted in his pursuits than many Christians exert in theirs.

"But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Mt.13:23).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Ro.12:1).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways" (Pr.23:26).

3 (16:9) **Stewardship—Wealth—Riches—Materialism**: the Christian is to use material wealth for good. The Christian is not being told to seek the friendship of the wealthy; he is being told to use his wealth to help others. By so helping, the disciple will gain friends and influence them for Christ. Then when the disciple finds himself without resources in this life, he will more likely be helped by those whom he helped.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousnnss; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Lk.18:29-30).

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

Note another significant point: if the Christian is not helped in this life, then at death he will certainly be welcomed abundantly into heaven. His compassionate initiative in helping others will assure God's approval. (See note—Jas.1:10-11 for more discussion.)

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor.5:1).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:10-11).

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18).

4 (16:10-12) **Rewards**: the Christian is to be faithful in handling possessions, for his faithfulness determines what he will be trusted with eternally.

1. Money and possessions are the least trust given a person (v.10). They are nothing compared to eternal salvation and to love, joy, peace, and the absolute assurance and confidence of life eternal. They are nothing compared to the presence and companionship, the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit. They are nothing compared to possessing the Word of God and the promises of God. They are nothing compared to knowing God personally and to being made an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

2. Unfaithfulness in the use of money and possessions disqualifies a person from true, heavenly riches. A person may think his life and possessions are his own to do with as he wills, but they are not. His life and possessions are God's. God has trusted the person with life and possessions only as long as he is on this earth. The holder is only a steward of all he is and has. He cannot take his life or possessions with him out of this world when he dies. He has both life and possessions only temporarily—as a trust. If he handles his life and possessions badly, he shows he is not fit to be trusted with responsibility in the new heavens and earth.

Scripture says that the *true heavenly riches* and rewards are beyond comprehension:

Rewards Dealing with our Nature or State of Being

⇒ Being adopted as a son of God (Gal.4:4-7; 1 Jn.3:1).
⇒ Being made blameless and harmless (Ph.2:15).
⇒ Being given eternal life (Jn.3:16; 1 Tim.6:19).
⇒ Being given an enduring substance (Heb.10:34).
⇒ Being given a glorious body (Ph.3:11, 21; 1 Cor.15:42-44).
⇒ Being given eternal glory and honor and peace (Ro.2:10).
⇒ Being given eternal rest and peace (Heb.4:9; Rev.14:13).
⇒ Being given the blessings of the Lord (Pr.10:22).
⇒ Being given the knowledge of Christ Jesus (Ph.3:8).
⇒ Being given durable riches and righteousness (Pr.8:18).
⇒ Being made priests (Rev.20:6).
⇒ Being given a crown of incorruption (1 Cor.9:25).
⇒ Being given a crown of righteousness (2 Tim.4:8).
⇒ Being given a crown of life (Jas.1:12).
⇒ Being given a crown of glory (1 Pt.5:4).

Rewards Dealing with Work or Position or Rule

⇒ Being made exalted beings (Rev.7:9-12).
⇒ Being made ruler over many things (Mt.25:23).
⇒ Being given the Kingdom of God (Jas.2:5; Mt.25:34).
⇒ Being given a position or rule and authority (Lk.12:42-44; Lk.22:28-29; 1 Cor.6:2-3).
⇒ Being given eternal responsibility and joy (Mt.25:21, 23).
⇒ Being given rule and authority over cities (Lk.19:17, 19).
⇒ Being given thrones and the privilege of reigning forever (Rev.20:4; 22:5).
⇒ Being given the privilege of surrounding the throne of God (Rev.7:9-13; 20:4).
⇒ Being made priests (Rev.20:6).
⇒ Being made kings (Rev.1:5; 5:10).

Rewards Dealing with our Inheritance or Wealth

⇒ Being made an heir of God (Ro.8:16-17; Tit.3:7).
⇒ Being given an incorruptible inheritance (1 Pt.1:3-4).
⇒ Being given the blessings of the Lord (Pr.10:22).
⇒ Being given durable riches and righteousness (Pr.8:18).
⇒ Being given unsearchable riches (Eph.3:8).
⇒ Being given treasures in heaven (Mt.19:21; Lk.12:33).

3. Unfaithfulness disqualifies a person from all he would receive. The other man in verse 12 refers to God. Our lives and possessions are His. If we are not faithful in using them, how can we expect to be compensated? Note a person never has all he would have if he fails to pursue God and to give others what is due them. (Cp. Mt.19:29; Mk.10:29-30; Lk.18:30.)

> **"Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Mt.25:27-29).**
>
> **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).**
>
> **"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor.3:13-15).**
>
> **"Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you" (Jer.5:25).**

5 (16:13) **Decision—Spiritual Struggle**: the Christian cannot serve two masters; he must choose God or riches. Note three significant points.

1. There are two masters in life, either God or the things and riches of this world.
2. A person serves one of the two masters. He gives himself either to one or the other...
   - He focuses himself upon the things and riches of the world or upon God.
   - He turns himself over to the things and riches of the world or to God.
   - He thinks primarily upon the things of the world or upon God.
   - He gives his time, energy, and effort to the things of the world or to God.
   - He allows his worldly pursuits to control Christ, or Christ to control his pursuits.
3. A person struggles against God or else struggles against the things and riches of the world. No man can serve both God and mammon.
   - ⇒ He hates the one and loves the other.
   - ⇒ He holds to one and despises the other.

> **"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Mt.4:10).**
>
> **"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk.10:21).**
>
> **Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor.10:21).**
>
> **"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas.1:18).**
>
> **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).**
>
> **"See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil" (Dt.30:15).**
>
> **"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Josh.24:15).**
>
> **"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Ki.18:21).**

1 The misunderstanding of money & possessions a. Man tends to use his possessions to justify himself b. God knows the heart c. God detests men who center their esteem around money & possessions	**L. The Misunderstanding About Wealth and God's Kingdom, 16:14-18** 14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. 15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.	16 The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. 17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. 18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.	**2 The misunderstanding of the new kindgom & world or social order** a. It is of God, not of earth b. It is for "every man" **3 The misunderstanding of the law** a. It is not destroyed by the new kingdom b. Marriage is an example of the unfailing law in both kingdoms

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

L. The Misunderstanding About Wealth and God's Kingdom, 16:14-18

(16:14-18) **Introduction**: three of the greatest misunderstandings among men are covered in this passage. This is a critical message. It needs to be heeded by men so they can correct their misunderstanding.

1. The misunderstanding of money and possessions (v.14-15).
2. The misunderstanding of the new kingdom and world or social order (v.16).
3. The misunderstanding of the law (v.17-18).

1 (16:14-15) **Money—Wealth—Materialism—Heart**: the misunderstanding of money and possessions. Jesus had just said: "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

The religionists and others standing before Jesus could not believe what they were hearing.

⇒ Jesus was saying that a man's energy and effort in seeking and looking after money was wrong, that a man could not seek money and at the same time keep his mind and thoughts upon God. It was impossible to concentrate on both. Jesus was demanding total allegiance, all of one's mind and thoughts, energy and effort. Those who heard Jesus knew exactly what He was saying.

⇒ Jesus was saying that a man must not give himself to seek the comfort and ease and pleasures and possessions of the world.

⇒ Jesus was going against the philosophy of the world, a philosophy that had even permeated religious circles: that money and possessions are a sign of the blessings of God.

What Jesus was teaching bothered men, in particular the religionists. The reason has to do with the nature of man. By nature, men want money and possessions, comfort and ease, acceptance and recognition; and at the same time, they want to be known as *close to God*. A man wants to fit in and be acceptable to the world and, at the same time, to feel acceptable to God. Therefore, a man becomes disturbed, sometimes extremely disturbed, when he is told...

⇒ that he cannot give his mind and thought, energy and effort to both God and money (the possessions of the world).

⇒ that he cannot serve both God and money at the same time.

⇒ that God demands a person's total allegiance, all of a person's mind and thoughts, energy and effort.

Note four things.

1. Men can be both religious and covetous; in fact, the most covetous men are sometimes the most religious. These men who were ridiculing Jesus were Pharisees, probably the most religious sect who had ever lived, yet they were said to be covetous. They wanted things of the world and the things of God at the same time.

> **"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).**
>
> **"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:18-19).**
>
> **"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).**

2. Jesus said that men tend to use their wealth to justify themselves before other men.
   a. They use their wealth to court the favor and honor of men and women. Even if they secured their wealth unjustly, they compensate for it by being generous, by entertaining, or by giving to some worthy need or project. And unfortunately, men and women alike give in to and go along with the wealthy.

b. Some rich persons are conscious of their need for a right relationship with God and of their obligation to help people. Therefore, they live strict religious lives and use some of their wealth to court the favor and honor of people through religious causes. The world, including the religious world, honors such benevolent giving by the wealthy.

> **"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).**
>
> **"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**

3. Jesus said, "But God knoweth your hearts." What did He mean?

a. A man is acceptable to God because his heart is right before God, not because he has a lot of money. Money does not mean that a man is greatly blessed by God. God's blessings are not in material things.

⇒ Some people are wealthy, yet they are as ungodly and dirty as they can be.

⇒ Some people are poor, yet they are very godly, having little money and few things of the world.

⇒ Some people have some money and possessions, yet they are very godly.

The point is this: the heart is that which *makes* a man acceptable to God, not money. Money does not mean that a man is blessed by God. It is the heart of a man that shows the blessings of God. God's blessings are not material things, they are spiritual things (see notes—Mt.19:25; Eph.1:3).

> **"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?" (Mt.19:23-25).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph.1:3).**

b. Note another important fact. When Jesus said that a man cannot serve God and money, He did not mean that a man's mind and thought could not be put upon his profession and work.

> **"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).**
>
> **"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).**

The Scripture is very clear about this. A person's profession and the beneficial activities of life are included in the things of God. The legitimate things of life are true and honest. Therefore, a man is to live and work well. Living and working well are a great testimony to God's name; therefore, a genuine believer should be the very best at living and working, demonstrating that God's people are the most true and honest, pure and lovely people on earth.

c. When dealing with the money and possessions of the world, we are to provide adequately for our families. But after adequate provision, the question arises, what are we to do? God is clear in His instructions: we are to work in order to have enough to help the needy. We are to help meet the needs of a desperate world.

> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).**
>
> **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**

4. God detests the esteem of men being centered around money and things. God wants men to center their lives and esteem around the things of the heart, not around the things they possess. Material possessions pass away; spiritual possessions endure forever (see note—Eph.1:3. See outlines and notes—Mt.19:16-22; 19:23-26; 19:27-30 for more discussion on Christ's teaching concerning wealth.)

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

2 (16:16) **Kingdom of God—Wealth—New Order—Old and New Testaments**: the misunderstanding of the new kingdom and order. Note three things.

1. Jesus sees the *period of Israel* (the law and the prophets) lasting up to and including the ministry of John the Baptist. As God's Messiah He ushered in a *new period and social order*, that is, the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is presently a spiritual kingdom that occurs within a man and takes effect in the acts and behavior of men. Since Jesus has come, every man is to let God rule and reign in his heart and life (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for more discussion).

2. The kingdom is now preached, a message which does not value what a man has, but what a man is—what he is within his heart. The message now centers upon the individual and his eternal potential in God, not upon material and temporal blessings. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; note—Eph.1:3.)

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Lk.17:20-21).

"The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15).

"And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk.6:20).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

3. Every man presses into the kingdom. The Kingdom of God is not for any single race; the kingdom is for all people everywhere. When people hear the glorious message of the kingdom, they press and struggle to get into it. They no longer want a cheap, formal religion and an easy message. They cannot be content with such, not when they *really get a glimpse* of the Kingdom of God. Once they have seen the glory and value of God's kingdom, they press and struggle to enter, no matter the odds.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Is.26:9).

3 (16:17-18) **Old Testament—Law, The—Word of God Enslaves**: the misunderstanding of the law. In this point Jesus dealt with a very serious question—a question that bothers men. Is there a *higher law*, a law of God to which men are to subject their lives? Since Christ has come, since there is now a new order and a New Testament, what about the Old Testament, the law and the prophets? Is the Old Testament and its laws still to be used and followed by us? What is the place of the law? Is it erased? Does it have a place in God's new kingdom? Jesus said that there is a *higher law*, a law of God that is given in the Old Testament. It is not erased; it has a place in the new order. In fact, the Old Testament is fulfilled in the new kingdom, and it shall outlast heaven and earth. An example is the law governing marriage. It is the law for both social orders. It never changes. (See note—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3 for detailed discussion of Christ fulfilling the law; see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.19:1-12 for detailed discussion of marriage.)

Thought 1. There is a *higher law*, a law of God given by God in the Old Testament, that is, in the old dispensation. It has been fulfilled in Christ; therefore, all men are to obey *the Law of God*. (Again, see note—Mt.5:17-18. This is an extremely important note to see how the Old Testament law was fulfilled in Christ.)

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:17-18).

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mt.24:35).

"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pt.1:25).

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps.119:89).

"Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever" (Ps.119:152).

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass" (Is.40:8).

	M. The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Self-Indulgent vs. The Man of Faith, 16:19-31		
1 A difference in life[DS1] a. Rich man nameless; Lazarus named b. Rich man wealthy; Lazarus poor c. Rich man healthy; Lazarus disabled d. Rich man fared sumptuously; Lazarus begged, being helpless	19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.	in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:	Lazarus comforted f. Rich man remembered his former life; Lazarus was silent g. Rich man was fixed in hell; Lazarus was fixed in Paradise h. Rich man agonized for loved ones; Lazarus was settled in eternity
2 A difference in death: Lazarus died & was escorted to Paradise; rich man died & was buried[DS2]	22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;	28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.	
3 A difference in eternity a. Rich man in hell;[DS3] Lazarus in Paradise b. Rich man *saw* glory; Lazarus was *in* glory c. Rich man was alone; Lazarus had fellowship d. Rich man had burning sensation; Lazarus had water e. Rich man tormented;[DS4]	23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented	29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.	i. Rich man begged for another chance; Lazarus was silently at peace j. Rich man was unable to intercede for his family; Lazarus was at rest in God's promises

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

M. The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Self-Indulgent vs. the Man of Faith, 16:19-31

(16:19-31) **Introduction**: note two things. Jesus identified Lazarus; Lazarus was named. When giving a parable, Jesus never named a character—not even once. Also note: Jesus did not say that this was a parable. These two facts, plus the language used to begin the account, point to it as an actual experience. Of course, it must always be remembered that spiritual and eternal truths have to be described with human and earthly language. This does not in any way lessen the blessing nor the terror of the truth; contrariwise, the eternal truth is *much more blessed* and *much more terrifying* than any mere human description.

1. A difference in life (v.19-21).
2. A difference in death: Lazarus died and was escorted to paradise; the rich man died and was buried (v.22).
3. A difference in eternity (v.23-31).

1 (16:19-21) **Life—Christians**: there is a difference in life. The differences are fourfold.

1. There was one main difference between Lazarus and the rich man: the rich man was nameless, but Lazarus was named. The difference is ever so important. It is the difference between being known and honored by God and not being known or honored by God. The rich man did not know God; therefore, he was unknown to God and God was not able to honor him. He was nameless to God. Lazarus knew God and was known by God. His very name, Lazarus, means *God is my Help or Helper*. He trusted God to look after him, and his eyes were upon heaven and the blessings of heaven, not upon the earth. The Latin word for "rich" is Dives. This is the reason the rich man is often called *Dives*. However, we must always remember it was not his name; he was a nameless man to God.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14; cp. Jn.10:27).
"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor.8:3).
"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor.13:12).

"Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:8-9).

2. The rich man was wealthy; Lazarus was poor. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sin*—Lk.16:19-21 for discussion.)

3. The rich man was healthy; Lazarus was disabled. Lazarus was full of ulcerated sores, unable to work and earn a living. He was either carried to the rich man's gate or else barely able to walk to the gate. He was what is called a *street person*—not by choice, but by being handicapped and without a family or friends who loved enough to care for him. How tragic! What an indictment against *men*. Note the charge is against the rich man and not *society*. Society is only an *idea*; men are a reality. The term or *idea of society* allows some men, including some social workers, to escape responsibility and to build up good salaries, healthy standards of living, and personal wealth while the needful continue to suffer. Each man is personally responsible for the poor and needy of the earth. That is Christ's point. In this case the rich man was responsible for Lazarus.

4. The rich man fared sumptuously; Lazarus had to beg because he was helpless. The picture is that of Lazarus' lying at the rich man's gate (most people would not allow this). The rich man was too occupied with his own estate, interests and pleasures; he ignored Lazarus' lying at his gate. The rich man neither helped nor seemed to care. While Lazarus waited for the crumbs from the rich man's table, too weak to fight off the dogs from licking his sores, he found hope and peace in God. The wealthy used large pieces of bread to wipe their hands and then threw the hunks away. It was this bread that Lazarus waited for.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:19-21) **Sin**: the sin of the rich man would not be a sin in the eyes of most societies. There is no record of a vicious, glaring sin; no record of a vulgar, public sin. He was not cruel—he never ordered Lazarus from his gate nor refused Lazarus the crumbs from his table. He was not a tyrant, not an oppressor of the poor, not a monstrous member of society. Rather, he was socially responsible, an upright citizen, respected and well-liked. No earthly court would ever think of arresting or condemning him. In society's eyes he was honored and highly esteemed. People liked him and spoke well of him. What then was his sin?

1. The word "sumptuously" (lampros) means that he was flamboyant, displaying his wealth in materialistic ways.
2. The "gate" was a large gate indicating that his home was a large house or a mansion.
3. The purple and fine linen show that he had the latest styles and the ultimate in luxury.
4. The words "every day" show that he feasted every day. His sin was *self-indulgence*, *comfort*, *ease*, *luxury*, *extravagant living*. He sought the things and pleasures of this world. He was complacent, hoarding and allowing money to lie around making more and more for himself and his estate while needs lay all around him—right at his gate. He neglected and ignored others, most significantly, Lazarus. The needs of a degenerate world concerned him little, if at all. He wanted what others in the world had, plenty for themselves and more. The world acknowledged and honored those who had plenty, and he wanted such recognition and honor for himself. He wanted what others had and he wanted to keep up with them.

"I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Mt.25:43).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zech.7:6).

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother" (Dt.15:7).

2 (16:22) **Death**: there was a difference in death. Lazarus died and was escorted to Paradise; the rich man died and was buried. Note the only words said about the rich man's death: "He died and was buried." What a terrible and disappointing legacy for a man to leave behind. The rich man was probably buried in state in the finest clothes and within the very best grave and cemetary. He had a most impressive funeral—a funeral well attended by the upper social class of his community. The words spoken over him were probably words of praise, words that recognized his respectability and contribution to society in providing so much for his community and religion. An expensive monument was probably set over his grave. However, the *tragedy of tragedies* was his experience. He knew *nothing* about it. He was not there to enjoy it. He just died and was buried.

However, note what is said about Lazarus. He "died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Abraham's Bosom*—Lk.16:22) or Paradise. Three facts are important here.

1. Lazarus lived on despite his body's being dead. His being—his spirit and soul—did not die, nor cease to exist, nor fall into a state of sleep.
2. Lazarus' soul was immediately met by angels. Instantaneously—as quick as the blinking of an eye—when Lazarus died, the angels stood by his body and carried his soul into Paradise.

3. Lazarus was carried into the very place where the *Source* of all wealth is, where all who have trusted God are, the place where Abraham is: the Paradise of God Himself. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Paradise*—Lk.16:23 for discussion.)

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**
>
> **"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:10-11).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(16:22) **Abraham's Bosom**: this refers to Paradise. It is a term that expressed the happiness that believers could expect upon death. It had the idea of sitting down and feasting with Abraham in Paradise. The bosom of Abraham was referred to because he was the father of the Jewish nation.

3 (16:23-31) **Eternal Life**: there was a difference in eternity. Ten facts are contrasted here.

1. The rich man was in hell; Lazarus was in Paradise (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Hell*—Lk.16:23).
   a. Death snatched the rich man from his comfort and pleasures and from the material goods and wealth of this life. And he was immediately in hell, the place of misery and torment. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Hell*—Lk.16:23.)

> **"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).**
>
> **"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (Rev.14:11).**

   b. The rich man was unfit for Paradise. Why? Because he had lived in a *worldly paradise* while others were hungry and starving, diseased and helpless, cold and unclothed, unsaved and dying. He had possessed the "good things" of life while others had nothing; and he had kept back, banked, and hoarded beyond what he really needed—all for the sake of recognition from people. Justice had to be executed. He was unfit to live in a paradise of justice and love. He deserved to be tormented and left without the "good things," for he had added to and refused to ease the torments of others while on earth.

> **"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Pr.21:13).**

2. The rich man only saw glory: Lazarus was sharing in and experiencing glory. Note three things.
   a. The rich man was able to see Paradise, but it was far, far off and way out of reach.
   b. The rich man was able to see into Paradise, able to see both Abraham and Lazarus there. He saw all the glory and comfort, perfection and joy of Paradise. He saw the man Lazarus whom he had neglected and treated so lowly. He saw Lazarus in all the glory and perfection of heaven, and he envied and regretted what he saw.

> **"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Lk.13:28).**

   c. Note that Lazarus seemed to be totally unaware of hell. He lived only in Paradise, only in the glory and perfection of God.

> **"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:53).**

3. The rich man was painfully alone; Lazarus had companionship. Nothing is said about another soul around the rich man. He stood all alone, talking to no one else in hell. He only saw those in Paradise. What a drastic difference from what

is so often pictured and expressed by the lost of this world, thinking they will have plenty of company in hell. The true picture painted by Christ is that a person will be tormented with loneliness, that the person will...

- be all alone
- see no one
- sense no one
- be cut off from others
- be desolate
- be bleak

Lazarus had the company of Abraham and of the saints in glory. Christ had earlier taught the same point to the "workers of iniquity":

> **"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves [workers of iniquity] thrust out" (Lk.13:28).**

4. The rich man had a burning sensation; Lazarus had water. The contrast here is dramatic. The rich man was burning with such misery and pain from the "flame" (the wrath of God) that he begged for mercy: if he could not be freed from the flame and the misery, then he begged for just a drop of water to feel a momentary coolness. However, look at Lazarus. He had water; he had the coolness of whatever he needed to refresh his body.

> **"...the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable" (Lk.3:17).**
> **"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev.22:1).**

5. The rich man was tormented; Lazarus was comforted (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Hell*—Lk.16:24).

> **"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).**
> **"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:42).**
> **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:15).**

6. The rich man remembered his former life; Lazarus was silent.
   a. Note the word "they" or "your." It is emphatic. The rich man had what *he* chose to have when on earth. He had received *his* "good things" (what he considered "good") in *his* lifetime, and he *saw* to it that Lazarus had "evil things." Now note: he did not beat, injure, or persecute Lazarus; *but he did not help Lazarus either.* He could have helped, for he had an estate and a bank full of money; but he did not help. Therefore, he *kept* Lazarus down and destitute in this world. He saw to it that Lazarus had "evil things" when he could have seen to it that Lazarus was helped.
   b. Lazarus was not responsible for the evil things that came upon him. Lazarus was *dished out* the evil things of this world by circumstances and by men like the rich man who neglected, ignored, and abused him.
   c. The rich man remembered...
      - his sins (comfort, ease, indulgence, pleasure, extravagance).
      - his missed opportunities (to help Lazarus).
      - his deaf ear to conscience, God, the Word, Lazarus, and all others who were so needy.
      - his failure to seek the truth (Heb.11:6).
      - his rejection of warning after warning.

7. The rich man was fixed in hell; Lazarus was fixed in Paradise. There was no passing from hell into Paradise or from Paradise into hell. There was a permanent gulf, and it was there for the *purpose* of keeping one from passing over. The sinner, who chooses to be cut off from God and Paradise, has his wish. He is cut off.

> **"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).**
> **"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (Mt.13:49).**
> **"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).**

8. The rich man agonized for loved ones; Lazarus was settled in eternity. The rich man had five brothers. He had set such a bad example for them they were also heading for hell. Note that the rich man was saying two things.
   a. Hell is such a horrible place that it is not worth all the wealth and comfort and ease and pleasure of this world. Christ had said the same thing:

      > **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).**

   b. Hell is such a horrible place that the world must be told to flee it. (Note that Christ is sharing how terrible hell is and how desperately we must seek to avoid it.)

The rich man was told that his brothers had the Scriptures, the Word of God, which explained and warned them of the future. They were to hear the Scripture, for the Scripture is a sufficient witness.

Lazarus was settled in eternity. He was a great contrast with the rich man's brothers. Why? Because he had believed the Scriptures, trusting God and His promises.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

9. The rich man begged for another chance as Lazarus was silently at peace as the Scriptures promised. This is seen by looking behind the words of the rich man. If Abraham were to allow one to arise to tell the living, the rich man could then plead less opportunity. He, too, would be entitled to another chance, to a sensational and miraculous sign, or so he felt.

Note that Lazarus was at peace just as the Scriptures had promised. Lazarus had believed and was thereby saved.

10. The rich man was unable to intercede for his family; Lazarus rested in God's presence. Note the words, "Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

a. A Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, has risen from the dead, yet men do not believe. Man's unbelief is not due to lack of signs; it is due to their love for the world with all its creature comforts and recognition, indulgence and selfishness, pleasures and honors.

> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).**

b. The Scriptures and their testimony of the Lord's resurrection are much greater testimony than a dead man's standing before us in some *ghostly, mysterious form.*

> **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39).**
>
> **"It [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(16:23) **Paradise—Hell (Hades)**: the Greek word *Hades* is the same as the Hebrew word *Sheol* (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Gen.37:35). The picture of Hades revealed by Jesus is that of the other world: the unseen world, the spiritual world, the spiritual dimension of being. Jesus says that Hades is a place which is divided into two huge areas or sections or compartments. The two areas are separated by a great gulf that is impassible (v.26). One area is the place of sorrow (v.23-24, 28). The other area is the place of Paradise where believers go. To say that a person is dead is to say that one is in hades, in the other world.

Note a critical fact: the other world, the spiritual world and the spiritual dimension of being, does exist. And there are two areas or two places in the other world: Paradise, the place of glory, and hell, the place of torment. Jesus said they both actually exist. (Cp. 22-23, see outline and notes—Lk.16:19-31; see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; notes—Mt.27:52-53; Eph.4:8-10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.3:19-20.)

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(16:24) **Hell—Torment**: to be anguished, tortured, and greatly distressed; to suffer pain and sorrow. The Bible unquestionably teaches there is to be a torment for unbelievers in fire. However, it must be remembered that the fire we know is material and temporal; it is not spiritual or eternal. Earthly fire does not last forever. Nothing on earth does. Earthly fire is of the physical dimension of being. The fire of hell, whatever its nature and qualities, is spiritual and eternal. It never ends. And men must face this; they must not shrink from the truth of hell. Why? Because hell, that is, separation from God, is much worse than any experience here on earth. It will be much worse than any physical experience imaginable. This is the teaching of Scripture. This is the point Jesus was making. Man absolutely must flee from hell. Man absolutely must flee to Christ for salvation (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22). (Cp. Mt.5:22, 29; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; 25:41; Mk.9:43-48; Lk.12:5; 16:23; 2 Th.1:8-9; 2 Pt.2:4; Rev.14:10-11; 16:10; 18:10; 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8.)

	CHAPTER 17 **N. The Christian Disciple and Four Laws, 17:1-10** (cp. Mt.18:6, 15; 17:20)	had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.	**essential—one of most powerful forces in the world**[DS2]
1 Law 1: Leading another to sin brings judgment a. Sin is inevitable b. Leading others to sin is terrible c. Leading others to sin is condemned[DS1]	Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!	7 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?	**4 Law 4: Obeying God is a duty, not a service** a. The illust.: A servant is a slave who serves his master 1) To serve all day
	2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.	8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?	2) To serve all evening 3) To serve until all others have retired
2 Law 2: Forgiving others is essential a. If one sins, he is to be rebuked b. If one repents, he is to be forgiven c. How often: Time after time	3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.	9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.	4) To serve whether or not one is thanked or appreciated
	4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.	10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.	b. The believer is to serve & obey until all of God's commandments are done c. The believer is to be humble in his service for the Lord
	5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.		
3 Law 3: Having faith is	6 And the Lord said, If ye		

DIVISION VI

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE II): HIS TEACHING AND PUBLIC CONFLICT, 13:22-17:10

N. The Christian Disciple and Four Laws, 17:1-10

(17:1-10) **Introduction**: there are four laws in this passage that could revolutionize society. They are to revolutionize the believer's life. The believer is "to take heed" to the laws (v.3).

1. Law 1: leading another into sin brings judgment (v.1-2).
2. Law 2: forgiving others is essential (v.3-4).
3. Law 3: having faith is essential: one of the most powerful forces in the world (v.5-6).
4. Law 4: obeying God is a duty, not a service (v.7-10).

1 (17:1-2) **Sin, Leading Others—Stumbling Blocks**: the first law is a severe warning: leading another person into sin brings heavy judgment. Note several facts.

1. The Lord was speaking to His disciples. The disciple had to guard against this grave sin. He was always subject to temptation, and if he yielded, he was going to mislead others. No sin will be condemned any more than the sin of misleading others into sin.
2. Sin is inevitable. Note the exact words of Jesus, "It is impossible but that offences will come."

> **Thought 1.** Sin enters the world. Sin enters the business, the office, the marketplace, the play field, the club, even the home and the church. No place ever escapes sin, for no person is perfect. Wherever a person is, there is sin. No person is without sin.

3. Committing sin is a terrible thing, but leading others to sin is even more terrible. The word "offend" means to be a stumbling block; to bait, lure, and trip someone (see note, *Offend*—Mt.17:27 for more discussion). Who are these, the ones who cause others to stumble? In one simple statement, it is anyone who *practices sin*, who *continues in sin*.
   a. A stumbling block is anyone who *seduces others to sin*. Many persons seduce others into the sins…
      - of grumbling, complaining, and criticizing.
      - of taking sides against others.
      - of being worldly and materialistic.
      - of craving more and more.
      - of being conceited and prideful.
      - of living loose and immoral lives.
      - of cursing and talking filthy.

b. A stumbling block is anyone who *makes a false profession*, anyone who claims to be a follower of Christ, but who is not. The person who makes a false profession scandalizes the name of Christ. He is a hypocrite who causes others to stay away and to detest Christ and the church. False professors not only shut themselves out of the kingdom, but they lead their children into a false, hypocritical religion which shuts them out. The false professor causes others to say they want nothing to do with the church because it is full of hypocrites.

c. A stumbling block is anyone who *discourages a person* from following and serving Christ by...
   - word or deed
   - abuse or neglect
   - persecution or injury
   - gossip or slander
   - anger or hostility

4. Leading others to sin is heavily condemned (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.17:2).

"And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea" (Mk.9:42).

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Ro.14:15).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).

"Give none offence" (1 Cor.10:32).

"Giving no offence in any thing" (2 Cor.6:3).

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him" (1 Jn.2:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:2) **Millstone** (monos onikos): the word *onos* is the word for a donkey. The word *mulos* is the word for the millstone that the donkey pulled around and around to grind the grain. Thus, the millstone Jesus spoke of is the huge millstone, not the small hand millstone used by the women to grind a little grain at a time. Note: the very fact that Jesus chose the huge millstone shows how great this sin is. The person would be held to the bottom of the sea by the most awful and terrible weight. The sin of leading others astray is the most awful sin that can be committed. Jesus is stressing that its condemnation will be awful and terrible.

2 (17:3-4) **Forgiveness—Church, Discipline—Rebuke**: the second law is that forgiving others is essential. Note the words, "Take heed to yourselves." What Jesus said was of critical importance. If a person sins against us, we are to rebuke him; but if he repents, we are to forgive him. The point is strong. There is to be no sense of unforgiveness among God's people, no matter how grave the sin against us, no matter how big a stumbling block is put in our path (cp. v.1-2).

The word "rebuke" (epitimeson) is important. It means to charge, to be emphatic with. The believer is to confront the person who *offends* and puts a *stumbling block* in his way. We are to do what we can to correct an offending brother, but the correction is to be done in love and compassion, not in a censoring and judgmental spirit. The whole theme of this instruction is forgiveness, which means that a spirit of love and compassion exists. The instruction does not mean that the believer is weak or indifferent to sin, but rather that he responds to being mistreated by being loving and compassionate.

Thought 1. Believers are to correct those who sin against them and do them wrong. To allow sin to continue is to indulge and to give license to sin, and the last thing God wants is for sin to be indulged in and given the license to run wild.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Th.5:14).

"Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Th.3:15).

"Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity" (1 Tim.5:1-2).

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim.4:2).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit.2:15).

"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject" (Tit.3:10).

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him" (Heb.12:5).

"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jn.7:7).

"I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you" (1 Cor.4:14).

"Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities" (Ps.141:5).

"But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof" (Pr.1:25).

"He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth" (Pr.10:17).

"Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish" (Pr.12:1).

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent" (Pr.15:5).

"Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die" (Pr.15:10).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools" (Eccl.7:5).

"They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly" (Amos 5:10).

The command to forgive is also strong. In fact, this is one of the most beautiful pictures of God's unlimited forgiveness. He continues to forgive and forgive. True, the believer does not have license to sin; the Bible is very clear about this (Ro.6:1-2; Gal.5:13; 1 Pt.2:16). The believer is not to take advantage of the forgiveness of God, for judgment awaits the person who so abuses the grace of God. However, the Bible is equally strong in proclaiming that God forgives and forgives the believer who truly repents—even if he sins time and again. It is God's unlimited forgiveness that requires the believer to forgive anyone who offends him and truly repents—even if the believer has to forgive the offender seven times a day for having wronged him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28.)

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt.5:7).

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mk.11:25).

"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Lk.6:36).

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph.4:32).

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:13).

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart" (Pr.3:3).

"The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh" (Pr.11:17).

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (Hos.12:6).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

3 (17:5-6) **Faith—Boldness**: the third law is that faith is essential; faith is a powerful force. The disciples realized something: their faith was weak—too weak to ever live like Jesus was talking about. He was insisting on a faith so strong that they would...

- be free from ever causing another person to stumble.
- be so loving and compassionate they could forgive a person time and again, even seven times in a single day.

They knew that they desperately needed greater faith in the power and love of Christ, that the power and love of Christ would infill and permeate their whole beings. They knew that they had to believe and trust His presence more and more. Note what Jesus answered.

1. Genuine faith is what is needed, not great faith. The stress is not quantity, not on how much faith a person has. It is not a matter of *increasing faith*; it is a matter of *possessing* and *having* faith. It is a matter of *genuine* faith. The very smallest amount of genuine faith, a faith as small as a mustard seed, can do the impossible. Nothing is impossible to him who has a faith that is genuine, even if the faith is the smallest amount possible. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Mustard Seed*—Lk.17:6.)
2. Boldness is needed. It takes boldness to walk up to a tree and tell it to be removed. Imagine—to really believe that the request is done! We either believe it or not. It is not a matter of how much belief; it is a matter of genuine belief. If one's belief is genuine, then it is done.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:21-22).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(17:6) **Mustard Seed—Faith**: What did Jesus mean by "faith as a grain of mustard seed"? The mustard seed was known for its small size, yet it grew to be a very large bush (see note—Mt.13:32). Picture a mustard seed lying in one's hand. It is *real and very small*, yet imagine the potential for *growth and use*. So is "faith as a grain of mustard seed." Faith is *real and small*, yet it has enormous power for growth and ministry.

4 (17:7-10) **Service—Ministry—Faithfulness—Labor—Steadfastness**: the fourth law concerns obedience: to obey God is a duty not a service. There is danger that believers will become prideful and puffed up because of the gifts and power God gives, especially if they begin to live victoriously in faith as just described (v.5-6). Jesus used an illustration, making three points to combat this danger.

1. The believer is a servant, and a servant is a slave who serves his Master. (The parable is clear, but see note, *Servant*—Ro.1:1 for more discussion.)

2. The believer is to serve and obey the commandments of God until all the work is done. He is to feed the cattle and plough the fields, then in the evenings he is to serve the household by feeding and waiting on tables. Ploughing and feeding are tough work, requiring a sound and disciplined body and spirit. They require endurance. Note that the servant labors all day and all through the evening until all others have gone to bed. He goes to bed *after* all others have retired, and he arises *before* all others arise. *The servant serves his Master.* (What a lesson Christ lays out for the believer! How few serve the Lord so diligently! How many arise before others in order to spend time alone with the Lord, and then spend the last minutes of a day with the Lord after all others have retired?)

"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk.10:43-44).

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"And when they had appointed him [Paul] a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Ro.12:11).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:9-10).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim.4:5).

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:11-12).

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb.12:1).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).

3. The believer is to be humble in his service for the Lord. No matter what we do for Christ, it is our *duty* to do it. We are unworthy of the privilege to serve Him. We are to count ourselves "*unprofitable servants.*" No man can claim he has done all he should; we know this. We all come short, no matter how much we do or how great the work. There is no room for pride or arrogance or boasting. God commands perfection; therefore, He expects humility.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Mt.5:48).

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:4).

"Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Lk.18:14).

"Be not highminded, but fear" (Ro.11:20).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:5-8).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and gives grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

	VII. THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27	14 And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.	d. There was perseverance
		15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,	e. There was believing, being tested, obeying
	A. The Lesson on Need and Gratitude, 17:11-19	16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.	**3 The lesson on gratitude** a. All were blessed b. One gave thanks 1) Glorified God 2) Worshipped Jesus 3) Was a Samaritan
1 Jesus went toward Jerusalem	11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.	17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?	c. Most did not give thanks
2 The lesson on need: Ten lepers were healed[DSI] a. There was desperation b. There was humility c. There was a cry for mercy	12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: 13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.	18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. 19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.	d. The one who was the most rejected was the most thankful e. The thankful one shall be the one assured of salvation

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

A. The Lesson on Need and Gratitude, 17:11-19

(17:11-19) **Introduction**: this passage teaches two powerful lessons, one on how to have needs met and the other on gratitude.

1. Jesus went toward Jerusalem (v.11).
2. The lesson on need: ten lepers are healed (v.12-14).
3. The lesson on gratitude (v.15-19).

1 (17:11) **Jesus Christ, Purpose**: Jesus went toward Jerusalem. His face was set to fulfill His purpose on earth: to die *for* man (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:51; note—13:22).

2 (17:12-14) **Need—Cleansing—Faith—Perseverance—Prayer, Answer**: the lesson on need—ten lepers are healed. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Leper*—Lk.17:12-14.) There were five things that led to their need's being met.

1. There was desperation. The men had leprosy, the most feared disease of that day (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Leprosy*—Lk.17:12-14). They met Jesus as He was entering the city, coming in from a long journey. The lepers had no idea where He was going: He could have been heading for an important meeting, or been tired and exhausted, or had no time for interruptions; but the lepers did not care. They were so desperate they would interrupt Him no matter what.

Thought 1. One thing is basic to having a need met: a sense of desperation. When we sense a need so desperately that nothing can stop us from reaching Jesus, our needs will be met.

"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).
"For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).
"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

2. There was humility. Note: they "stood afar off." They respected the law which demanded they stand at least six feet away from a person. These lepers were, of course, many yards away from Jesus because of the large crowd's following Him. They showed a great respect for the law by remaining on the outskirts of the crowd. On other occasions those seeking healing had ignored the law, bursting through crowds and running up to Jesus. Jesus was bound to note their humility and their acknowledgment of being unclean.

Thought 1. Every man must recognize his uncleanness in approaching Jesus. He must come in humility...
⇒ *confessing unworthiness* to approach One so holy.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).
"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).
"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).

⇒ *confessing need* for the cleansing touch of the Holy One of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. There was a cry for mercy. Note two things.
   a. They called Jesus "Master." The Greek word for "Master" is not *Rabbi*, the Teacher; but it is *epistata*, which means the Chief, the Commander, the Overseer, the One who has the power to meet needs. Note: the need is not for instruction (Rabbi) but for healing. By healing, they meant both the cleansing of their physical bodies and the spiritual sin which had caused their disease. The Jews always connected leprosy with sin, so this is definitely what they meant. They recognized Jesus to be the Master who could cleanse both the body and spirit, who could give them both healing and forgiveness of sins.
   b. They cried out for mercy. They did not ask only for physical healing; they asked for spiritual healing, for the forgiveness of sins as well. They cried out for mercy upon all of their being.

> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed" (Ps.6:1-2).**
>
> **"Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me" (Ps.27:7).**
>
> **"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps.34:6).**
>
> **"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions" (Ps.51:1).**
>
> **"Show us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation" (Ps.85:7).**
>
> **"My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him" (Ps.89:28).**
>
> **"The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Ps.103:8).**
>
> **"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).**
>
> **"Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight" (Ps.119:77).**
>
> **"Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceeding filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud" (Ps.123:3-4).**
>
> **"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).**

4. There was perseverance. Jesus did not notice them immediately. He ignored their cry in order to test them. They needed to cry and cry for mercy in order to show their sincerity and to build up their sense of need. These two things are important to note. God does not always answer our prayers immediately. Sometimes we need to learn to trust Him more or to build up a greater sense of need and desperation. Forcing us to seek and knock and persevere does both. Once God answers our prayer, we learn to trust Him more. There is another crucial matter as well. Forcing us to stay on our knees and to persevere in prayer day after day keeps us in His presence. Deep concentrated prayer provides some of the sweetest communion and fellowship ever experienced, and such communion and fellowship is what God is after.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk.11:9).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**

5. There was *believing and obeying*. Jesus did not heal the lepers immediately. There were things they had to do, instructions that had to be obeyed, to have their needs met. They were to obey the law, go to the priest and report that they had been cleansed. If they obeyed the law and believed the Lord's Word (promise of cleansing), they would be cleansed. Now note: they were cleansed "as they went." This was a great legacy of faith to leave for succeeding generations (cp. Heb.11:7f). Think about the great belief they had in Jesus' word and power! They had to strike out for the temple to be inspected and pronounced cleansed—and they were not even healed yet! While they were obeying the Jewish law of cleansing, they were to be healed (Lev.14:1f).

> **"Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way" (Jn.4:50).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:12-14) **Leprosy**: leprosy was the most terrible disease in the day of Jesus; it was greatly feared. It was disfiguring and sometimes fatal. In the Bible, leprosy is a type of sin.

1. The leper himself was considered *utterly unclean*—physically and spiritually. He could not approach within six feet of any person including family members. "His clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean'" (Lev.13:45).
2. He was judged to be *dead—the living dead*. He had to wear a black garment so he could be recognized as from among the dead.
3. He was banished as an outcast, totally ostracized from society—earthly and heavenly. "All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be *defiled*; he is *unclean*; he shall *dwell alone; without the camp* shall his habitation be" (Lev.13:46). He could not live within the walls of any city; his dwelling had to be outside the city gates.
4. He was thought to be polluted, incurable by any human means whatsoever. Leprosy could be cured by God and His power alone. (Note how Jesus proved His Messiahship and deity by healing the leper.)

Imagine the anguish and heartbreak of the leper, being completely cut off from family and friends and society. Imagine the emotional and mental pain. There are other recorded instances of lepers' being healed (cp. Lk.7:22; Mt.8:1; 10:8; 11:5; Mk.1:40; and perhaps Mt.26:6; cp. Mk.14:3).

3 (17:15-19) **Gratitude**: there are five points to note on the lesson of gratitude.

1. All the lepers were blessed and should have been thankful. This was true of the ten lepers, and it should be true of every man. Every one of the ten should have turned back and given thanks. They had all been blessed by Christ. Note they had all...
   - recognized their need.
   - shown humility.
   - cried for mercy.
   - persevered.
   - believed and obeyed.

Their need had been met: they had all been healed. They now needed to turn back to give thanks and show appreciation.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.15:6).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps.9:11).

"And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long" (Ps.35:28).

"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps.67:3).

2. One did give thanks. He was a Samaritan, the most despised and rejected of the men. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Samaritan*—Lk.10:33.) Note what he did.
   a. He glorified God immediately. He shouted at the top of his lungs with the loudest voice possible. He *witnessed* for God. God had cleansed him and he wanted all to know the great mercy and love of God.
   b. He worshipped Jesus. Note that he fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus. This was both humility and recognition of the power of God in Christ, two essentials for true spiritual cleansing (salvation, v.19).
3. Most did not give thanks. They kept going about their business at hand. They did not stop what they were doing nor return to the Lord to give thanks. But note something: they did return to their former world, the lives they used to live.

Thought 1. There is a lesson in the behavior of the lepers. Christ expects us to return to Him continually, to return, glorify, and worship Him as the Source of our power and strength for life.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy" (2 Tim.3:2).

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Ro.1:21).

"Do ye thus requite [repay] the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?" (Dt.32:6).

4. The most rejected was the most thankful. Note the word "stranger" (allogenes, v.18). It means that he was a *"stranger* from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12). He had felt his need more keenly and deeply. He knew he needed to be saved, genuinely saved—spiritually as well as physically. Despite the fact that he had never known the real promises of God and that he had been without God in this world, he now knew God. His heart just broke forth to give glory to God. Jesus had saved him from so much.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col.1:12).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).

5. The thankful man shall be the one truly saved—spiritually. The verb "made whole" (sesoken) is literally "has saved you." The man was clearly whole in body. This could be easily seen, but one could not see the spiritual and inward cleansing. Jesus was telling the man that his sins were forgiven; He was giving the man the assurance of salvation.

Now note an important question. Had the nine been spiritually cleansed as well as physically cleansed? Or was it lack of being spiritually cleansed that kept them from returning to give thanks? Or was Jesus just giving this man a strong assurance of salvation?

We are not told, but one crucial factor is known. This man, the grateful and thankful leper, was the man who received *assurance of being cleansed and of having his sins forgiven.* The others did not. They failed to be grateful and thankful.

Another important fact to note is this: gratitude and praise bring assurance to the heart. They stir Christ to speak to the human heart, giving assurance of acceptance and cleansing.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"I said, LORD, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee" (Ps.41:4).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

	B. The Coming Day of God's Kingdom and Jesus' Return, 17:20-37 (cp. Mt.24; Mk.13)	and destroyed them all.	judgment will fall
		28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;	b. The days of Lot 1) Normal affairs will be going on
1 The coming of God's Kingdom	20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:	29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.	2) Suddenly, unexpectedly, judgment will fall
a. It cannot be observed		30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.	c. The day of the Son of Man will be the same: Sudden, unexpected
b. It is within	21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.	31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.	**6 The day will be a day of urgency for all men** a. The urgency illust.
2 The day will be longed for	22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.	32 Remember Lot's wife.	
3 The day is unknown; it is coming suddenly & visibly	23 And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.	33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose life shall preserve it.	b. The doom of turning back illustrated c. The one essential: Total abandonment
	24 For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.	34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.	**7 The day will be a day of separation**
4 The day cannot come until some things happen first	25 But first must he suffer many things and be rejected of this generation.	35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.	
5 The day will be as the days of Noah & Lot: Men will be occupied with normal, routine affairs a. The days of Noah 1) Normal affairs will be going on 2) Suddenly, unexpectedly,	26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.	36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.	
	27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came,	37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.	**8 The day will be universal, worldwide**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

B. The Coming Day of God's Kingdom and Jesus' Return, 17:20-37

(17:20-37) **Introduction**: the religionists (Pharisees) asked when the Kingdom of God was going to come. The Kingdom of God was the focus of Jesus' preaching and conversation. It was the topic of conversation being buzzed about by everyone. The Messiah had come and the Kingdom of God was to be ushered in. The religionists (Pharisees) in particular were interested.

⇒ They had heard Jesus preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." They wanted to know when it was coming, for it meant great blessings both for Israel and for them personally as religious leaders.

⇒ They had heard Jesus instruct His disciples to pray for the Kingdom of God to come. Their curiosity was aroused, and they wanted to know when to expect it.

Jesus answered their question in a very simple statement of two verses (v.20-21). Then, note what He did. He turned to His disciples (v.22) and gave them a dynamic message on *the coming day of God's Kingdom and on His own return*. It is important to see two things (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24 for more discussion).

⇒ Two stages of God's kingdom are covered here: the spiritual kingdom that is within a person (v.20-21), and the coming kingdom to be set up on earth when Christ returns (v.24).

⇒ The Kingdom of God and of the Lord (Son of Man) refer to the same kingdom (v.20-21, 24, 26, 30).

1. The coming of God's Kingdom (v.20-21).
2. The day will be longed for (v.22).
3. The day is unknown; it is coming suddenly and visibly (v.23-24).
4. The day cannot come until some things happen first (v.25).

5. The day will be as the days of Noah and Lot: men will be occupied with normal, routine affairs (v.26-30).
6. The day will be a day of urgency for all men (v.31-33).
7. The day will be a day of separation (v.34-36).
8. The day will be universal, worldwide (v.37).

1 (17:20-21) **Kingdom of God**: the coming of God's kingdom. When will it come?

1. The Kingdom of God cannot be observed (paratereseos). The word means to watch closely, to give close observation to (as in astronomical observations). The kingdom cannot be seen with the naked eye. This means at least two things.
   a. The Kingdom of God does not come with an outward, dramatic, thunderous show. It does not come in such a way that men say, "Lo here! or, lo there!" It comes with a silent, pervasive influence. It is coming, and its coming will permeate the whole world; but its coming is to be silent, not showy (cp. the leaven which silently permeates the whole lump, see note—Mt.13:33).
   b. The Kingdom of God cannot be seen with the naked eye. The Lord's kingdom is not of this world, not of the physical and material dimension of being. It is not the kind of kingdom men see when they observe the nations of the world.
2. The Kingdom of God is "within you" (entos humon). Some say this should be translated "among you." If so, then Christ is saying that He is the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. He is setting up the Kingdom of God among them, there and then. God is already beginning to rule and reign in the lives He is touching.

Others say the words mean "within you." If so, then the kingdom is to be looked for within the hearts and lives of people. The Kingdom of God is spiritual; it is the changing of hearts, the rule and reign of God within men's lives. It is the power of God to change a sinful, immoral, and unjust man into a servant of God.

> **"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:14-15).**
>
> **"And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God" (Lk.6:20).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).**

2 (17:22) **Jesus Christ, Return—Kingdom of God**: the day will be longed for. Note: from this point on Jesus began to speak to the disciples, but He was still dealing with the same subject: the coming of the Son of Man and of God's kingdom.

1. The Kingdom of God is internal, but it is to be external also.
   ⇒ The term the "days of the Son of Man" refers to the Messianic kingdom.
   ⇒ The Son of Man is the title used by Daniel when describing the kingdom of the Messiah (cp. Dan.7:13-14).
2. Men cannot control the Kingdom of God. This is a crucial point to note. They may wish to see the kingdom...
   - as being prepared by the hands of men,
   - as being close at hand, coming soon,
   - as being now—existing on earth with God's ruling and reigning,

...but man has nothing to do with its control. No matter how much men may "desire to see one of the days," they do not control even one day of it. They cannot create a single day of the kingdom so that they can see it.

3. What is it that makes a believer ache to see the Son of Man and to be with Him in His kingdom (heaven)?
   ⇒ tough and terrible trials
   ⇒ persecution, personal abuse, and mistreatment
   ⇒ divisions, torn families and social groups
   ⇒ death, separation from family and dear friends
   ⇒ worship, a close sense and deep experience with God

Now note something ever so wonderful and precious. In every one of the above situations, God takes His dear child and meets his need. God draws his dear child near Him to give His child a sense of His presence and care and love. Even if the moment for the child's death and entrance into heaven has arrived, God draws near and carries His child in His arms of love, carries him through the "valley of the shadow of death" (Ps.23:4). However, the point made by Jesus is not the closeness of His presence in the death of the believer. It is the closeness of His presence through the great trials and troubles of life that causes the believer to ache for heaven. God does infuse a deep desire for heaven into the heart of the genuine believer, and He does it often. Such a consciousness of God's presence causes the genuine believer to long and ache for God's presence all the time.

> **"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:12-13).**
>
> **"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him" (Ps.62:5).**

3 (17:23-24) **Jesus Christ, Return—Kingdom of God**: the day is unknown; it is coming suddenly. Some men will always be saying the kingdom has come and is present on earth. The kingdom...

- is here, "See here."
- is there, "See there."

Jesus said there is an *internal kingdom*, a kingdom "within you" which is the rule and reign of God within the human heart (v.21). But there is also an *external kingdom*, a heaven for which men shall long and not be *able* to see (v.22). The

external kingdom is coming "in His day" (v.24). When that day comes, it shall come suddenly and visibly, just as quickly and visibly as a flash of lightning.

Jesus was teaching an important lesson here. Since the day cannot be known, believers are to be busy about their labor for the Lord.

> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**
>
> **"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:27).**
>
> **"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things [God's kingdom], be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:14).**

4 (17:25) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the day cannot come until some things happen first. This was, of course, a reference to the Lord's death. Before the Kingdom of God could ever come to earth, He had to suffer and die. It was His death that would make it possible for His kingdom to come to earth.

> **"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11; cp. 1 Cor.15:22-24).**
>
> **"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:1-3).**

5 (17:26-30) **Noah—Lot—Jesus Christ, Return—Judgment**: the day will be as the days of Noah and Lot; men will be occupied with normal, routine affairs.

1. The affairs listed are the routine affairs of every day life. Men...
   - ate
   - drank
   - married
   - bought
   - sold
   - planted
   - built

This is just the point. Men will be going about their daily lives without giving any attention to God or to the warnings of coming judgment (see note—Mt.24:37-39. Cp. 1 Pt.3:18-22; Gen.6:1f; 7:11f.)

2. Noah and Lot were not men who had reached spiritual maturity. They were not examples of spiritual men for others to follow. However, they did one thing which others failed to do: they believed God's Word when God said to prepare for the flood and for the coming judgment of fire. Despite all their shortcomings and failures, all their sensual and loose living, when the Word came to prepare, they *believed* and they *prepared*.
3. The people of Noah's and Lot's day did not believe and did not prepare. They went right on with their normal routine, living and focusing their minds upon...
   - the world and its things.
   - the flesh and its pleasures.
4. The people of Noah's and Lot's day were caught unaware. Unexpectedly—suddenly...
   - "The flood came and destroyed them *all*" (v.27).
   - "It rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them *all*" (v.29).
5. God took care of Noah and Lot, the two who really believed His warning and prepared. He saved them from the coming judgment.
6. This is the crucial point. When the Son of Man returns, the world will be the same as it was in the days of Noah and Lot.
   a. Men will be going about their routine day-to-day affairs.
   b. Men will not believe God's warnings.
   c. Men will be caught unaware. Unexpectedly, suddenly Christ will appear and men will be judged.
   d. True believers who have really prepared themselves will be saved and delivered.

> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).**
>
> **"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness" (2 Pt.3:11).**
>
> **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th.5:23).**
>
> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**
>
> **"That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim.6:14).**

6 (17:31-33) **Jesus Christ, Return—Judgment—Decision**: the day will be a day of urgency for all men. These verses are applied by some to the destruction of Jerusalem and by others to the return of Christ. They are applicable to both.

1. "In that day" when God gives the indication that His return is imminent, a man must act quickly, not wasting a moment's time. When is the Lord's return imminent? When are we to prepare and act?

Jesus said *now*: "Behold, I come quickly." Since He is coming soon, there is no "stuff in the house" (v.31)—no possessions—worth our attention and loyalty. Christ and Christ alone is worthy of our devotion and attention.

2. "Remember Lot's wife." She illustrates the doom of turning back. She came close to being saved; she had prepared. She was faithful to her husband, listening to his spiritual warnings, walking with him through the sinful city (world), and walking toward God's designated safety. But she walked behind her husband, not by his side; therefore, she was able to look back upon her sensual experiences in the world of Sodom. When she did, she perished with the worldly. "Remember Lot's wife" who came so close but who tried to hang on to the delights of the world (Gen.19:26).

> **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).**
>
> **"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).**
>
> **"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning" (2 Pt.2:20).**

3. The one essential is total abandonment to Christ and the warnings of judgment to come. We must not try to save (live) our lives for this world in its worldly ways. We must not do as Lot's wife and the people in the days of Noah and Lot. We must lose our lives for *Christ and His coming kingdom*. (See outline and notes—Lk.9:24 for more discussion.)

> **"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:24).**
>
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

7 (17:34-36) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the day will be a day of separation. The point is clear: the day will come when all men will be going about their affairs, working or resting as usual. Then all of a sudden, unexpectedly, one here and there will be taken and the other left behind. The believer who has truly prepared himself will be taken home to the Lord. All who reject and oppose the Lord will be left behind. (See outline and notes—1 Th.4:13-5:3.)

> **"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).**
>
> **"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just" (Mt.13:49).**
>
> **"And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things?" (Mt.13:50-51).**
>
> **"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Th.1:7-10).**

8 (17:37) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the day will be universal, that is, worldwide. Note the disciples asked where His return and kingdom was to take place. Jesus used an illustration to teach that His return would be universal. The "eagles" (hoi aetoi) can mean either eagle or vulture. It probably should be translated vulture here, for they are the ones who gather universally as scavengers over dead bodies. Vultures gather where the dead are and feast upon them. Since death is universal, vultures are found everywhere. Therefore, the coming of Jesus Christ and of God's kingdom will be the same as the coming of vultures. He shall come to the whole earth, to the place where men die. The moral corruption throughout the world necessitates the Lord's return in divine judgment (see note—Mt.24:25-28; cp. Job 39:27-30).

> **"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mt.24:30).**
>
> **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev.1:7).**

	CHAPTER 18	while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear	He was hard & harsh
	C. The Parable of the Unjust Judge: The Secret of Prayer—Persistence, 18:1-8	not God, nor regard man; 5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.	d. The point: The judge honored her request because she continued to come
1 The great duty to persevere in prayer	And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;	6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.	**3 The lesson on persevering prayer**
		7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him,	a. Hear this point b. God avenges the elect who persevere in prayer*DS1*
2 The parable of persevering prayer a. The unjust judge b. The poor widow: Was all alone & persecuted	2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: 3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.	though he bear long with them? 8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?	c. He waits & bears long with unbelievers d. God will avenge His elect speedily
c. The silence of the judge:	4 And he would not for a		**4 The great tragedy: In the last days few will persevere in prayer & faith**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

C. The Parable of the Unjust Judge: The Secret of Prayer—Persistence, 18:1-8

(18:1-8) **Introduction**: the secret to prayer is persistence. This is the great lesson Jesus taught in this passage.

1. The great duty to persevere in prayer (v.1).
2. The parable of persevering prayer (v.2-5).
3. The lesson on persevering prayer (v.6-7).
4. The great tragedy: in the last days few will persevere in prayer and faith (v.8).

1 (18:1) **Prayer—Perseverance—Jesus Christ, Return**: the great duty to persevere in prayer. Jesus was strong and forceful in stressing the believer's duty to persevere in prayer.

1. This discussion follows the passage dealing with the return of Christ. There is need for perseverance in prayer, for praying over a long period of time and not giving in and becoming discouraged. God's people are to pray and keep on praying until Christ returns, no matter how long He may be delayed.
2. The words "to this end" and "ought" (pros to dein) have the idea of necessity. It is absolutely necessary that men persevere in prayer.
3. The word "always" means at all times. The believer is to develop a constant spirit of prayer, to maintain an unbroken consciousness of God's presence, to practice the very presence of God, to walk in a constant state of prayer.
4. The words "not to faint" (me egkakein) mean not to lose heart, not to turn coward, or give up, or give in to evil.

> **"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).**
>
> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**
>
> **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph.6:18).**
>
> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).**
>
> **"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).**
>
> **"Pray without ceasing" (1 Th.5:17).**

2 (18:2-5) **Prayer—Perseverance**: the parable of persevering prayer. The parable shows clearly the *power of persistence* even in the business and judicial affairs of men.

1. There was the unjust judge. He had no fear of God and cared even less for what men said. The idea is that he took bribes and gave favors to persons who held position and authority. He did not care for conscience or law, for morality or justice. He was out to fill his pockets and to gain honor and esteem, recognition and position from those who were influential, those who held position, power, and wealth (cp. Eccl.3:16).
2. There was the poor widow.

   ⇒ She was poor, without money to bribe the judge.

⇒ She was a widow, a woman all alone in a man's world, with no man and no money to secure legal counsel to plead her case.
⇒ She held no position or authority, no rights to commend her to the judge.
⇒ She was persecuted, being taken advantage of and abused by some adversary.

Note what she did: she let none of this stop her. She came to the judge and asked him to avenge her, to get rid of her adversary.

3. There was the silence of the judge. The judge did not move to help her. His heart was hard and harsh; he had no interest in helping anyone who would not benefit his career or fill his pockets.

4. The point is this: the judge gave in. He "would not for a while," but the poor widow kept on coming and coming, pleading and pleading. She would not let the judge rest. Now note the stress. The judge...

- did not fear God,
- did not regard man's opinions,

...yet he gave in to the widow, avenging her of her adversary.

Why? Because of her "*continual coming*." He could not get rid of her. She would not accept silence nor take *no* for an answer. She kept coming and coming. The judge said, "Lest she wear me out" (hina me hupopiazei me). The literal meaning is unless she "give me a black eye." The word can mean to *annoy* or to *damage a reputation*. She was persistent—refusing to let the judge go!

3 (18:6-7) **Believers, Avenged—Judgment—Prayer, Persevering**: the lesson on persevering prayer. The lesson has four points.

1. Hear the lesson. The unjust judge holds a great lesson for believers. Hear, give attention and thought to what he teaches.

2. God avenges His elect who persevere in prayer.

a. The elect are God's "own elect," the followers of His dear Son (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Elect*—Lk.18:7).

b. God will avenge His elect. This indicates that they are in trouble; they need to be avenged and delivered from being...

- ridiculed
- ignored
- slandered
- cursed
- criticized
- abused
- passed over
- persecuted
- injured

c. The reason God avenges His elect is because they persevere in prayer. They pray *day and night*.

⇒ They have great need.
⇒ They recognize that God alone can meet their need.

Therefore, they go before God as the just Judge of the universe. They are one of His own elect, and they cry day and night to be avenged of their adversaries (spiritual as well as human adversaries). They plead and plead their case before God. They do not let God remain silent nor let Him refuse His delivering power.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation [trial]: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Lk.21:36).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zech.13:9).

3. God waits and bears a long time; He is *long-suffering* toward unbelievers. This is part of His purpose: to have mercy upon all who can be reached, not willing that any should perish (2 Pt.3:9). Note a significant point: the believer, bearing up under trial and persecution, is a dynamic witness of the strength of Christ. Some unbelievers are reached, and eventually they turn to Christ because of the strong witness of suffering believers. The point is this: God does not always answer the cry of a believer immediately. God allows the believer to suffer trial.

a. A believer is allowed to suffer in order to be a dynamic witness to others. The presence and power of Christ is sufficient to help the believer stand faithfully.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.1:7).

"[God] who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor.1:4).

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation [behavior] of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (1 Pt.3:1-2).

b. A believer is allowed to suffer in order to become stronger and stronger in trusting and hoping in God (see note—Ro.5:3-5).

"We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:3-5).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas.1:2-4).

4. God will avenge His elect speedily; that is, in God's time He will act quickly, suddenly, and without hesitation. He will avenge His elect. His wrath will come upon the world.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Ro.12:19-20).

"[God] who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us; ye also helping together by prayer for us" (2 Cor.1:10-11).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).

"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:15).

"They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded" (Ps.22:5).

"In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion" (Ps.71:1).

"The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish" (Pr.10:28).

"And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).

"Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD" (Jer.1:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(18:7) **Elect** (eklektos): the chosen, the person picked out. The elect are the believers, the disciples of Christ, the people who genuinely belong to God (Mt.24:22, 24, 31; Mk.13:20, 22, 27; Ro.8:33; Col.3:12; 2 Tim.2:10; Tit.1:1; 1 Pt.1:1; 2:9. Also cp. where the word is translated "*chosen*," Mt.20:16; 22:14; Ro.16:13; 2 Jn.1:1, 13; Rev.17:14.)

The focus of the word is upon God's choice. There is no doubt about this, for the word itself means that God does the choosing and the picking out. But note: the choosing is for service, not for salvation or position (Jn.15:16). The believer is chosen to bear fruit (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8).

4 (18:8) **Prayer, Persevering**: the great tragedy is this: in the last days few will persevere in prayer and faith. Most will fall away. This is the implication of Christ. Note three significant facts.

1. Faith is the one thing Christ is after. He wants trust and belief in Him, in His Word, in His promises and warnings.
2. The greatest evidence of faith is persevering prayer. Faith and persevering prayer are tied together. The person who truly believes will be talking and sharing, communing and fellowshipping, living and moving with God day and night. The person will be praying always.
3. There will be few men of faith and prayer when He returns to earth. There will be some, but the number will be few.

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim.4:1).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:1-5).

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt.3:3-4).

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 Jn.2:18).

"How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts" (Jude 18).

"The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none good, no, not one" (Ps.14:2-3).

"For I beheld, and there was no man; even among them, and there was no counselor, that, when I asked of them, could answer a word" (Is.41:28).

"And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor" (Is.59:16).

"And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold" (Is.63:5).

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none" (Ezk.22:30).

	D. The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican: The Spirit Needed for Prayer, 18:9-14	tioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.	making him what he is
1 A parable of warning a. To the self-righteous b. To those who despise	9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:	12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.	c. He rededicates himself—he reaffirms his commitment
2 The scene: Two men are praying in the temple a. One is a Pharisee b. One is a sinner	10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.	13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.	**4 The sinner prays** a. He stands "afar off" b. He feels unworthy to face God c. He cries for mercy
3 The religionist prays a. He stands—prays only with himself b. He thanks God for	11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extor-	14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.	**5 The major lesson: Justification** a. A humble approach is heard b. A proud approach is not heard

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

D. The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican: The Spirit Needed for Prayer, 18:9-14

(18:9-14) **Introduction**: two striking things are seen in this passage—both the spirit needed for prayer and the spirit needed for one to be saved.

1. A parable of warning (v.9).
2. The scene: two men are praying in the temple (v.10).
3. The religionist prays (v.11-12).
4. The sinner prays (v.13).
5. The major lesson: justification (v.14).

1 (18:9) **Self-righteousness—Religionists—Self-sufficient**: this parable is directed to three self-centered persons.

1. Those who trust (peitho) in themselves; that is, those who feel they are completely self-sufficient and have no need for anyone else. They feel all they need dwells within their own bodies and minds. There is a feeling that neither God nor anyone else is really needed—not too often, if ever—as one ploughs through life. Note the pride and conceit in the self-sufficient.

> **"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).**
>
> **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).**
>
> **"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).**
>
> **"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).**
>
> **"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).**

2. Those who are self-righteous. (See notes—Lk.11:37-54; 15:25-32; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.2:17-29 for more discussion.) The self-righteous differ from the self-sufficient in that they are interested in righteousness and in God. The self-righteous can be divided into two classes.

   a. There are those who feel they are *good enough* for God as they are. They have done and are doing enough good for God to accept them. They think that when they stand face to face with God, He will never reject them. True, they do wrong; but not that much wrong, not enough for God to reject and condemn them, not for eternity. They go about life living as they wish, worshipping God only enough to satisfy their consciences.

   Thought 1. The vast majority of people are in this class of self-righteousness. Few men believe they will be rejected by God and refused entrance into heaven. They feel they have enough *goodness* to make them acceptable to God.

> **"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor.10:12).**

"If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse" (Job.9:20).

"I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me" (Job 33:9).

"Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?" (Job 35:2).

"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits" (Pr.16:2).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).

"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).

"Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest, I have not sinned" (Jer.2:35).

b. There are those who have a sensitive conscience and feel the need to give themselves to *good works* as much as is humanly possible. They work and do good in order to secure the favor of God. They believe their good works are what make them *good and righteous* and build them up in the eyes of God. Thus, they labor all their lives trying to build up virtue and merit before God. They try their best to make themselves acceptable to God.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:22-23).

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Ro.3:20).

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:9).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).

3. Those who despise others. The word "despise" (exouthenountas) means to set at naught; to count as nothing, as unimportant and insignificant. Such persons feel and act as though they are above and better, more important and significant than others. They shy away from, ignore and neglect, pass by and downgrade, criticize and talk about...

- the poor
- the unfortunate
- the poorly dressed
- the homeless
- the downcast
- the derelict
- the undernourished
- the sinner

"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13:41).

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Ro.2:4).

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:28-29).

Now note: it is these people to whom Jesus directed this parable. He both appealed to and warned the self-sufficient, the self-righteous, and the man who despises others.

2 (18:10) **Seeking God—Prayer**: two men are praying in the temple. One was a Pharisee, a religionist; the other was a publican, a tax collector who was a great sinner. Note two points.

1. Both men went to the most prominent place to pray, to the temple, the house of prayer itself. There is no better place to pray, no better place to seek God's face. Both men were seeking God's face right where they should have been.
2. Both men went to pray in order to please God. They were both seeking God, wanting God to accept them and to be present with them throughout all their life.

> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**

3 (18:11-12) **Self-Righteousness—Religionists**: there is the prayer of the religionist.

1. The religionist stood and prayed only "with himself." Standing was the posture used for public prayer in that day. But note the signiticant fact: he prayed only "*with himself*," that is, only to himself. He called "God" by name and addressed his words to God, but his words were not going up to God. They were not a true prayer. He was speaking only with himself and perhaps to others who could hear him. His time and words were wasted except for their personal value, that is, to build his self-confidence and social acceptance. As far as God was concerned, no prayer was being offered to Him. The man's so-called prayer was only a *formal prayer*. There was no true worship or personal communion in it.

> **"Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (Jn.9:31).**
>
> **"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (Jas.4:3).**
>
> **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Ps.66:18).**
>
> **"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they seek me early, but they shall not find me" (Pr.1:28).**
>
> **"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Pr.21:13).**
>
> **"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Pr.28:9).**
>
> **"And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Is.1:15).**
>
> **"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Is.59:2).**
>
> **"Then shall they cry unto the LORD, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings" (Mic.3:4).**

2. The religionist thanked God for making him what he was. Note several things that should be eye-openers to us. (See note—Lk.18:9 for Scripture on the self-righteous attitude.)
   a. He *thanked God that he had been kept* from the sins which people counted as *public sins* or *scandalous sins*. God had kept him from falling into the *great public sins*. He acknowledged that "but for the grace [strength] of God, there go I," and he thanked God that he had been kept from such terrible sins.
   b. He said that other men had fallen and committed such sins. He said that...
      - God had His hand upon his life and had kept him from sin, so he thanked God for keeping him.
      - God did not have His hand upon the lives of sinners, so he thanked God that he was not like such men.
      - God looked upon him as the favored one and upon the sinner as the unfavored one.
   c. He listed some of the *more serious* public or scandalous sins that he had not fallen into. He thanked God that he was not...
      - an extortioner: in dealing with others he had always been fair and just, kind and giving, rather than coming across as not being fair or as taking advantage of others.
      - unjust: he treated all men justly by recognizing, commending, and promoting them and their welfare. He moved to the side himself and pushed others ahead rather than running the risk of appearing unjust and demonstrating a bad testimony.
      - an adulterer: he was faithful and moral, never going astray in his behavior.
      - a betrayer or non-religious person: he was not as the tax collectors who sold their loyalty and religious privileges to serve the Roman empire, by which they betrayed their own nation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Tax Collector*—Lk.5:27).
   d. He listed two very positive and worshipful acts which he did.
      ⇒ He fasted twice a week. Imagine going without food two days every week just to seek to worship and please God. The religionist was as sincere as he could be about God and righteousness.
      ⇒ He tithed not only ten percent of his income but also ten percent of all that he possessed. Imagine!

   (Again, see note—Lk.18:9 for Scripture on the self-righteous attitude.)

4 (18:13) **Lost, The—Confession—Mercy**: there is the prayer of the sinner. Note three significant points.

1. The sinner stood "afar off." He was ashamed and embarrassed by his sin. He felt cut off both by God and man. He felt isolated and alone, estranged and separated, dirty and unclean. He also knew that others were embarrassed and shamed

by his sin, and he did not want them to be, so he kept his distance: he stood "afar off." But note: he is genuinely worshipping God, even if he is standing "afar off."

2. The sinner felt he was unworthy to face God. This is seen in two acts.
   a. He would not so much as lift his eyes up to heaven. He did lift his heart, but not his eyes. His sins weighed him down ever so heavily, for he had fallen into gross sin. He was a terrible sinner and he knew it. He was unworthy of the least of God's favors and he knew it. He did not deserve God's forgiveness and acceptance, and he knew it. He could not lift up his eyes, for he had hurt God too much.
   b. He beat upon his breast and did it often. Why? Because he could not help it. Sometimes he was disappointed in himself and angry at himself; at other times his heart burst with tears of pleading, begging God to forgive him. He was so unworthy that the tension, emotions, and strain burst forth.

> **"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Mt.11:27).**
>
> **"When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).**
>
> **"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Ps.34:18).**
>
> **"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (Ps.40:17).**
>
> **"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Ps.51:2).**
>
> **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps.51:17).**
>
> **"Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake" (Ps.79:9).**
>
> **"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Is.57:15).**
>
> **"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Is.66:2).**
>
> **"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).**

3. The sinner cried for mercy. There are two things to note.
   a. He called himself "*the sinner*" (to hamartolo). This is critical: he did not feel he was just "a sinner" like everyone else, which would mean he was also as good as everyone else. But he felt he was *the sinner*, the one who had hurt and shamed God more than anyone else, the one who was more undeserving than anyone else. There was nothing *good* within him, nothing to commend him to God, nothing to make him acceptable to God.
   b. He cried for mercy. The word "mercy" (hilastheti) is really the word for "*propitiated.*" He prayed for God to remove His anger and judgment from him. He deserved God's anger and judgment, but he begged God to turn His anger and judgment away. He felt he would die from the pressure within his chest unless God forgave him and gave him peace and assurance of forgiveness. He wanted to be reconciled to God; he wanted God to remove His judgment from him and to accept him.

      Now note: he knew the only way he could ever be accepted by God was for God to have mercy upon him and to forgive his sins. He had *no good* thing about him, no righteousness to offer God. If he were going to be saved by God, God had to accept him simply because he came to God in all the desperation and sincerity of his heart and begged God for mercy. God alone was his hope, and mercy alone was all he could plead.

> **"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation" (Lk.1:50).**
>
> **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5; cp. v.4-7).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**
>
> **"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Mic.7:18).**

5 (18:14) **Justification—Salvation**: the major lesson of these verses is justification. The words of Jesus are shocking, contrary to what the world teaches, contrary to the opinions of men, and even contrary to the way many believers act. The *scandalous sinner is the one "justified"* in the sight of God. Why? There are two reasons given by Jesus.

1. Because of what justification means. It means that a person...
   - acknowledges his sinfulness and unworthiness.
   - cries for God to have mercy.

The justified person is *not righteous*, but he is *counted righteous* by God. The justified person has genuinely cried for mercy and turned from his sin to God. Because of his cry and repentance, God has taken his cry and counted it as righteousness. He has accepted the person because his heart was really set upon God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; 5:1. Cp. Ro.4:5; 4:1-3; 4:1-25 for more discussion.)

> **"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mk.2:17).**
>
> **"And therefore it [faith] was imputed to him for righteousness" (Ro.4:22).**
>
> **"But for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).**
>
> **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).**

2. Because a proud approach is not heard (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.14:11 for complete discussion).

> **"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Lk.14:11).**
>
> **"A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit" (Pr.29:23).**

	E. The Little Children and Jesus, 18:15-17 (Mt.19:13-15; Mk.10: 13-16)	16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.	**2 Jesus wanted to receive little children & He called them to Him** **3 Little children are in the Kingdom of Heaven**
1 Little children were brought to Jesus a. By parents b. For Jesus to touch c. Against the disciples' judgment	15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.	17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.	**4 Only children are in the Kingdom of Heaven**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

E. The Little Children and Jesus, 18:15-17

(18:15-17) **Introduction**: What is it that makes a man acceptable to God? The answer had just been given by Jesus in the story of the Pharisee and the publican (Lk.18:9-14). Now Jesus gave a living demonstration. He took a few small children into His arms and sat them upon His lap, and He told everyone exactly what they must do to be acceptable to God.

1. Little children were brought to Jesus (v.15).
2. Jesus wanted to receive little children and He called them to Him (v.16).
3. Little children are in the Kingdom of Heaven (v.16).
4. Only children are in the Kingdom of Heaven. (v.17).

1 (18:15) **Children—Parents**: little children were brought to Jesus. Note three things.

1. The children were brought by their parents. It is not actually said that the parents brought the children, but it was certainly their parents. They were brought by parents who had already been blessed by Jesus, parents who had already heard Him and been touched by Him. They had been so deeply touched that they wanted their children to be touched.

> **Thought 1.** The point is clear. Parents need to expose themselves to the gospel; they need to be touched by Christ. Parents need to experience true repentance and salvation, and then they need to bring their children to Christ.

2. The children were brought to Jesus for Him to touch. The parents cared for their children and cared deeply. They believed that the thing needed by their children was the *touch* of Jesus. They believed that His touch would bring blessings to their children's lives. But the children were unable to come by themselves. The children would not receive the touch of Jesus unless the parents brought them. To these parents, the touch of Jesus was powerful.

> **"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs" (Jn.21:15).**
>
> **"Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children" (2 Cor.12:14).**
>
> **"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph.6:4).**
>
> **"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Dt.4:9).**
>
> **"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Dt.6:7).**

3. The disciples rebuked the parents, refusing to let them reach Jesus. They probably felt the parents were only trying to show off their children, and Jesus was just too busy for such frivolous pride. They made two serious errors in stopping children from coming to Jesus.
   a. They were determining who could and who could not be touched by Jesus. Of course, no man has the right to dictate who can and cannot be touched by Jesus.
   b. They were not grasping the importance of Jesus' touch, even for little children. Their understanding of the blessing and power of God was immature. No one should ever be stopped or discouraged from coming or from being brought to Jesus.

2 (18:16) **Children—Man, Growth Process—Creation**: Jesus wanted to receive little children and He called them to Him. There are at least two reasons for this.

1. Little children were formed in the mind of God. God is the One who planned for a person to grow from a little child. God cares about every stage of the process of human growth. Therefore, He cares for every single child. As the song says, "He holds the tiny little baby in His hands."
2. Jesus is love, and as love He cares for all, no matter the size or age, looks or appearance, abilities or capabilities. Jesus loves the person even if the person is only a *baby* who has to be carried in the arms of a parent.

> **"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28).**
>
> **"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).**
>
> **"Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps.100:3).**
>
> **"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Ps.127:3).**
>
> **"Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion" (Is.8:18).**
>
> **"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Is.43:7).**
>
> **"This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise" (Is.43:21).**
>
> **"Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not" (Is.44:2).**
>
> **"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (Jer.1:5).**
>
> **"The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech.12:1).**

3 (18:16) **Children—Kingdom of Heaven**: little children are in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus was saying at least two significant things.

1. Little children are in the *keeping* hands and care of God. "Of such [as these little children] is the kingdom of God." God is looking after little children, loving and caring for them, at least until they reach the point of deliberately rejecting Him and His righteousness.
2. Little children possess the traits that exist in heaven. (See notes—Mt.18:3; DEEPER STUDY # 5—Mk.10:15 for more discussion.)

   a. A child is usually dependent and trusting. He knows little and can do little in taking care of himself. To him *big people*, especially mommy and daddy, know everything and can do everything. The child trusts everyone; anyone can take the child into his arms, for the child has not learned to suspect the world. Everyone is a friend; no one is an enemy, and few are strangers.

> **"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children" (Eph.5:1).**
>
> **"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Ps.34:11).**
>
> **"Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Ps.131:2).**
>
> **"Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven" (Ps.148:12-13).**
>
> **"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl.12:1).**
>
> **"But I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.20:18-19).**

   b. A child is usually responsive and submissive. A child responds to an adult. He will come, go, pick up, do whatever is suggested to him. He will drop whatever he is doing, surrender whatever is occupying his thoughts and behavior and respond.

> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).**
>
> **"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).**
>
> **"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder, Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pt.5:5-6).**
>
> **"Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Pr.20:11).**

c. A child is usually obedient and learning. He will do exactly what he is asked to do and learn by it. He has not yet learned too much pride nor to act too independently—not while small and innocent. The terrible tragedy is, he is soon taught to be self-centered and pridefully independent just by the example of adults.

> **"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).**
>
> **"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph.6:1-3).**
>
> **"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Col.3:20).**
>
> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pt.2:2).**
>
> **"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Ps.34:11).**
>
> **"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Pr.23:22).**
>
> **"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).**

d. A child is usually humble and forgiving. He is not interested in prominence, fame, power, wealth, or position. He does not push himself forward. He does not want to *sit around* in the midst of a group of adults. He has not been taught to think in terms of *self-importance*, not yet. The child also forgives ever so easily. He can be disciplined, neglected, even abused; and before the adult turns around the child forgives and forgets (unless, of course, it is extreme abuse. We must remember that Christ is talking about the child in a normal, healthy environment.)

> **"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt.5:9).**
>
> **"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men" (1 Cor.14:20).**
>
> **"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou are rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb.12:5-6).**

4 (18:17) **Children—Kingdom of Heaven**: only children are in the Kingdom of Heaven. This point is critical to see, for Christ used strong words about some persons not being able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven: "[Some persons] shall in no wise enter therein." There is nothing, absolutely nothing that can get a man into the Kingdom of Heaven except receiving the kingdom like a little child. There is no one in heaven except little children, people who have become children of God. (See note, *Child*—Mt.18:3 for more explanation of this fact.)

> **"And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray" (Mt.18:13).**
>
> **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:14-16).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **(Cp. also Gal.4:4-7; Ph.2:15; 1 Jn.3:1.)**

	F. The Rich Young Ruler: The Cost of Eternal Life, 18:18-30 (Mt.19:16-30; Mk.10: 17-31)	23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.	d. He rejects sorrowfully
1 Example 1: The ruler		24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!	**2 Example 2: The wealthy**
a. He must acknowledge Jesus as God	18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?		a. It is difficult for a wealthy person to enter God's Kingdom
1) Ruler called Him "Good Master"		25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.	b. The misconception about wealthy persons
2) God is the only good one	19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.		
3) Jesus asked: Are you calling me God?		26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?	
b. He must keep the commandments	20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do no kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.	27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.	c. The only possible way for wealthy persons to be saved: God
		28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.	**3 Example 3: The disciples**
	21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.	29 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,	a. They left all to follow Christ
c. He must *give up* all that he has	22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.		b. They & all other followers shall be greatly rewarded
		30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.	1) In this world: "Much more"
			2) In the world to come: "Life everlasting"

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

F. The Rich Young Ruler: The Cost of Eternal Life, 18:18-30

(18:18-30) **Introduction**: many people think that eternal life is free, that it costs nothing. This is a false concept. Eternal life does cost. It costs a man everything he is and has. The message of this passage is probably the most demanding message ever preached.

1. Example 1: the ruler (v.18-23).
2. Example 2: the wealthy (v.24-27).
3. Example 3: the disciples (v.28-30).

1 (18:18-23) **Eternal Life—Jesus Christ, Deity—Needs—Self-Denial**: the first example is that of the rich young ruler. When the other gospel accounts of this event are compared, the ruler is seen to be young and rich. But it does not matter, not for the purpose Luke is stressing. The cost of eternal life is the *same* for all persons, rich or poor, young or old.

1. The person who seeks eternal life must acknowledge Jesus as God. The ruler called Jesus "Good Master." The word "good" was a word that was ascribed only to God. It was never used in reference to a man. This is critical to see, for it meant that the ruler was calling Jesus "good" in the sense that God would be called "good." He saw something in Jesus *like God*. It was not just flattery; he esteemed Jesus highly, probably believing or else coming close to believing Jesus' claim to be the Son of God.

Now note what Jesus did. The man had called Him "good," a word used only in addressing God. Jesus asked the man, "Why callest me good? God alone is good. Are you saying I am God?" Jesus is unquestionably claiming to be God. He was saying, "*If I am a mere man*, a good teacher, then I am not good and do not have the words of eternal life. *But if I am God*, then you can truly call me good, and I do have the words of eternal life." The point is this: Jesus told the man how to receive eternal life. He was claiming to be God, the One who could give eternal life to a person.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him" (Jn.14:6-7).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

2. The man must keep the commandments. He had asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" In his mind he had to do something, some great work—and he did. He had to trust and love God so much that he would keep God's commandments. He had to keep the commandments *after* he had accepted Jesus as God.

Jesus said to the man, "I am good, just as God is good; therefore, I am God. Now, once accepting this fact, you must obey the commandments and learn to love your neighbor. First, trust and love God, then trust and love your neighbor." Note two facts.

a. The man had to see that Jesus was God, and as God He was to be trusted and loved. Then he had to see that he was to love his neighbor *as* himself. Jesus was simply covering the two great commandments with the man, and He was going to show the man how desperately short he was. (See outlines and notes—Mt.22:34-40.)

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).

b. The man made a phenomenal claim: he had kept all these commandments from his youth up. He, of course, had not kept them, not like he should. He was sincere, but this picture of God was a surface picture. He was not perfect in all his dealings with men and women, not in the eyes of God. In fact, it was just this, the way he looked at men and the desperate needs of the world, that was his problem. He was not *giving* to help the needs of the world like he should. It was this that was keeping him out of heaven.

3. The man must *give up* all he had. This is exactly what Jesus said, "Sell, give all that thou hast and distribute to the poor." Was this unreasonable? Did Jesus really mean it? Could such radical action be demanded even by God?

Why not? Why would God *not* demand just this? Especially when the world is full of little children (and men and women) who are starving and diseased, without shelter or clothing, and dying being doomed to hell? And why are they in such a condition when there is enough of everything to go around, and the gospel that can save them is known? Let no one ever say that God does not demand the giving of all after a man has taken care of his own necessities. And let no one ever think that the doom of God will not fall upon the man...

- who shuts his eyes to the massive needs of the world.
- who hoards and banks his money.
- who lets money just sit and sit, doing nothing except causing men to say "My, what a rich man."

How empty words really are. There is but one question for the man who builds up and keeps: "Who do you think you are, God? Beware of God if you think He does not demand the giving of all you are and have to help the desperate millions of this earth." Jesus hit the very nerve of the man's problem: coveting—lusting after money, material goods, possessions, and wealth—instead of longing to help the needy of the world.

Note the glorious promise: give all you have and you shall have treasure in heaven and be allowed to follow Christ. It is *only after* we give all we have (beyond our own true needs) that we are allowed to enter heaven. That is the Word of Christ, His answer to the question, "How do I inherit eternal life?"

The man rejected Jesus—Jesus had asked too much. The man was unwilling to give all he was and had; he was sorrowful about his decision, but he did reject.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [give]; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev.3:18).

2 (18:24-27) **Wealth—Rich—Salvation—Needy**: the second example is that of wealthy persons. Jesus made three striking points.

1. It is extremely difficult, almost impossible, for a rich person to enter heaven. It is as difficult as a camel's going through the eye of a needle. Why? Because the rich man has kept his wealth, hoarded and stored it up. He has not served God by *loving his neighbor as himself.* The rich man has used his talents to make money so that he could buy the *latest styles and be called rich* by other men. He failed to use his talents to make money to meet the desperate needs of children (and men and women). The world desperately needs food, shelter, clothes, medicine, and above all, the gospel. It is no wonder a rich man will not enter heaven when most of the world is in such desperate need. Why would God accept a man who has wealth when that man would not take the time to seek and reach out to the child who was starving and dying both physically and spiritually?

Attempts are sometimes made to lessen the cost of the Lord's demands.

⇒ Some say that what Christ means is this: a man *must be willing* to give his wealth, not actually give it. This is tragic, for there is *no meaning in willingness*—no act, no true decision, no work, no evidence, no proof, no demonstration. Willingness is nothing more than a word. It is empty without action to back it up. A man who is truly willing does something. Conversely, a man is *not really willing* if he does not do something.

⇒ Others try to explain away the impossibility of a camel's going through the eye of a needle. They say that a sewing needle is not what is meant (see note, *Camel*—Mt.19:24). Again, this view misses the whole point. Jesus is saying this: a man who does not give all his wealth (beyond his *true* necessities) to meet the needs of the world shall find it no easier entering heaven than a camel does going through the eye of a needle.

Thought 1. Let none of us miss heaven or cause another to miss heaven by trying to lessen the demand of Christ. Any honest man—if he were responsible for overseeing the children of the world—would condemn another person who had the money but who let a child die of starvation or exposure.

Thought 2. It is time for us to be honest and let the Savior of the world speak with the force with which He spoke. The world is desperate. Children and their mothers and fathers are dying from the agonizing pain of hunger and disease, and the terrorizing elements of nature. They are dying without ever having heard of the eternal salvation that is in Christ. The rich, who have the talents to earn more than they need, must use their talents to earn more to save the children and adults of the world who are in such a desperate plight. Jesus said no rich man shall enter heaven who does not give all he has.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness" (Ps.52:7).

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch" (Pr.11:28).

2. The misconception about wealth. The disciples were shocked, thoroughly dismayed. Jesus was saying something diametrically opposed to what they and everyone else had always thought. They had always been taught (as have succeeding generations, even the church):

⇒ that prosperity (wealth, comfort, and things) is God's blessing.

⇒ that a person receives because God is blessing him.

⇒ that prosperity is the reward of righteousness and obedience.

⇒ that God blesses a person with the things of this earth if he is righteous and obedient.

However, Jesus was saying the very opposite: that a prosperous person will most likely never enter heaven; that prosperity poses such a dangerous threat to a person that his eternal doom is almost assured. The disciples knew that God would never put a person in such a precarious, dangerous position. They knew that Jesus was attacking the world's most cherished and ardent belief: be good (righteous) and you will be blessed by God (and the thought of blessing is always of material blessing. See note—Eph.1:3.)

They were shocked, thoroughly dismayed: Who then can be saved? The vast majority of people were threatening their own eternal destiny. They were dooming themselves. Since prosperity is not the reward (sign) for righteousness and the rich are barred from heaven, that means that the poor, too, are barred; for they are spending most of their time in dreaming about and seeking prosperity.

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God" (Dt.8:13-14).

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit" (Pr.18:11).

3. The only possibility for wealthy persons to be saved is God. Very simply...
   - it is impossible for a rich man to save himself.
   - the rich man must turn to God and love God and do God's will by loving his neighbor as himself. God alone can save a rich man.
   - the decision is up to the rich man. He can turn to be *with God* in eternity, or he can continue to live for himself now and can suffer eternal condemnation.

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:17-19).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

3 (18:28-30) **Reward**: the third example is that of the disciples. Note two points.

1. The disciples were examples of what Christ meant. They had left all to follow Christ. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23 for discussion.)
2. The disciples and all other followers of Christ will be richly rewarded. Note three points.
   a. The reason for the reward is clearly stated. They left all, gave up all for Christ, in order to meet the desperate needs of the world, and they gave up the most cherished things on earth: their property and family.
   b. Their reward in this world was to be *much more*. The Gospel of Mark makes it clear that Christ was speaking of present reward on earth (Mk.10:21). No true follower of Christ has ever forsaken persons or things and then been left alone and destitute by Christ. Christ rewards His true follower manyfold. Note: the reward is both human and material.
      1) The human reward is most fulfilling: a real and true fellowship among genuine believers. Christ knows when a follower of His has been turned against by those whom He loves ever so deeply. He knows when to send someone into the life of His followers, when to meet the aching need of His follower for true friendship. He more than abundantly meets the need.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:63).

"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Mal.3:16).

      2) The material reward is most assuring: the meeting of necessities and whatever else God wants us to have so that we can help meet the needs of others.

The idea that Christ was conveying is that of perfect care and security. Fear and insecurity cause us to crave and to be greedy for more, and fear and insecurity are most unhealthy and destabilizing. When we forsake all to genuinely follow Christ, He gives us the greatest peace and security possible: Himself and His power to provide our necessities. We never have to worry or be anxious again (see notes—

Lk.16:10-12; Mt.6:25-34. Cp. Lk.18:30; Mk.10:30; Eph.4:28.) There is much more in Christ than in any amount of possessions or worldly companionship and friendship. In Christ the believer has...

- happiness
- peace
- assurance
- satisfaction
- fulfillment
- joy
- security
- confidence
- completeness

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33; cp. Mt.6:25-34).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Ps.68:19).

"Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures" (Is.30:23).

"And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed" (Joel 2:26).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

c. Their reward in the world to come is to be "life everlasting." (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3; cp. Jn.1:4 and Mt.19:28. Cp. Ro.8:16-18.)

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me" (Mk.10:21).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

	G. The Prediction of the Cross, 18:31-34 (Mt.20:17-19; Mk.10: 32-34)	32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:	**2 The prophecies to be fulfilled** a. He was to be tortured & disgraced b. He was to be put to death c. He was to rise again[DS1]
1 The purpose of Jesus: To fulfill the Scripture	31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.	33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again. 34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.	**3 The disciples' response: Confusion**

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

G. The Prediction of the Cross, 18:31-34

(18:31-34) **Jesus' Death—Bible**: note that Jesus pulled the twelve disciples off to the side. He wanted to continue drilling into them the fact of His death and resurrection. It was through these two phenomenal events that He was to save the world; therefore, they had to be indoctrinated with the glorious truth of the two events.

1. The purpose of Jesus: to fulfill Scripture (v.31).
2. The prophecies to be fulfilled (v.32-33).
3. The disciples' response: confusion (v.34).

1 (18:31) **Jesus Christ, Mission—Purpose—Scripture—Prophecy**: the purpose of Jesus was to fulfill Scripture. Note three points.

1. Jesus said, "We go up to Jerusalem." This was His purpose, to set His face toward Jerusalem. By this He meant His death and His sufferings. The focus of His purpose on earth was to suffer for the salvation of men (see notes—Lk.9:51-13:21; 9:51-56).
2. Jesus claimed to be the Son of Man. He said that all things written concerning the Son of Man would be fulfilled in Him. He was the One who was sent to fulfill God's purposes on earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20).
3. Jesus said that His sufferings were the prophetic fulfillment of Scripture. In Him all the prophecies of Scripture are to be fulfilled. Note how this supports both the truth of the Scripture and of Christ. The Scriptures have to be fulfilled, and they have to be fulfilled in Christ. Not one jot or tittle can fail. Jesus was the Son of Man, the very One of whom Scripture spoke and the very One in whom all Scripture was to be fulfilled.

> **"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).**
>
> **"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Lk.21:33).**
>
> **"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure" (Ps.111:7).**
>
> **"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass" (Ezk.12:25).**

2 (18:32-33) **Prophecy—Scripture**: the prophecies to be fulfilled. Note the reference to the Gentiles. Jesus was to be delivered to the Gentiles. The Jews were going to be the ones to deliver Him into Gentile hands. This fact was to symbolize both the religionists and the world—both were going to reject and put God's Son to death. Neither could accept Him and His message of total self-denial. There were three prophecies in particular to be fulfilled. (Cp. Ps.22:1f; Is.53:1f.)

1. Jesus was to be tortured and disgraced, injured and insulted. There were four forms of disgrace and torture mentioned.
   a. To mock: to ridicule, scorn, insult, humiliate, defy, jeer.
   b. To spitefully treat (hubristhsetai): to reproach; to treat with insolence and contempt; to be outraged; to treat shamefully and despitefully.
   c. To spit upon: a sign of monstrous disrespect and gross insult.
   d. To scourge: to beat with a rod or a whip weighted with either jagged metal or bone chips. Thirty-nine or forty lashes were inflicted. The whole purpose of scourging was to inflict severe pain.
2. Jesus was to be put to death. In this passage He was predicting His death. We, of course, look back upon it. Jesus bore the sins of men, suffering the ultimate degree of pain. He suffered pain in an absolute sense.
   a. Mentally, while He was being tortured, His mind was bound to be upon why He was suffering. He was thinking about the sin of man and the problem sin had caused God. Imagine all the world's sin, the enormity and awfulness of it, consuming His mind. He was suffering mentally to the ultimate degree.
   b. Spiritually, His heart was being broken. Those whom He loved so much were committing a sin so horrendous it defied imagination. They were rebelling against God so much that they were killing God's own Son.

      Even more terrible, His own Father, God Himself, was to turn His back upon Him. Because of sin, God was forced to separate Himself from His Son (see notes—Mt.27:46-49; Mk.15:34). Jesus was going to

bear spiritual pain in an absolute sense (1 Pt.2:24; 2 Cor.5:21. Cp. Is.53:4-7 for a descriptive account of His bearing our sin.)

c. Physically, the pain of the crucifixion was to be more severe because of the mental and spiritual pressure He was having to bear. There is also truth to the fact that the more ridicule within a persecutor's heart, the more he tortures his victim (cp. the crown of thorns, royal robe, and excessive mockery of the soldiers). The fact that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God aroused the heart of the persecutors to inflict more scorn and torture.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour....Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5:2, 25).

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).

3. Jesus was to rise from the dead (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.18:33).

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).

"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:14-15).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:25).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).

"After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles" (1 Cor.15:7).

"[Christ] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:14).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pt.1:3).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:33) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus was to be raised from the dead. Covering the resurrection in the same discussion with His death did three major things.

1. It drove the point of the resurrection into the minds of the disciples. They must forever remember the resurrection. The death of Jesus was not the final word.

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2 Tim.2:8)

2. It foreshadowed the power of God. After His resurrection the disciples would remember, and the glorious truth of God's power would be reinforced in their minds and hearts forever.
   a. The power of God was victorious.

> **"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?...But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:55, 57).**

   b. The power of God did triumph.

> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**

   c. The power of God did conquer.

> **"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Ro.8:37).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

3. It foreshadowed the stirring that God's power was going to work in their lives.
   a. The power to encourage and motivate.

> **"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).**
>
> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).**

   b. The power to assure and build confidence.

> **"Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn.20:27-29).**

   c. The power to give courage and boldness.

> **"And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus" (Acts 4:29-30).**
>
> **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:8-9).**

3 (18:34) **Jesus Christ, Death, Misunderstood**: the disciples' response was that of confusion. (See notes—Mt.17:22; Lk.9:44-45 for more discussion.) Note an interesting fact. This verse says the same thing over and over in three different ways. The disciples were totally confused.

⇒ They understood none of these things. They *would not* accept nor understand the death of Christ literally. They refused to take His words at face value; therefore, they *did not* understand these things.

⇒ His saying was hid from them. Since they *would not* literally accept His words, they *could not* understand. What He said was a puzzle, a mystery, a riddle. The meaning was completely hidden from them. The word "hid" (kekrummenon) has the sense of completion in it.

⇒ They did not know the things which were spoken. They did not perceive, and they *kept on* not perceiving.

The disciples were familiar with the Old Testament, but they had never seen *within* the passages that predicted the Messiah's death. They were so intent on the predicted blessings that the Messiah was to bring that they were blind to the predicted sufferings. They could see nothing that could be accomplished by the disgrace of death; therefore, they had only a partial grasp of prophetic truth. (See note—Mk.10:32.)

Thought 1. When the Scriptures are not taken at face value—when they are not accepted for exactly what they say—the result for anyone is always…

- not understanding *these things*.
- having the *saying* hid from them.
- not knowing *the things* which are spoken.

> **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).**
>
> **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).**
>
> **"Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:20).**
>
> **"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).**

	H. The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus: Steps to Getting Help from God, 18:35-43 (cp. Mt.20:29-34; Mk.10:46-52)	before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.	**in seeking Jesus that would not quit**
1 Jesus approached Jericho	35 And it came to pass, that	40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,	**5 A man had the boldness to ask great things of God** a. Jesus stood still & called for him
2 A man had great need a. He was blind b. He was poor	as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging:	41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.	b. The man expressed his longing
3 A man had great hope in Jesus	36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.	42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.	c. The man was saved by faith
a. He believed the reports he had heard about Jesus	37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.	43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.	**6 A man had the appreciation to glorify God**
b. He acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah[DS1]	38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.		
c. He cried for mercy			
4 A man had a persistence	39 And they which went		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

H. The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus: Steps to Getting Help from God, 18:35-43

(18:35-43) **Introduction**: blind Bartimaeus demonstrated ever so clearly how men can get help from God.

1. Jesus approached Jericho (v.35).
2. A man had great need (v.35).
3. A man had great hope in Jesus (v.36-38).
3. A man had a persistence in seeking Jesus that would not quit (v.39).
4. A man had the boldness to ask great things of God (v.40-42).
5. A man had the appreciation to glorify God (v.43).

1 (18:35) **Scripture, Discrepancies**: Jesus was near Jericho, about to enter the city. He was on His way to Jerusalem where He was to die. His face was set to accomplish the purpose for which God had sent Him into the world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:51.) Jericho was only about seventeen miles from Jerusalem, so the journey was about over. The cross was ever so near, hanging immediately before His face.

There are two apparent conflicts among the three gospel accounts of this event that need to be mentioned.

1. The actual location where the healing of Bartimaeus took place. Luke said it took place as Jesus "came near" to Jericho; Matthew and Mark said the event took place as He "departed from Jericho." What happened was apparently what often happens in a big city. There was an old Jericho (the one so often mentioned in the Old Testament), and a new Jericho built by Herod the Great; or as we might say today, an old section of town and a new section. Matthew and Mark were apparently referring to the old or new city Jesus was leaving and Luke to the other city He was entering. There is also the possibility that the two blind men began to cry as Jesus entered the city. However, since they needed their faith strengthened by persisting, Jesus waited until they were close to leaving the city before hearing their cry.

2. The number of blind men involved. Matthew said there were two; Mark and Luke said one, and Mark gave his name as Bartimaeus. The simplest explanation of what happened is what often happens in an ordinary conversation when an event is being explained: the spokesman or prominent person is the only one mentioned. In this particular case, the prominent person was Bartimaeus. Therefore, Bartimaeus is the only blind man referred to by Mark and Luke.

Note: we do not know what actually happened. However when we get to heaven, God will reveal that what *appeared* to be discrepancies were only that, apparent discrepancies that gave us another opportunity to trust Him and His Word.

2 (18:35) **Needy, The**: a man had great need. The blind man was as needful as he could be, desperately needful. He had been blind for years, perhaps for life, with no hope of ever seeing. All he knew about things and people was what he could imagine from touching and hearing and tasting. The only places he could go were the places where people led him or else where he could safely feel his way along. Even then he would sometimes stumble and fall. He was doomed to live in total darkness, never to see anything but pitch black as long as he lived. The worst fact of all was that he knew it. He had to live with the knowledge that he was doomed to a world of darkness. It preyed and preyed upon his mind. He knew that he could never be normal, never fit in, and never be fully accepted by normal people.

He was also poor. He had to beg to survive, and he suffered the humiliation of being a beggar every day. There was no one to care for him—not family or neighbor or social group. He was left on his own, entirely alone in fending for himself and struggling for survival. How many days he must have gone to bed hungry, his stomach suffering sharp pains or nausea from lack of food. He was desperately needful, and he knew it.

3 (18:36-38) **Seeking Jesus—Hope**: a man had great hope in Jesus. As the blind man sat by the wayside, he heard all kinds of commotion throughout the day. The road was a major highway, one of the major commercial routes of the day. During this particular time, pilgrims from all over the known world were flooding the road; therefore the commotion was noisier and more hectic than usual. All of a sudden, the blind man heard a huge throng of people passing by. When he asked about the crowd, someone told him Jesus of Nazareth was coming.

1. The blind man had heard about Jesus of Nazareth, and he had *believed the reports* about Him. Apparently the blind man hoped for "the consolation of Israel." As soon as he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he knew who Jesus was and he began to cry out immediately. This tells us that he had already been thinking about the possibility of Jesus' coming his way. Hope had already risen in his heart, and now, despite the fact that he could not see, the opportunity of his life stared him in the face. The point to note is this: he had already *believed the report* that the Messiah had come. Belief had already been stirred in his heart—at least to some degree.

> **"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" (Is.53:1; cp. Jn.12:38; Ro.10:16).**
>
> **"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).**

2. The blind man acknowledged Jesus as Messiah. He called Jesus "thou Son of David." This term is used only two times in Luke (cp. Lk.20:41). It was a title of the Messiah. (See *notes*—Lk.3:24-31; DEEPER STUDY # 1—18:38; note—7:21-23.) It was an inadequate concept of Jesus, although it was a true fact. He was the Son of David predicted from the beginning, but He was more, much more. He was the very Son of God Himself. But note: the blind man approached Jesus with what knowledge he had. He used what he understood and cried out to Jesus in his desperate need.

> **Thought 1.** All a man needs to do is *use what knowledge* he has and call out to God. God will help a man grow in knowledge as the man continues to seek God's help, no matter the need.

> **"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).**
>
> **"Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore" (Ps.105:4).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger" (Zeph.2:3).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**

3. The blind man cried for mercy. This is significant. He was blind and poor and he had to beg for daily survival. But note: he did not cry for food, clothing, or shelter. The basic necessities of life were not his primary concern. The mercy of God upon his life was his concern.

> **"And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation" (Lk.1:50).**
>
> **"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified" (Lk.18:13-14).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**
>
> **"Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed: my soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, how long?" (Ps.6:2-3).**
>
> **"Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me" (Ps.27:7).**
>
> **"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions" (Ps.51:1).**
>
> **"Show us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation" (Ps.85:7).**
>
> **"Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is my delight" (Ps.119:77).**
>
> **"And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil" (Joel 2:13).**
>
> **"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me" (Mic.7:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:38) **Jesus Christ, Titles, Son of David**: the title the Son of David is a common title throughout the Bible. (Cp. Mt.12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Acts 2:29-36; Ro.1:3; 2 Tim.2:8; Rev.22:16.) It was the common title and popular concept of the Messiah. Generation after generation of Jews longed and looked for the promised deliverer of Israel. The people expected Him to be a great general who would deliver and restore the nation to its greatness. In fact, they expected Him to make the nation the center of universal rule. Under God He would conquer the world and center the glory and majesty of God Himself in Jerusalem. From His throne, the throne of David, He (the Son of David, the Messiah) would execute "the Messianic fire of judgment" upon the nations and people of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER

STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; 22:42; Lk.7:21-23. Referring to these notes will show what the Jewish concept of the Messiah was.)

4 (18:39) **Persistence**: a man had a persistence that would not quit. This is an excellent example of the kind of persistence that gets help from God.

1. Some of the people with Jesus rebuked the blind man. They tried to silence and stop him from crying out to the Lord. Why we are not told, but they did oppose him. He had every reason to be discouraged, for he was blind and could not see to make his way through the crowd. All he could do was shout out, and some were even trying to stop him from doing that. He could have easily quit and given up, for it seemed so useless.

2. Note what he did: he "cried so much the more." He would not quit and would not be silenced. Jesus was his hope, the only chance he had for mercy. No other man could have mercy upon him or meet his need. They might feed, clothe, and house him; but they could not meet the crying need of his heart, the blindness of his eyes and spirit. His faith in Jesus was strong; therefore, he was not to be stopped. His faith fought against all odds: the opposition of the crowd and the noise above which he had to be heard. His faith cried out louder and louder, desperately hoping that God would help Jesus hear.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**
>
> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).**

Thought 1. Perseverance—resisting and standing against all odds—is the answer to being helped by God. God cannot turn a deaf ear to the persevering cry of a desperate need, not if the person cries and cries for help, never quitting. God has promised to hear and answer *undying perseverance* (cp. Lk.11:8-13; 18:1-8).

5 (18:40-42) **Prayer—Seeking**: a man had the boldness to ask great things of God. Note three significant facts.

1. The man's persistence caused Jesus to stop and to stand still. Imagine the scene. Jesus heard the cry and its sound of desperation. He stopped and looked about, standing perfectly still with a hush sweeping over the crowd until there was nothing but stone silence. Then piercing through the silence, the desperate cry came: "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me."

Thought 1. There is symbolism in the scene: the great need for quietness and silence for Jesus to hear us. There are times when the crowd must be silenced, hushed so that Christ can hear our cries for mercy. Nothing should ever be allowed to interfere with our daily *quiet time* with the Lord. How many of our needs would be met so much quicker if we persevered daily in a *quiet time*, crying out to the Lord for mercy.

> **"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps.46:10).**
>
> **"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab.2:20).**
>
> **"Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation" (Zech.2:13).**

2. The blind man asked for a great thing to be done. Imagine—being truly blind and asking a man standing there to heal your eyes. An unbelievable thing, yet the blind man believed. He believed in the One who stood before Him, *believing what he had heard*: that this Jesus was the Messiah who possessed the very power of God. He was able to do anything, so the blind man asked for the greatest need in his life to be met. There was no need to ask for anything less, for Jesus was the One possessing the power of God. And Jesus had called him to come forward and to ask for whatever he needed. It was a time for courage, the kind of courage that asks great things of God, even if they seem impossible.

> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn.14:13).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**
>
> **"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Is.65:24).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**

3. Jesus granted his request. He gave him sight and saved him. The blind man had taken three critical steps. He had...
   - believed the reports that Jesus was the promised Messiah (Ro.10:13-17, esp. 16).
   - cried out for mercy.
   - persevered and persisted and refused to give up despite all kinds of odds.

Therefore, Jesus saved him by giving him sight and saving his soul. This was a complete healing that included both the inner and outer person: the spirit as well as the body (see note—Mt.14:36).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

6 (18:43) **Witnessing—Courage**: a man had the appreciation to glorify God, the courage to become a witness for Christ.

1. Note that he followed Christ immediately.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children" (Eph.5:1).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

2. Note that he glorified God and caused others to praise God.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.15:6).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:12).

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

"Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings" (Ps.9:11).

"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (Ps.67:3).

	CHAPTER 19	Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house.	b. Jesus called him by name c. Jesus asked to be received d. Zacchaeus obeyed
	I. The Conversion of Zacchaeus: The Meaning of Conversion, 19:1-10	6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.	
1 Zacchaeus, the chief tax-collector—a man who was very rich	And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.	7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.	**4 Third, repenting, that is, changing one's whole way of life** a. He was a sinner b. He repented, changed his life
	2 And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.	8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.	
2 First, being desperate to see Jesus: Who He is a. He was thrust back b. He persisted	3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.		
	4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.	9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.	**5 Fourth, looking to Jesus as the Savior** a. The One who proclaims salvation b. The One who seeks & saves the lost
3 Second, receiving the invitation of Jesus a. Jesus saw him	5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him,	10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.	

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

I. The Conversion of Zacchaeus: The Meaning of Conversion, 19:1-10

(19:1-10) **Introduction**: the meaning of conversion is clearly illustrated in the experience of Zacchaeus. The fact that man can be converted should stir hope within every heart that truly senses need and wants to meet God as though face to face.

1. Zacchaeus, the chief tax-collector—a man who was very rich (v.1-2).
2. First, being desperate to see Jesus: who He is (v.3-4).
3. Second, receiving the invitation of Jesus (v.5-6).
4. Third, repenting, that is, changing one's whole way of life (v.7-8).
5. Fourth, looking to Jesus as the Savior (v.9-10).

1 (19:1-2) **Tax Collector**: Zacchaeus, the chief tax-collector, was a very rich man. This is the only time the title "chief" is used with a tax collector. Its meaning is not known. It probably refers to the head of the local taxation office; therefore, Zacchaeus would be responsible to the Roman government for the employment and management of the local tax-collectors and their monies. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.5:27.) Note two things about Zacchaeus.

1. He had all the pleasures and comforts of life which money could buy.
2. He was a man who would find it very difficult to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. His money was a serious threat to his salvation, as it is with all rich men. It was going to be difficult to give up all he had to follow Christ. A man tends to *love* his money and the things it does for him (see outline and notes—Lk.18:24-27).

2 (19:3-4) **Seeking Jesus—Conversion**: first, conversion is being desperate to see Jesus, just who He is. Note three facts.

1. Zacchaeus showed a desperation in trying to see Jesus. Despite his wealth and the pleasures and comfort enjoyed by wealth, he was apparently empty and lonely within his heart. This can be imagined because tax-collectors were bitterly hated by the people. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.5:27.) Zacchaeus was also small of stature, which means that he was probably self-conscious and felt inferior and had a low self-image. Being so little in stature, it was dangerous for him to be out in the midst of a crowd that despised him. From all indications he was denied passage through the crowd, probably being shoved back and abused. Therefore, his desperate determination and persistence is even more evident.

> **"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**
>
> **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).**
>
> **"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).**

2. Zacchaeus persevered in his attempt to see Jesus, and he had to humble himself to do it. Imagine Zacchaeus, a man of position and wealth, climbing a tree just to see an important person pass by. He wanted to see Jesus so badly he

forgot everyone around and humbled himself to climb a tree. He was determined to see the Lord, and nothing was going to stop him.

3. Zacchaeus had most likely experienced the stirring of faith within his heart for some time. He had heard reports about Jesus being the Messiah, and perhaps had heard about Jesus saving and calling Matthew, another tax-collector, to be one of His apostles. Zacchaeus had begun to *believe the reports* or at least to wonder and hope that the reports were true. His efforts to see Jesus and what follows are evidence of some stirring, of some hope that drove him to seek Jesus.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

3 (19:5-6) **Conversion**: second, conversion is receiving the invitation of Jesus. Note several points.

1. Jesus "looked up, and saw him." Jesus sees every man, no matter where he is: in the dark places of his sin and shame, in his home and work and play, in his seeking to know the truth. Jesus sees everything about a man, but there is one person in particular whom he sees. He sees the man who is seeking Him. Jesus sees him in the sense of knowing about his need and reaching out to meet that need.

Zacchaeus is an example. He was desperate to see Jesus, so he had struggled against the odds and found a place where he could see Jesus. Even though the place he chose meant humiliating himself and exposing himself to people who were bitterly opposed to him, he was willing to suffer whatever it took to get a look at the Savior. And, because Zacchaeus sought so diligently to see Jesus, Jesus saw him.

2. Jesus knew and called him by name. This was bound to strike Zacchaeus and be very meaningful to him. When anyone, especially a stranger, calls us by name, our ears perk up and our senses become more alert. Jesus knows every man's name (cp. Jn.1:48; Is.43:1). He wants to address every one of us by name, but we must let Him. We have to do as Zacchaeus did: seek to find the place and vantage point where we can see Jesus, then Jesus will see us and call us by name.

"And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (Jn.1:42).

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (Jn.10:3).

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor.8:3).

"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" (Gal.4:9).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Is.43:1).

3. Jesus asked to be received and to be received with haste. He was set for Jerusalem and must not delay too long. There was no time to waste. Jesus wanted to be welcomed, received, and entertained by Zacchaeus; but Zacchaeus had to act then and there. Jesus had only a couple of hours before He had to move on to fulfill His purpose. The moment of opportunity was then and there, that day. The next day it would be gone. There would be no pull, no struggle, no spirit of seeking within Zacchaeus' heart.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

4. Zacchaeus *obeyed*; he made haste and received Christ joyfully.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

4 (19:7-8) **Conversion—Repentance—Restitution**: third, conversion is repenting, that is, changing one's whole way of life.

1. Zacchaeus was a sinner. Note "all murmured." Everyone knew that Zacchaeus was a betrayer of his country, serving the alien power of Rome. And Zacchaeus himself knew that he was a sinner, both a betrayer and a thief, having stolen much from many. The point is twofold.

a. Zacchaeus knew he was a sinner and readily confessed his need for the Savior.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).**
>
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

b. The crowd, that is, the general populace, demonstrated self-righteousness. They did not like Jesus' eating and associating with a known and confessed sinner. Note: their sin was murmuring and grumbling and complaining—the great sins of Israel in the wilderness. They just misunderstood Jesus' purpose for coming to earth, that of saving sinners.

> **"And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk.5:31-32).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**

2. Zacchaeus repented and changed his whole life; he completely turned around from his sinful life to God and His way of righteousness.

a. He gave half his goods to the poor. He did exactly what Jesus had said time after time, and he did exactly what the rich young ruler had refused to do (Lk.18:18-24).

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:23-25).**
>
> **"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).**
>
> **"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).**
>
> **"Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Lk.18:22).**
>
> **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**
>
> **"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:17-18).**

b. He gave back to those whom he had cheated; he gave *four times* what he had taken. *Restitution* became the thrust of his life for the next while. Think of the people he had cheated, stealing everything he could from them. Imagine the list of people and how long it would take to track them down.

> **"Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found" (Lev.6:4).**
>
> **"But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house" (Pr.6:31).**
>
> **"I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed with judgment" (Ezk.34:16; cp. 1 Ki.20:34; 2 Ki.8:6; Neh.5:12).**

The point is that this sinner, Zacchaeus, truly repented. He was serious about following Christ and living righteously. (See notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30.)

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezk.18:21).

5 (19:9-10) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: fourth, conversion is looking to Jesus as the Savior.

1. Jesus is the One who proclaims salvation. He proclaimed two things:
   a. That repentance saved Zacchaeus, and that Zacchaeus would bring the message of salvation to his whole household.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk.16:16).

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

   b. That Zacchaeus was a true son of Abraham, a spiritual son.

"That he [Abraham] might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised [have undergone a ritual]; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also" (Ro.4:11).

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Ro.3:28).

2. Jesus is the One who seeks and saves the lost.
   a. The lost are the ones who are perishing, being destroyed, losing eternal life, and being cut off from God. The lost are spiritually destitute.
   b. Jesus, the One who seeks and saves the lost, is the One who sought Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus put himself in a position to see Jesus, but Jesus did the speaking to Zacchaeus' heart, asking Zacchaeus to receive him. Note: only after Zacchaeus received Jesus did Jesus save him. (See notes—Ro.10:16-17; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.1:18 for more discussion.)

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" (Lk.15:4).

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Ro.10:16-17).

	J. The Parable of the Pounds: Every Man is Being Tested, 19:11-27	saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.	500% receives 500%
		19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.	
1 Jesus tried to correct a wrong idea about the Kingdom of God	11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.	20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:	c. The believer who does not work receives nothing
		21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.	
2 He went to a far country to receive a kingdom, but He will return	12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.	22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:	
3 He insisted: Occupy till I come *DS1,2*	13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.	23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?	
4 The citizens of the world hate Him & reject His rule	14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.		
5 His servants are to be rewarded according to the percent of their labor *DS3*	15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.	24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.	**6 The servant who labors 1000% will be given the reward of the unfaithful plus his own reward** a. Other servants wonder why b. Because the servant was so faithful—ever increasing, 1 Cor.15:58
		25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)	
		26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.	
a. The believer who works 1000% receives 1000%	16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.		
	17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.	27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.	**7 The citizens who are enemies of His rule are to be slain**
b. The believer who works	18 And the second came,		

DIVISION VII

THE SON OF MAN'S GREAT JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (STAGE III): HIS LESSONS AND WARNINGS, 17:11-19:27

J. The Parable of the Pounds: Every Man is Being Tested, 19:11-27

(19:11-27) **Introduction**: the Lord trusts us; He believes in us. He gives us gifts and responsibilities to look after until He returns. He longs for us to be faithful and diligent in doing our duty, and He is going to greatly reward those who are faithful. But He is going to severely judge those who do nothing to help a lost and needful world. (See outline and notes—Mt.25:14-30 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus tried to correct a wrong idea about the Kingdom of God (v.11).
2. He went to a far country to receive a kingdom, but He will return (v.12).
3. He insisted: occupy till I come (v.13).
4. The citizens of the world hate Him and reject His rule (v.14).
5. His servants are to be rewarded according to the percent of their labor (v.15-23).
6. The servant who labors 1000 percent shall be given the reward of the unfaithful plus his own reward (v.24-26).
7. The citizens who are enemies of His rule are to be slain (v.27).

1 (19:11) **Kingdom of God—Messiah, Misconception of**: Jesus tried to correct a wrong idea about the Kingdom of God. Jesus was near Jerusalem. The disciples and people with Him believed that the capital of God's kingdom was to be set up in Jerusalem. They were very aware of how He had been talking about Jerusalem and setting His face like a flint for the city. They also thought that the kingdom "should *immediately* appear." They believed that as soon as they reached Jerusalem, Jesus was going to usher in the Kingdom of God, freeing Israel from Roman domination and establishing the rule of God over all the earth. In their minds the climax of human history and the beginning of God's reign upon earth was

at hand. They knew that with His power, He could do whatever was necessary to subdue the nations of the earth and bring God's righteousness to earth.

Now note, all their thoughts were upon this earth: upon the temporal and the worldly, the physical and the material. They saw themselves in positions of leadership and honor, as the princes and counsellors of state (cp. Lk.22:24-30; Mt.20:20-28; Mk.9:33-37). There is a problem with this concept: at most a person would enjoy an earthly kingdom for only a few short years of a life time. The disciples were just not thinking in terms of the spiritual world:

⇒ an eternal life which lives on forever.
⇒ an eternal world which actually exists.
⇒ an eternal world in another dimension of being.
⇒ an eternal world which is the real world.
⇒ an eternal world which is much more real than this physical world which fades away in its corruption.

Jesus had to correct their misconcept and teach them the truth about the Kingdom of God. In the parable, Jesus is the nobleman; the citizens are the unbelievers of the world; the servants are the professing believers of the Lord.

2 (19:12) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the Lord went to a "far country" to receive a kingdom, but He will return. The following facts are important.

1. The "far country" indicates He will be gone for a while. It takes time to travel a long distance and handle the affairs and return.
2. He has gone to receive a kingdom from the King of the *whole realm of the universe*, God Himself. The picture is that of Jesus' sitting at the right hand of God in glory while He and God discuss the kingdom and its affairs.
3. He is to return. He will be gone a long time, for the "far country" is a long way off. The discussions surrounding His kingdom, His rule, and His reign will take time; but He will return. The day of His arrival will come. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of Heaven*—Mt.19:23-24.)

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).

"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mt.26:63-64).

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Lk.21:27).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

3 (19:13) **Dedication—Ministering—Service**: the Lord insisted, "Occupy till I come." Note what He did.

1. He called His servants. They were already His servants and already belonged to His household; therefore, He believed in them, feeling that He could trust them. They were supposed to be responsible persons, completely trustworthy, for they belonged to the household of the Lord Himself.
2. He put His business affairs into their hands while He was gone. Jesus illustrated this with money (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Pound*—Lk.19:13). The Lord said, "Occupy till I come." That was all He said: four exact, straightforward, and powerful words. Yet, they were so full of meaning. The servant of God is to take what Jesus has given him and use it until Jesus returns. The word "occupy" (pragmateuomai) is a word of diligent action. It is from the root word meaning to walk, to set in motion, and to continue in motion. The servant is to labor diligently, never letting up and using all the Lord has given him to look after (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Occupy*—Lk.19:13).

Thought 1. Every believer is called and gifted by Christ to serve (cp. Ro.12:3f; 1 Cor.12:7f; Eph.4:11f; 1 Pt.4:10).

"Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (Jn.4:35).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pt.4:10).

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

"Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy" (2 Tim.1:4).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(19:13) **Pound**: the word in the Greek testament is *mna* which was a Greek coin worth about one hundred drachmai. One drachmai was about one days' wage for a laborer.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(19:13) **Occupy** (pragmateuomai): to do business; to get busy; to work for gain; to trade. This is the only time the word is used in the New Testament (cp. Is.35:3; Heb.12:28; 12:12).

4 (19:14) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Unbelief**: the citizens of the world hate Him and reject His rule. This, of course, describes the unbeliever who refuses to acknowledge Christ and surrender his life to the rule of Christ. It can also apply to Israel's rejection of Christ. Men are rejecting Christ every day. Why? Very simply because they will not let Him rule over them. They want to control their own lives, do their own thing just as they wish.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:43-44).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Is.28:12).

"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not" (Is.30:15).

5 (19:15-23) **Faithfulness—Dedication—Gifts—Unfaithfulness—Service**: the Lord's servants are to be rewarded according to the percent of their labor. The story is clear, but note these points.

1. Scripture is clear about judgment: there is to be a day of judgment.

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:31-32).

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim.4:1).

2. In the parable the Lord did return. The day of accounting did arrive. Every servant was called to report on what he had done with the gifts Christ had given him.
3. Only the servants of the Lord are pictured as appearing before the Lord. The three results illustrate the three courses of action taken by God's servants: being very faithful, faithful, and unfaithful.
4. The first two servants were both faithful. Both labored diligently, but there was a difference. One labored ever so diligently: daily, hourly, every day and every hour. He was always walking with the Lord, never slacking up or allowing the trials of life to hinder his labor. He worked to increase the Lord's property regardless of circumstances. He was 1000 percent faithful. The other servant was not quite as sold out; he did not strain and sacrifice as much. He was 500 percent faithful.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk.16:10).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Ro.12:1).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" (Ro.12:11).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:11-12).

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Pt.5:2-3).

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Pt.1:10).

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:14).

5. The two faithful servants were rewarded. But note three facts.
   a. The servant who labored 1000 percent was commended by the Lord, "Well, thou good servant." The servant who served 500 percent was not personally commended.

b. The servants were rewarded *exactly* as they labored. A city for each pound. *Perfect justice* was executed. Each servant determined exactly what his own reward would be. The amount or the percent of energy and labor put into increasing the Lord's property determined his reward.

c. The reward involved responsibility, the assigning of duties to perform for the Lord. The two faithful believers reigned with the Lord: they were put in charge of certain territories that included several cities or kingdoms. The point to see is this: they were definitely assigned certain areas of responsibility to oversee *for the Lord*, and the areas of responsibility were based upon how trustworthy they had been while He had been gone. This is the picture of rewards always painted by the Lord and Scripture (see Rev.2:26).

> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Mt.25:34).**
>
> **"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Lk.6:35).**
>
> **"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me" (Lk.22:28-29).**
>
> **"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:17).**
>
> **"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge [reign over, hold authority over] the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor.6:2-3).**
>
> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (Rev.1:5-6).**
>
> **"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Rev.2:26).**
>
> **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev.3:21).**
>
> **"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.22:5).**

6. The servant who did not work received nothing. Note two facts.

a. The unfaithful servant did nothing, absolutely nothing with what Christ had given him.

⇒ He had no vision of what could be done.
⇒ He had no sense of responsibility to the Lord.
⇒ He had no concern for the growth of the Lord's kingdom and property.
⇒ He felt the gift given him did not matter that much and was not needed that much.
⇒ He did not look for the blessed moment of his Lord's return.
⇒ He had a *false security*, believing the Lord would accept him and understand even if he did fail to use the gifts.

b. He tried to justify his behavior. He accused the Lord of being "austere" (austeros), which means sharp, stringent. He felt the Lord was too demanding and strict, that if he committed himself to the Lord's affairs, he would lose out on too much of the pleasures and comforts of life. But note: this was merely an excuse for his failure. He had chosen to live a life of selfishness and comfort and worldliness in the kingdom of the Lord without paying the price of helping to build it. He had been complacent and idle, doing very little. He had to cover up his failure or else face judgment, but his excuse was unacceptable. Perfect justice was executed again. "Out of thy mouth will I judge thee." The very excuse as well as the life of the unfaithful servant determined his judgment.

Note the unfaithful servant is called "thou *wicked* servant." He was not being condemned for what he did, but for what he *had not* done. He was moral and decent, a good and ethical person, but he failed to use his gifts for the Lord in building up the Lord's kingdom. His sin was the sin of omission, not the sin of commission. He was not actively working with the faithful servants of the Lord. He felt the Lord required too much, that the Lord was too strict.

> **"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).**
>
> **"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:14).**

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth" (Lk.21:34-35).

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter" (Jas.5:5).

"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:13).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(19:15-19) **Rewards—Responsibility**: moneymaking was not the purpose of the servants (see note 3—Lk.19:13). The purpose was to test them, to show how capable and responsible they were. Could they be trusted with responsibility, with the authority of God? The leaders who are needed to rule God's universe in the coming kingdom and world order must be strong and responsible. The dominant idea is that of testing, a time of trial. The Nobleman's purpose is to develop distinguished rulers: leaders that are decisive, firm, and strong.

It is interesting that the Lord spoke in the hundreds of percent—interesting that the one who really pleased the Lord exerted not 100 percent energy but 1000 percent, and the one who showed some fruitfulness labored not just 50 percent but 500 percent. Is there some significance in these percentages? Some message for God's people? Is there a servant who dares to waste a moment of time after studying what the Lord said?

6 (19:24-26) **Reward**: the Lord's servant who labors 1000 percent shall be given the reward of the unfaithful. Why? Very simply, because he has proven he can handle any amount of responsibility. He had taken a little (one pound) and used it to the maximum. He was as responsible as he could be. He could and would handle and oversee whatever the Lord gave him to oversee.

Note: there were some who objected. Who it was that objected is not known. Jesus simply answered that he who had labored ever so diligently to increase would receive more and more. But the person who did not work to increase would lose even what he had (cp. 1 Cor.15:58). If a man does not use his gift, he will lose it just as a man would lose his arm if he did not use it.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).

"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Lk.6:35).

"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (Eph.6:8).

7 (19:27) **Judgment**: the citizens who are enemies of the Lord's rule are to be slain. There are two points to note here.

1. The man who rejects Christ and His reign over his life is an enemy of Christ. He opposes and stands against Christ.
2. The enemy of Christ shall be condemned *before Christ*. He shall suffer doom, be slain, be put to death, and be separated from God eternally and spiritually (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Heb.9:27).

"But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.8:12).

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.25:30).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41).

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).

"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:5).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).

	VIII. THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4	even as he had said unto them.	
		33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?	
	A. The Triumphal Entry: Jesus' Claim to be King, 19:28-40 (Mt.21:1-11; Mk.11: 1-11; Jn.12:12-19)	34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.	d. He accepted the recognition of the disciples
		35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.	
		36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.	**3 There was the people's proclaiming Him to be King**
1 There was the constraint to go to Jerusalem: To suffer & die	28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.	37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;	
2 There was the deliberate claim to be King[DS1,2]	29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,		
a. He planned a dramatic demonstration in detail[DS3]	30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.	38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.	
		39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.	**4 There was the insistent claim of Jesus; He was to be proclaimed King by the people**
b. He used the title "the Lord" in laying claim to men's property	31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.	40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.	a. The religionists rebuked Him b. Jesus insisted that proclaiming Him King was inevitable
c. His instructions were carefully followed	32 And they that were sent went their way, and found		

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

A. The Triumphal Entry: Jesus' Claim to be King, 19:28-40

(19:28-40) **Introduction**: this was a dramatic picture. Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem began the last week of His life. It is what we call *Holy Week* or *Palm Sunday*. Jesus was unquestionably claiming to be King, but He was claiming to be a different kind of King, a King who was different from what men usually conceived. He was claiming to be the King of Peace, the King whose kingdom is not of this earth (Jn.19:36).

1. There was the constraint to go to Jerusalem: to suffer and die (v.28).
2. There was the deliberate claim to be King (v.29-35).
3. There was the people's proclaiming Him to be King (v.36-38).
4. There was the insistent claim of Jesus: He was to be proclaimed King by the people (v.39-40).

1 (19:28) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there was the constraint, the drive to suffer and die. Right after Jesus had finished sharing the parable of the pounds, He felt the driving constraint to move on toward Jerusalem. There the climax of His purpose was to take place. He was to suffer and die for man. Jesus was constrained, compelled with an iron determination, to complete His purpose. Jesus was driven to die for man. His whole spirit is pictured in the words, "Therefore have I set my face like a flint" (Is.50:7. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:51; Mk.10:32.) Remember, Jerusalem was only about seventeen miles away. The final events were now to begin.

2 (19:29-35) **Jesus Christ, Claim—Messiah**: there was the deliberate claim to be King. Note four things. (See notes—Mt.21:2-5 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus planned a dramatic demonstration in detail. The whole scene was to center around His riding into the city on a colt (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Lk.19:30 for discussion).
2. Jesus used the title "the Lord" in laying claim upon men and their property. "The Lord" (o kurios) is a strong expression; it is the same as saying Jehovah. Jesus was claiming the right to use the colt because He was "the Lord." The owner was bound to have been a disciple who would allow "the Lord" to borrow his animals. A man of the world might not allow the claim of the Lord to affect him.
3. Jesus' instructions were followed carefully.

Thought 1. Note a crucial point. The task given to the two disciples to go and secure the colt may have seemed small, but no task is small in the proclamation of Jesus as King. Fetching the colt was extremely important if Christ were to be proclaimed as King before the people. The task was essential.

4. Jesus accepted the recognition of the disciples. The disciples knew exactly what Jesus was doing. They acknowledged His claim by three acts.

⇒ They obeyed His instructions explicitly.
⇒ They used their own garments as a saddle.
⇒ They sat Jesus upon the colt.

The point is this: Jesus accepted their homage and thereby claimed to be the Messiah.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(19:29) **Bethphage**: means *House of Figs*. It was a suburb of Jerusalem, lying toward the Mount of Olives. Note that Jesus arrived in Bethphage by foot. This pictures the great humiliation to which the Son of God subjected Himself in order to come to earth and save man. While on earth, He had no means of travelling except by walking.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(19:29) **Bethany**: it was a suburb of Jerusalem, about two miles east. The city was the home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. Jesus stayed with the family when ministering in and around Jerusalem. One must remember that Jesus apparently had no home of His own. His immediate family did not believe in His claims (Jn.7:1-5, esp.5). He Himself said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt.8:20). The only housing He had was the home of others such as Martha and Mary (Jn.11:1f; cp. Lk.11:1f; Lk.10:38-42; Jn.12:1f).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(19:30) **Colt—Ass**: in ancient days the colt or donkey was a noble animal. It was used as a beast of service to carry the burdens of men. More significantly, it was used by Kings and their emissaries when they entered a city in peace. They rode a colt to symbolize their peaceful intentions (cp. the judges of Israel and the chieftains throughout the land, Judges 5:10; 10:4). This differed dramatically from a conquering King. When a King entered a city as a conqueror, he rode a stallion.

Jesus was dramatically demonstrating two things: first, He was unquestionably the promised King, the Savior of the people; and second, He was not coming as the people expected. He was not coming as a conquering king or as a worldly potentate in pomp and ceremony, nor as the leader of an army to kill, injure, and maim. Therefore, the people must change their concept of the Messiah, for He was coming as the Savior of Peace. He was coming to save men not to destroy them. He was coming to show men that God is the God of love and reconciliation.

1. The colt was a symbol of peace. Jesus came to bring peace, as pointed out in the above discussion.
2. The colt symbolized service. It was a noble animal, an animal used in the service of men to carry their burdens. Jesus came upon the colt symbolizing that He came to serve men, to bear their burdens for them.
3. The colt symbolized sacredness, for it had never been ridden before (v.2). Animals and things used for sacred or religious purposes had to be animals and things that had never been used before (Num.10:2; Dt.21:3; 1 Sam.6:7). This detail points to the sacredness of the event. It pictured that Jesus was deliberately taking every precaution to proclaim that *He is the sacred hope*, the promised Messiah of the people.

3 (19:36-38) **Messiah, Misconceptions**: there was the people's proclaiming Him to be King. Three facts need to be noted in this point.

1. The people praised God for all the mighty works they had seen. There were teeming thousands lining the roadway, throwing their cloaks down ahead of Him. (See note—Mt.21:8-9 for more discussion.) The people had just recently seen miracle after miracle including the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The whole atmosphere was electric with excitement and expectation. The people knew Jesus had the power to do anything: He could bring the Kingdom of God to earth.

> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**
> **"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).**
> **"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Ps.115:3).**

2. They proclaimed Jesus to be "the King that cometh in the name of the Lord." They thought the hour had arrived. Jesus was going to usher in the Kingdom of God *now*. (See note—Lk.19:11.) God was going...

- to free all the nations of the earth from Roman domination.
- to set up the throne of Jesus in Jerusalem from which the rule and reign of righteousness would be executed.
- to establish Israel as the leading nation of the earth.

> **"And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Lk.19:11).**

3. The people failed to see several things.
   a. They failed to see that Jesus was riding a colt, coming as the King of Peace.

> **"Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring [Christ] from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk.1:78-79).**
>
> **"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk.2:14).**
>
> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27; cp. Jn.16:33).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).**
>
> **"The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace" (Ps.29:11).**

   b. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal of burdens, coming as the King who wished to bear the burdens of men.

> **"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15-16).**

   c. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal that symbolized sacredness, coming for the purpose of saving the people spiritually. (See note—Eph.1:1-3.)
   d. They failed to see that Jesus was riding the animal that symbolized meekness, coming as the King of meekness.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:28-29).**
>
> **"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:23-24).**

4 (19:39-40) **Jesus Christ, Claim—Praise**: there was the insistent claim of Jesus. He was to be proclaimed King by the people. The religious authorities were hostile. They had already given the word to hunt Jesus down and arrest Him (Jn.11:57). Despite this threat, Jesus publicly and triumphantly entered Jerusalem. The great weight and importance of His mission, "to seek and save that which was lost," is clearly seen in such courageous behavior. (See notes—Mk.11:1-11.)

> **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**

Note the clear declaration to deity that Jesus made: "I tell you that, if these [the praising crowds] should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Nature did cry out when He hung upon the cross. The world and the disciples had forsaken Him, but the sun hid its face and the earth split asunder in a demonstration of the cry of nature (cp. Mt.27:45, 51-52).

> **"Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that moveth therein" (Ps.69:34).**
>
> **"Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel" (Is.44:23).**
>
> **"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted" (Is.49:13).**

	B. The Dramatic Prediction: Judgment Upon Jerusalem, 19:41-44 (cp. Mt.23:37-39; Lk.13:34-35)	eyes.	
1 The great love of Jesus for the city a. He wept over the city b. The city had rejected the way of peace; that is, it rejected the Messiah[psi]	41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,	43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,	**2 The terrible fate of the city foretold** a. Was to be encircled
	42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine	44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.	b. Was to be utterly destroyed c. Was to be personally judged **3 The cause of the city's doom**

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

B. The Dramatic Prediction: Judgment Upon Jerusalem, 19:41-44

(19:41-44) **Introduction**: this passage is covered only by Luke. It is full of prophecy and compassion, the prediction of Jerusalem's terrible fate and the compassion of our Lord for a people doomed to utter destruction. The truth of Scripture is also demonstrated in this passage, the truth that Scripture is God's Word. There is also the truth that sin dooms a nation, but righteousness exalts a nation and its people.

1. The great love of Jesus for the city (v.41-42).
2. The terrible fate of the city foretold (v.43-44).
3. The cause for the city's doom (v.44).

(19:41-48) **Another Outline**. A Look at Jesus.

1. The compassion of Jesus (v.41-44).
2. The anger of Jesus (v.45-46).
3. The courage of Jesus (v.47-48).

1 (19:41-42) **Jerusalem—Jesus Christ, Compassion**: the city was greatly loved by Jesus (see outline and notes—Mt.23:37-39; Lk.13:34-35).

1. Jesus wept over the city. Note three facts.
   a. The word "wept" (eklausen) means to burst into tears, to weep out loud, to sob, to wail, to mourn. Jesus was literally heartbroken over Jerusalem.
   b. The words "beheld the city" mean He was looking and gazing upon the city with deep intensity. He was looking upon, considering, regarding the city in all its tragic state.
   c. Jesus was weeping while the city was engaged in the excitement of feasting and fellowshipping in a jovial, party-like spirit. The whole atmosphere was like that of a present-day convention. The scene can be imagined. But while the people were in such a partying mood, Jesus was off on the hillside weeping over the city and its people.
2. The reason for Jesus' weeping was stated by Jesus Himself: the city and its people had rejected the way of peace, that is, the Messiah Himself. Another way to say it is, they had rejected the things which make for peace.
   a. Jesus was not weeping because He was to suffer and die in the city. He was not weeping over Himself, not yet. He was weeping over the city and its people, weeping because they did not know the way of peace.
   b. There are things which make for peace, things which bring peace both to the hearts of men and to the society and world of men (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.19:42 for discussion).
   c. The things that bring peace are "hid from [the people's] eyes." This statement has two possible meanings. First, the people closed their eyes to Jesus and His message of peace. They refused to see; therefore, they did not see. Second, God counted Jerusalem as having lost its opportunity. He had shown patience for generation after generation (see outline and notes—Mt.23:37); now the time for judgment had come. God hid "the things of peace" from their eyes. He turned Jerusalem over to their blindness (see notes, *Judicial Judgment*—Mt.13:13-15; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.12:39-41; note—Ro.1:24-25; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:7-10).

> **"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(19:42) **Peace** (eriene): to bind together, to join and weave together. It means that one is bound, woven, joined together with himself and with God and with others.

The Hebrew word is *shalom*. It means freedom from trouble and much, much more. It means experiencing the highest good, enjoying the very best, possessing all the inner good possible.

There are two kinds of peace mentioned in the Scripture.

1. There is the *peace of the world*. This is a peace of escapism, of avoiding trouble, of refusing to face things, of unreality.
2. There is the *peace of Christ and of God*. This is a *bosom peace*, a peace deep within. It is a tranquility of mind, a composure, a peace that settles and strengthens the believer even through the most terrible circumstances and situations. It is more than feelings, even more than attitude and thought.
   a. God's bosom peace is the *peace of conquest*. It is the peace independent of conditions and environment; the peace which no sorrow, danger, suffering, or experience can take away.

      "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

      "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33)

   b. God's bosom peace is the *peace of perfect assurance*. It is the peace of unquestionable confidence; the peace with a sure knowledge that a person's life is in the hands of God and that all things will work out for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

      "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

      "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

      "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

   c. God's bosom peace is the *peace of intimacy with God*. It is the peace of the highest good. It is the peace that settles the mind, strengthens the will, and establishes the heart.

      "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1; cp. v.2-5).

      "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6-7).

There is *the source of peace*. Peace is always born out of reconciliation. Its source is found only in the reconciliation wrought by Jesus Christ. Peace always has to do with personal relationships: a man's relationship to himself, to God, and to his fellow man. A man must be bound, woven, and joined together with himself, with God, and with his fellow man (cp. Eph.2:13-14).

Man secures peace in the following manner.

1. By justification (Ro.5:1)
2. By loving God's Word (Ps.119:165; Jn.16:33)
3. By praying about everything (Ph.4:7)
4. By being spiritually minded (Ro.8:6)
5. By keeping his mind upon God (Is.26:3; Ph.4:8)
6. By keeping God's commandments (Is.48:18; Ph.4:9)

The *subject of peace* is often divided as (1) Peace with God (Ro.5:1; Eph.2:14-17), (2) the Peace of God (Lk.7:50; Ph.4:6-7), and (3) Peace from God (Ro.1:7; 1 Cor.1:3).

2 (19:43-44) **Jerusalem—Judgment, Upon Nations**: the city's terrible fate. Three major things were to be involved in Jerusalem's destruction.

1. The city was to have a trench dug around it, completely encircling the city. The ditch and dirt mound shoveled from it served as a protective wall for the Roman army. Sharp-pointed wooden stakes were driven into the mound of dirt, sticking up facing the encircled city in the event that the city's army launched a counterattack. The city was to have an army launched against it in a full-fledged military attack.
2. The city was to be utterly destroyed. It was to be completely demolished and razed to the ground; not one stone was to be left upon another.
3. The people were to be *personally* judged. Note the words, "Thy children within thee" shall be laid to the ground. Also note that the word "you" is used ten times in two verses (v.42-44). The prediction is very personal. Cities and nations may fall under the judgment of God, but it is the people who are at fault and who shall be personally judged.

What Christ said was literally fulfilled by the attack of Titus in 70 A.D. In 66 A.D. the Jews revolted and the Roman army was swift to attack, but the city was difficult to take, primarily for two reasons. It sat upon a hill, well protected by the terrain, and the leaders of the revolt were religious fanatics. Well over a million people had fled into the city behind its protective walls.

As the siege wore on, the predictions of Christ were literally fulfilled. Outside the walls sat the Roman army with all the maiming and killing of war. Inside the walls neighbor after neighbor faced famine, pestilence, false deliverers (messiahs), betrayal, murder, revolt, rebellion, and hatred—and all took their toll. Josephus says over 1,000,000 people died and 97,000 were taken captive. He describes well the horrors of the siege (see notes—Mt.24:7; 24:10; 24:11. See Flavius Josephus. *Josephus Complete Works*, translated by William Whiston. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1960. *Wars*. 5. 12:3; 6. 3:4; 6. 8:5.)

"It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were" (Josephus, Wars. Preface 4). (See outline and notes—Mt.24:1-14 for a descriptive picture of the utter destruction of Jerusalem.)

Thought 1. Jerusalem is a prime example of the fate of a nation that rejects God. It is doomed to fall.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Ro.10:21).

"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked" (Pr.11:11).

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Pr.14:34).

"It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness" (Pr.16:12).

"Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness" (Pr.25:5).

3 (19:44) **Jerusalem—Judgment Upon Nations**: the cause of the city's doom. The people rejected the day of the Messiah or the day of their salvation.

1. Their day of visitation came. God had always visited Israel; they had the revelation...
   - of God Himself down through the centuries.
   - of God's Word, the Scriptures of the Old Testament.
   - of God's messengers and prophets.
   - of God's active presence in the lives of believers.

Now they had the very presence of God's Messiah, the Son of God Himself (cp. Ro.9:4-5).

2. They did not know Him, and there was no excuse, for they could clearly see that God was at work once again among His people. It had been three to four hundred years since the Old Testament had closed and the last prophet had appeared. The evidence was clear and strong that the day of prophecy had been opened once again. The promised Messiah, the day of Israel's salvation had come, but the people rejected the evidence. They were doomed by their rejection, and Jesus wept because they refused to see the day of their salvation.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Lk.13:34-35).

	C. The Cleansing of the Temple: The Righteous Anger of Jesus, 19:45-48 (Mt.21:12-16; Mk.11:15-19; cp. Jn.2:13-16)	written, My house is he house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. 47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to	a. The place of His presence & dwelling b. The place of prayer c. The place for teaching the Word of God
1 How He cleansed the temple: Cast people out a. Those who profaned b. Those who exploited	45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought;	destroy him, 48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to	**3 The results of His cleansing the temple** a. The leaders: Sought to destroy Him b. The people: Listened to Him attentively
2 Why He cleansed the temple	46 Saying unto them, It is	hear him.	

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

C. The Cleansing of the Temple: The Righteous Anger of Jesus, 19:45-48

(19:45-48) **Introduction**: the anger of Jesus is seen in this passage. It is important to note what angered Him: the abuse of God's temple.

⇒ The believer's body is the temple of God, and it angered Him to see the body abused (1 Cor.6:19-20).

⇒ The church is the temple of God, and it angered Him to see the church abused (see note—1 Cor.3:16; 3:17).

The church is the temple of God. This fact is often de-emphasized by believers and overlooked by the world. But no matter how man treats the church, Jesus proclaims the church to be God's, to be His holy temple. The church is the place that is set apart for prayer, worship, and communion with God.

1. How He cleansed the temple: cast people out (v.45).
2. Why He cleansed the temple (v.46).
3. The results of His cleansing the temple (v.47-48).

1 (19:45) **Temple—Church**: How did Jesus cleanse the temple? He "cast out" those who profaned and exploited the temple. This took place in the outer court of the temple, the court of the Gentiles, which was where Gentiles worshipped. It was tragically abused. It had become nothing more than a commercial marketplace owned and, in many cases, operated by the priests. It was used for the selling and buying of sacrificial animals which included oxen and sheep as well as smaller doves and pigeons. It was also used for the inspection of the animals' purity and for the exchanging of foreign currencies. Every Passover season found thousands of pilgrims coming to the temple from all over the world travelling great distances. It was usually impossible for a pilgrim to bring his own animal for sacrifice; but if he did, he had to get it by the inspector, which often cost a fee. The bickering back and forth created an atmosphere of utter chaos that apparently gave off the sound of a human volcanic uproar. Picture a modern-day trade show—large, crowded, extremely noisy—and add to that the presence of animals and the exchanging of thousands of coins (see note, pt.2—Eph.2:14-15).

Hundreds of thousands of animals were sold at the great feasts, and unfortunately, the High Priest and other priests were often in the middle of the commercialism. It is this commercialism and secularism of religion that Jesus lashed out against. (See note—Mt.21:12-16 for detailed discussion and thoughts.)

> **"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (Jn.2:16).**
>
> **"What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in [businesses to buy and sell in]? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (1 Cor.11:22).**
>
> **"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:30).**
>
> **"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).**
>
> **"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it" (Jer.7:30).**
>
> **"Her [the temple, the churches] prophets are light and treacherous persons: her priests have polluted the sanctuary, they have done violence to the law" (Zeph.3:4).**

2 (19:46-47) **Temple**: Why did Jesus cleanse the temple? Jesus' attitude toward the temple is clearly seen in this verse. The same attitude, of course, would be true of the church. He held the temple in the highest regard.

1. Jesus called the temple (church) "My house." This says at least two things to people of every generation.
   a. The temple or church is the place where He dwells and lives: it is the place where His presence is. However, considering that God is omnipresent (everywhere) what could Jesus have meant? Very simply, the church is a place that has been *set apart* (sanctified) especially for Him. The church is the very special place designated for Him; it is the place that is different from all other places, different in that it is the place set aside for God's very own presence to be known.

Note: Jesus said in another place that the temple is related so closely to God that it actually *reveals and reflects God's nature*. This is seen in His demand that men not swear by the temple. Why? Because the temple or church is God's, of His plan and purpose; therefore, the church is of Him, of His very nature (Mt.23:16f).

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Jn.4:24).

"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Dt.12:5).

"LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Ps.26:8).

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple" (Ps.27:4).

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Ps.65:4).

b. The word "My" is possessive: the temple is the Lord's; it belongs to Him. He possesses and owns it. The people in the temple are only ministers, not owners; therefore, whatever is done in the temple is to be what He wants done. His house is to be operated as He wills, and His servants are to do His bidding, not violating, profaning, or exploiting His house. (See note—1 Cor.3:16; 3:17.)

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Ps.23:6).

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps.84:10).

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Ps.122:1).

2. Jesus called the temple "the house of prayer." Jesus' words are actually a quotation from two Scriptures.

"Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people" (Is.56:7).
"Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" (Jer.7:11).

Note three points.

a. The temple or church is called a house of prayer, not a house of sacrifice, nor a house of offerings, teaching, prophecy, or preaching. Everything done within the House of God is to lead to prayer, the *worship of and communion with* the Father.

b. The temple or church is to be the house of prayer. Men are to pray everywhere, but they are to go to the church to pray also. The church is the very special place *set aside* for God. It is the place where all of God's people come together; therefore, it is a very special place for prayer.

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read" (Lk.4:16).

"And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Lk.24:52-53).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker" (Ps.95:6).

"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth" (Ps.96:9).

"Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy" (Ps.99:5).

"And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also" (Zech.8:21).

c. The temple or church is not to be used as a commercial place. It is not to be a place of buying and selling, marketing and retailing, stealing and cheating. It is not to be profaned. The church is the House of God, God's House of Prayer. It is to be a place of sanctity, refined and purified by God Himself. It is to be a place of quietness and meditation, a place set aside for worship, not for buying and selling and securing gain.

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:30).

"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Ex.3:5).

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).

"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab.2:20).

3. Christ used the temple as a place for teaching. Note three things.
   a. He taught daily in the temple. It was the place where the people had gathered for the purpose of hearing the Word of God, so He met their need and fulfilled that purpose.
   b. It was not enough to cleanse the temple. He was compelled to be about God's business, that of proclaiming God's Word in God's house.
   c. He was about God's business while others were still misusing the temple and plotting against His life. He was busy carrying out the purpose of the temple while others were profaning and misusing it. He used the temple as the house of teaching, teaching which led men into prayer and worship and communion with God.

"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me [in the temple]? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk.2:49).

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Is.2:3).

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Mic.4:2).

3 (19:47-48) **Temple—Church**: the results of Christ's cleansing the temple were twofold.

1. The leaders sought to destroy Christ. The leaders were the chief priests and Scribes, that is, those who were *professional religionists*. There were also "the chief of the people," that is, lay leaders and people from among the ruling class.

Note two things.

   a. The leaders were actively seeking to "destroy" (apolesai) Christ. The word means to *utterly destroy*. (Imagine *religious leaders'* being so disturbed that they seek to destroy and ruin the ministry of a person.)

   b. The reason why the leaders were so disturbed was twofold: first, they were losing control of the temple; and second, they were losing control of the people. Jesus had invaded their temple by cleansing it, and He was teaching the true gospel of the Kingdom of God and righteousness. They were losing money because Jesus had cast out the vendors, and their own personal ideas and control were being undermined. They were unwilling to accept the truth personally and to surrender their lives to Jesus. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. The leaders were making the same two mistakes made by men of every generation.

1) They were letting their *greed* keep them from Christ.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right" (Pr.16:8).

"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool" (Jer.17:11).

2) They were letting their self-confidence and self-righteousness keep them from Christ. Just think about it! Not a single leader, civil or religious, thought God would ever reject him or keep him out of heaven. Every one of them thought he was good enough to be acceptable to God, yet not a single one is in heaven today.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother" (Pr.30:12).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.3-4).

2. The people listened to Jesus. The word "attentive" (exekremeto) means they hung upon Jesus, gave Him rapt attention, were struck by Him. The picture is this: since the Triumphal Entry the day before, *teeming thousands* were clinging to Him, anxious to hear His word as much as they could. Note: it was His popularity among the people that kept the leaders from arresting Him. They just could not find a time or place to carry out their terrible scheme without causing an uprising among the people.

Thought 1. How many give rapt attention to Jesus today? If we were truly concentrating our attention upon Him like we should, would there be so much opposition to the gospel? Would society be different? Would evil be held back and controlled more?

"With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Is.26:9).

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee" (Ps.38:9; cp. Ps.63:1).

	CHAPTER 20		
	D. The Question of Authority: Who is Jesus? 20:1-8 (Mt.21:23-27; Mk.11: 27-33)	3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: 4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?	d. Jesus appealed to the logic of men: Was John the Baptist of God of or men?
1 The unbelief of men vs. Jesus a. Jesus taught & preached the gospel b. Unbelief caused men to close their ears to the gospel c. Unbelief caused men to question the authority of Jesus	And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, 2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?	5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? 6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. 7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. 8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.	**2 Possibility 1: His authority was of God** **3 Possibility 2: His authority was of men** **4 Possibility 3: Indecision & silence**

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

D. The Question of Authority: Who is Jesus? 20:1-8

(20:1-8) **Introduction**: this passage begins a series of attacks upon Jesus. Question after question was asked Him in an attempt to discredit His claim to be the true Messiah, the Son of God. But the questions were to no avail. The present passage is basic, it is the question of authority: Who is Jesus?

1. The unbelief of men vs. Jesus (v.1-4).
2. Possibility 1: His authority was of God (v.5).
3. Possibility 2: His authority was of men (v.6).
4. Possibility 3: indecision and silence (v.7-8).

1 (20:1-4) **Unbelief**: there was unbelief vs. Jesus. This is a striking picture.

1. Jesus was teaching and preaching the gospel. He shared the good news about the Kingdom of God and the great hope for man through repentance. A large crowd listened "very attentively" (Lk.19:48), soaking up every word He said and having the hope of God stirred within their hearts. The words of the Lord were being driven home to the need of the human heart.

2. But note what happened. Unbelief caused men to close their ears to the gospel. The religionists were standing there listening to Jesus just as so many others were, yet their motives differed from the crowd. They were not seeking God beyond their own ideas of religion. They had...

- critical and unbelieving hearts.
- a fear of worldly ridicule, disapproval, and unacceptance.
- a concern for livelihood, security, profession, and position.

They were not interested in discovering the truth about Jesus. They were only interested in tricking Him and discrediting Him before the people. They wanted the people's loyalty to their own *religious position*. The truth mattered little. Their ears were closed and their eyes were blinded to the truth because of their obstinate unbelief.

3. Note another fact about unbelief. Unbelief caused men to question the authority of Jesus, just who He really was. This was the basic question to ask, a question that probed into the very nature of Jesus. What was His authority, who sent Him, who empowered Him, who gave Him the right to do as He was doing? Where had He come from? Just who was He?

The leaders wanted to know what right He had to interfere with their lives and area of responsibility. They were the authorized guardians and rulers of the temple and of the people. He was interfering with their management and had no right to do so. They asked Him two questions.

a. What was the authority for His works? "By what authority doest thou *these things*?" He had marched triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem as a King, receiving the homage of the Messianic King from the people; He had cast the market traders out of the temple; He had healed the blind and lame (Mt.21:14); and He had accepted the homage of small children proclaiming Him to be the Messiah. What authority did He have to do such things?

Thought 1. The leaders were asking the basic question that needed to be asked. It is the question that every man needs to ask: What is the authority, the explanation for the works of Christ? The works of...

- ministry
- healing
- teaching
- raising the dead
- rising again
- preaching
- calming the storms of nature
- foretelling the future
- dying and fulfilling Scripture
- ascending into heaven

b. What was the authority of His person: "*Who gave thee* this authority?" He *was claiming*...
- to be the promised Messianic King by entering the city as He did.
- to be the Head, the God of the Temple: "My house."
- to be the Light of the world to the blind and the Messianic Healer to the lame (Mt.21:14).
- to be the Messianic fulfillment of Scripture by receiving the praise of the children.

The authorities knew who Jesus was claiming to be. They just rejected His claim and refused to believe. They chose the course of obstinate unbelief, still refusing to believe despite having proof upon proof.

There were two possible answers to the question of who Jesus was.

⇒ Jesus could have claimed to be acting by His own authority, saying that His power was His own. This, of course, would have made Him an ego-maniac or a great imposter (the greatest in history). Of course, if He had claimed to act by His own authority, they would have discredited Him immediately and arrested Him for causing so much havoc.

⇒ Jesus could have claimed to be acting by the authority of God, to be of and from God. Now note: this was the claim that Jesus made time and again. But if He had made it then and there in the face of the authorities, they would have arrested Him immediately for blasphemy. They would claim that God would never give orders to cause such turmoil in the temple.

Again the leaders were asking the basic question that needs to be asked by every man. *Who gave Jesus* His authority? Who is He: a mere man or truly the Son of God? Is He *of man* or *of God*? Is His authority of men or inherent, that is, from within, of His very own nature as God?

4. Very simply, Jesus appealed to the truth and logic of John the Baptist: "Was [John] from heaven, or of men?"

2 (20:5) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Unbelief**: the first possibility was that Jesus' authority was *of God*. *John pointed* toward Christ and proclaimed...
- "Behold the Lamb of God" (Jn.1:29).
- "I saw and *bare record* that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).

If John were from God, a true messenger of God, then Jesus was the true Messiah, the Son of God. This would mean that Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God, of hope for man through repentance, was true. Man could be saved from sin, death, and hell.

Note the words, "they reasoned with themselves." They discussed the matter among themselves. However, they were not searching their hearts and seeking for the truth. Their minds were already made up. Their preconceived ideas were not going to be set aside, not even by the truth. They were deliberately rejecting Jesus, being obstinate in their unbelief.

Thought 1. Christ and His message were from God; therefore, there is great hope for man. Man can be saved eternally, saved for the Kingdom of God. However, man has a twofold problem.

1) There is the problem of obstinate unbelief.

> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**

2) There is the problem of being unwilling to give up this world, of being unwilling to deny oneself, one's own desires and preconceived ideas. Man loves the money, acceptance, positions, and possessions of the world too much.

> **"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).**
>
> **"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).**
>
> **"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Ph.3:18-19).**
>
> **"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).**

3 (20:6) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Unbelief**: the second possibility was that Jesus' authority was *of men*. Again, whatever was true of John was true of Jesus. However, if John's ministry was of men, how could so many *changed lives* be accounted for? Thousands had repented and been transformed, turning their lives completely around and following God with

a new vigor. To say that John was *not of God*, that he had received his power and his authority from men, was foolish and absurd (cp. Lk.7:29; Jn.10:41-42).

The authorities knew that if they publicly held this position, the people would rise up against them. They would lose whatever grip they had over the people, for the people believed that John was a great prophet of God.

Thought 1. Down through the centuries thousands of lives have been changed by Christ. Thousands would lay down their lives in testimony of His transforming power. No greater evidence exists for the deity of Christ. The changed lives of many proclaim the glorious truth of the gospel. Christ is the true Messiah, the Son of God.

> **"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John" (Lk.7:29).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).**
>
> **"And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there" (Jn.10:41-42).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**

4 (20:7-8) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Unbelief**: the third possibility was indecision and silence. This was tragic. It is always tragic when a person's concern is to save face not to discover the truth. It is always tragic when a person is so concerned with his position, esteem, and security that he ignores or denies the truth. This was the very response of these men, and it is often the response of men to Christ.

1. They chose expediency, to be deliberately ignorant. They feared being shamed, embarrassed, and ridiculed. To confess Jesus would have meant confessing they had been wrong all along. It would have meant denying self completely and doing so publicly.
2. They denied Jesus. To confess that John was of God would have forced them to acknowledge Jesus, and they were not willing to confess Him. They feared the loss of all they possessed: position, power, wealth, esteem, image, security, and livelihood.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).**

Thought 1. The tragedy of tragedies is that most men...

- choose expediency rather than principle.
- choose to play it safe rather than to stand for the truth.
- choose to say "I don't know" rather than to speak the truth.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).**

	E. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: The Overview of World History, 20:9-18 (Mt.21:33-46; Mk.12: 1-12; cp. Is.5:1-7)	will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.	a. He sent His own Son to collect the fruit
		14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us	b. The tenants saw the Son
1 A man founded a vineyard	9 Then began he to speak	kill him, that the inheritance	c. The tenants plotted the Son's death
a. Leased it to tenants	to the people this parable; A	may be ours.	d. The tenants planned to seize the inheritance
b. Went to a far country	certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.	15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?	e. The tenants rejected & killed the Son
			4 A just judgment was pronounced
2 A day of accounting came	10 And at the season he	16 He shall come and de-	
a. He sent servants to collect	sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the	stroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to	a. He shall come to destroy them
b. The husbandmen mistreated His servants & refused to pay them	vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.	others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.	b. He shall give the world to others
	11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.	17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?	**5 A sure proof of coming judgment was given: Scripture**
			a. Jesus' solemn look
c. He showed patience	12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.	18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.	b. The rejected Stone's exaltation
			c. The rejected Stone's destructive power
3 A special appeal was made to the tenants	13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I		

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

E. The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: The Overview of World History, 20:9-18

(20:9-18) **Introduction—World**: the parable was directed to Israel, but it is a panoramic view of world history as well. (See note—Mt.21:33-46 for the interpretation of Israel.) In the view of world history, God is the man who founded the world; the husbandmen or tenants are men and nations responsible for certain areas of production; the servants are God's messengers sent to secure His fruit; the Son is Jesus Christ Himself. Every man or nation who rejects God's Son finds God turning elsewhere and giving the vineyard and the responsibility to others.

1. A man founded a vineyard (v.9).
2. A day of accounting came (v.10-12).
3. A special appeal was made to the tenants (v.13-15).
4. A just judgment was pronounced (v.15-16).
5. A sure proof of coming judgment was given: Scripture (v.17-18).

1 (20:9) **Labor—Man, Duty—World**: a man (God) founded a vineyard. He planted the world; He also planted Israel. He leased the world to men, and Israel to the Jews. Now note two critical facts.

1. It was God, not man, who created the world and created Israel. Neither the world nor Israel happened by chance. God made both, each one for a very specific purpose.

> **"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28).**
>
> **"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).**
>
> **"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps.100:3).**
>
> **"And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth" (Is.51:13).**
>
> **"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Mal.2:10).**

2. God has given man the highest of privileges: the privilege of life and the privilege of caring for His world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22 for Israel's privilege and purpose.) God has given man life and the potential of the earth in which to live, and He has placed both life and the earth into man's hands. The world is in no one else's hands; therefore, man is responsible for the world, to manage it for God and to give God the fruit of his hands. The point is simply this: man is to labor ever so vigorously, making every contribution He can both for God and for his fellow man (society). Why? Because

he is privileged ever so highly, privileged with life and privileged with the beauty and potential of the earth. He is to labor out of love and appreciation for all God has given him.

> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen.1:27-28).**
>
> **"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet" (Ps.8:6).**
>
> **"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his servants, and delivered unto them his goods" (Mt.25:14).**
>
> **"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor.4:2).**
>
> **"Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Tim.6:20).**
>
> **"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come" (Lk.19:13).**

2 (20:10-12) **Judgment**: a day of accounting came; the day for payment came. Note the words "and the season." The season came when fruit was to be offered up to God.

1. God sent servants to collect. Fruit was expected, and it was time for payment. God *sent* servants to ask for the fruit. Every man was *expected* to pay his dues, to contribute for the wonderful privilege of living in the beautiful vineyard of the world.

> **"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:8).**
>
> **"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).**
>
> **"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn.15:2).**
>
> **"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).**
>
> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Ro.7:4).**
>
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).**

2. God's servants were mistreated and were refused payment. Note three things.
   a. Man deliberately rebels against God. Man wants to rule the vineyard himself. He wants to be the king of the kingdom, the ruler of the earth, and even the head of the church. He wants things to go his way, to rule and reign as he desires and wills. He wants no authority above him. He wants to live as he wishes and do things as he wishes. He wants to claim the fruits for himself.
   b. Man wants his own way so much that he criticizes, ridicules, slanders, persecutes and even murders the true servants of God.

> **"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:52. Cp. Mt.23:34-37; Heb.11:36-38.)**

   c. The servant of God must understand that he is called to suffer (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23).

> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).**
>
> **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pt.4:12-13; cp. 1 Pt.2:21; 4:5-6; Mt.19:29; Ro.8:16-17).**

3. God showed patience. He did not strike out in anger at the first sign of rebellion, even when men brutally attacked His servants. He continued to send messengers to Israel (the world), giving man chance after chance.

> **"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers" (Acts 7:52. Cp. Mt.23:34-37; Heb.11:36-38.)**
>
> **"Then said he unto the dresser of the vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said**

unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down" (Lk.13:7-9).

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).

"For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off" (Is.48:9).

3 (20:13-15) **Jesus Christ, Rejection of**: a special appeal was made to the tenants. This was a very special appeal. It was God's sending His own "beloved Son" into the world to collect the fruit. Five significant facts are spelled out.

1. Jesus claimed to be God's Son. He was different from all the servants sent before. He was more than another man-servant; He was God's very own Son. There was no question that Jesus was clearly making this unique claim for Himself.
2. The cultivators saw God's Son. There were all kinds of evidence: Old Testament prophecies, the testimony of John the Baptist, the claims of Jesus Himself, the miraculous works, the signs of the times (Gal.4:4). There was a feeling that He was the promised Messiah even among those who now opposed Him (see note—Jn.3:2; cp. Jn.11:47-52). This was the tragic indictment against the Jews. Down deep within, they had a sense that Jesus really was the Messiah; but sin or greed for position, esteem, power, and security kept them from acknowledging Him. Their unbelief was deliberate—obstinate (see outline and notes—Mt.21:23-27).
3. The cultivators plotted His death (cp. Mt.12:14; Jn.11:53).
4. The cultivators planned to seize His inheritance. Man wants to possess the kingdom, the nation, the property, the power, the rule, the reign, the position, the esteem, the fame, the recognition, the wealth. Whatever the possession is, man always wants the possession himself. He will deny, deceive, lie, cheat, steal, and even kill to get it. (See note—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.)
5. The cultivators murdered the Son. They committed the worst crime of human history: they killed the Son of God Himself. Note two things: (1) Jesus was predicting His death, and (2) His death was to be a voluntary act on His part. He knew death lay ahead and could have escaped, but He chose to die. It was in "the determinate counsel of God" (Acts 2:23).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

"[God] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).

4 (20:15-16) **Judgment**: a just judgment was pronounced. The crime was the most terrible and tragic crime in all the universe: the rejection and killing of God's *only* Son. Therefore, the judgment was to be the most tragic and extreme judgment in all the universe.

1. The rebellious tenants will be destroyed (see note—Lk.20:17-18).
2. The vineyard (world) will be given to others. The vineyard will not be left uncultivated; it will not be left untended to bear no fruit. God will raise up a new people to care for it (the church, the new creation of God. See notes—Eph.2:11-18; pt.4, 2:14-15; 4:17-19.)

When the Jews heard this statement, they knew what Jesus meant. They could not believe their ears. There was no chance whatsoever that they could be rejected by God, not in their minds. They burst forth in outrage, interrupting His warning, "God forbid."

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:6).

"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).

5 (20:17-18) **Judgment**: a sure proof of coming judgment was given—the proof of Scripture. Note His solemn look, "He beheld them and said...The stone which the builders rejected." The stone is a symbol of Jesus Christ. Note two facts.

1. The rejected Stone's exaltation. Christ is the Head or Chief Cornerstone, the Foundation Stone. He is the Foundation, the Stone upon which every man must build his life. There is no other Foundation upon which man can build and be secure. Similarly, He is the Foundation and Cornerstone of the church (see DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mt.21:42).

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:11).

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:20-22).

"To whom [Christ] coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pt.2:4-5.)

2. The rejected Stone's destructive power. The destructive power of a stone against flesh and blood is well-known. A man who stumbles or falls over the stone, Jesus Christ, is hurt. A man upon whom the huge stone, Jesus Christ, falls is ground to powder, utterly destroyed—permanently. (See DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mt.21:42; DEEPER STUDY # 8,9—21:44 for more discussion.)

"The wicked shall fall by his own wickedness" (Pr.11:5).

"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD" (Jer.6:15).

"Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?" (Jer.8:4).

"The people that doth not understand shall fall" (Hos.4:14).

	F. The Question of Government and Religion: Which is Supreme? 20:19-26 (Mt.22:15-22; Mk.12: 13-17)	thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly:	
		22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?	**2 The two false concepts of citizenship**
1 The cause of the question: The religionists sought to destroy Jesus a. Their reason: They feared losing control of the people	19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.	23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?	
		24 Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's.	**3 The image stamped on coins is the government's image** a. The government owns some things b. The government is due some things
b. Their method: They sought to discredit Him 1) Before the people 2) Before Rome: Committing treason	20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.	25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.	**4 The image stamped upon man is God's image**
		26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.	**5 Conclusion: The religionists were silenced**
3) Through deception & flattery	21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that		

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

F. The Question of Government and Religion: Which is Supreme? 20:19-26

(20:19-26) **Introduction**: one of the major questions throughout history has dealt with government and religion—Which is supreme? Jesus deals with the subject in this passage.

1. The cause of the question: the religionists sought to destroy Jesus (v.19-21).
2. The two false concepts of citizenship (v.22-23).
3. The image stamped on coins is the government's image (v.24-25).
4. The image stamped upon man is God's image (v.25).
5. Conclusion: the religionists were silenced (v.26).

1 (20:19-21) **Religionists, Opposed Jesus**: the cause of the question. The religionists sought to destroy Jesus. Note how institutionalized and political Jewish religion had become. The priesthood had begun with Aaron right after Moses had led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. Now, after just a few centuries, the priests were seen manuevering to discredit and destroy Jesus just like secular rulers seek to destroy political opponents. There is no testimony of godliness in their lives. The very persons who were to be God's testimony in righteousness had become engrossed in selfish ambition and political intrigue.

The religionists feared they were losing their control over the people. The people were flocking to Jesus by the droves (Lk.19:37), and Jesus had...

- proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah (Lk.19:30, 37, 46; 20:2-6, 13, 17-18).
- cleansed the temple, accusing them of misusing it (Lk.19:25).
- confounded their attempt to discredit Him (Lk.20:7-8).
- accused them of being wicked husbandmen who had failed to care for God's vineyard (Lk.20:9-18).

If the people rose up against the leaders and proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah, the Romans would step in to put down the revolt. The leaders would lose their position, authority, livelihood—everything. They felt they must stop Jesus at any cost.

The method they chose to stop Jesus was to pose trick questions to Him. If they could get Jesus to take some position against the people, the people would forsake Him. He could then be arrested and destroyed. On the other hand, if they could get Him to take some position against Rome, He would be arrested for preaching treason.

Note the deception and drooling flattery used on Jesus (v.21). It turns the reader's stomach, yet how characteristic of men who seek their own ends. (Cp. Job 15:5; Ps.5:9; Pr.12:3; 29:5.)

Thought 1. Too often religion becomes institutionalized and political. God's people must always guard against seeking...

- recognition
- honor
- position
- power
- worldly security
- selfish loyalty

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Mt.20:25-27).

"But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:11-12).

2 (20:22-23) **Citizenship—State—Caesar**: the two false concepts of citizenship are seen in this question.

1. There was the concept of the religionists who were asking the question. They believed religion was supreme. They believed strongly in the heavenly, spiritual world. They believed all obedience and loyalty were due God and God alone. In fact, all things on earth were due God. The state and all other power and authority were to be subject to religious rule. Therefore, they were strongly against paying taxes to a foreign king. Paying taxes was an infringement upon God's right.
2. There was the concept of the secularist or humanist. These believed the state was supreme. They did not hold to the supernatural, not in the sense that a Supreme Being was the creator and sovereign power who was to be actively involved in the affairs of men. Religion, if it were to be practiced at all, was to be subject to the state. Religion existed to serve and benefit the state. God was either ignored or denied, viewed only as a tool to benefit the state.

Thought 1. Both concepts are always present among men. There will always be those who hold religion to be supreme and those who hold humanism and secularism to be supreme.

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).

"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps.49:17).

"Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it" (Is.5:14).

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Is.66:5).

"Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters" (Ezk.24:25).

"As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame" (Hos.4:7).

Note that Christ saw through the deception and flattery. He was the Son of God, so He knew *their craftiness* and knew...

- every self-seeking ambition.
- every deception and flattering word.
- every pretension to honor Him.
- every man who ignored and denied Him.
- every secular and humanistic claim.

3 (20:24-25) **Citizenship—State**: the image stamped on coins is the government's image. As Jesus pointed to the image on the coin, this could not be denied. The government had made the coin and stamped its inscription on it. God did not make the coin; therefore, the government owned the coin and the government could demand the coin. The point was clear.

1. The coin and some other things produced by the state belonged to the state, things such as roads, buildings, sewage, and public transportation.
2. The government was due some things. In particular, the state was due a man's allegiance and support. A man was a citizen of this world as long as he was in the world. The world provided him with everything necessary to sustain physical life; and the government under which he lived provided protection, roads, water, and laws. Therefore, man owed his *due share* to the state. (See note—Ro.13:1-7 for more discussion.)

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).

"Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee" (Mt.17:27).

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work" (Tit.3:1).

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pt.2:13-15).

"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Pt.2:17).

"And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment" (Ezra 7:26).

"I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God" (Eccl.8:2).

4 (20:25) **Citizenship—State—Man, Image of God**: the image stamped upon man is God's image. The Jews frantically held that God created man and that He stamped His very image upon man. Therefore, man owed his total obedience to God and to no one other than God. What they failed to grasp was what Jesus was pointing out. Man is presently a citizen of two worlds: this world (cosmos) and the world of God or of the Spirit. Therefore, man owes to Caesar whatever carries Caesar's stamp, and he owes to God whatever carries God's stamp.

1. The stamp of God is upon *man's life*; therefore man owes God his life—life that was made to exist with God forever.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:3).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**

2. The stamp of God is upon *man's life*; therefore man owes God his world—a world that is ever so beautiful and needs to be looked after and cared for by man.

> **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen.1:27-28).**
>
> **"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).**
>
> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**

3. The stamp of God is upon *man's life*; therefore man owes God his spirit—a spirit that can be *born again* and live a self-denying life of love and peace for the sake of all men everywhere.

> **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:22-23).**
>
> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**
>
> **"[Christ] whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col.1:28).**
>
> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**

4. The stamp of God is upon man's mind and body; therefore man owes God his mind and body—a mind and body that have the power to produce for the betterment of all mankind.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**
>
> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**
>
> **"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen.9:6).**
>
> **"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God" (1 Cor.11:7).**
>
> **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**

5 (20:26) **Citizenship**: the conclusion was that the religionsts were silenced. Two things happened: first, they were unable to discredit Jesus; and second, they were struck with amazement. They marvelled at His answer.

> **Thought 1.** Men have to stand in amazement at the Lord's concept of dual citizenship. A man is to be a citizen both of this world and of heaven: rendering to Caesar what is due him, and rendering to God what is due Him.
>
> **"Fear God. Honor the King" (1 Pt.2:17).**

	G. The Question of the Resurrection: The Two Worlds—Earth & Heaven—Differ, 20:27-38 (Mt.22:23-33; Mk.12: 18-27)	died also. 33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.	c. They asked an egotistical & blind question
1 The Sadducees, the liberal-minded, tried to discredit Jesus[DS1]	27 Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,	34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:	**2 Marriage is different** a. This world: There is marriage
a. They referred to Levrite marriage[DS2]	28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.	35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:	b. Next world: There is no marriage **3 Entrance is different: Must be counted worthy**
b. They presented a logical situation	29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.	36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.	**4 Death is different: No longer can die** **5 Personal being (nature) is different** a. Are like angels b. Are children of God
	30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.	37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.	**6 Life is different: It is a resurrected life** a. It is life after death b. Illustrated by Moses
	31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.	38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.	c. Purpose: To live for God
	32 Last of all the woman		

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

G. The Question of the Resurrection: The Two Worlds (Earth and Heaven) Differ, 20:27-38

(20:27-38) **Introduction**: this world and the other world—earth and heaven—differ. They differ drastically. Jesus used the attack of the Sadducees to discuss the differences.

1. Sadducees, the liberal-minded, tried to discredit Jesus(v.27-33).
2. Marriage is different (v.34-35).
3. Entrance is different: must be counted worthy (v.35).
4. Death is different: no longer can die (v.36).
5. Personal being (nature) is different (v.36).
6. Life is different: it is a resurrected life (v.37-38).

1 (20:27-33) **Religionists, Oppose Christ—Question**: The Sadducees, the liberal-minded, tried to discredit Jesus. Note three points.

1. They referred to Levrite marriage (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.20:28).
2. They presented a logical situation: there were seven brothers. The first brother married but died without having children. Each of the other brothers obeyed the law, but each brother *died before having children*. Finally the woman died also. The point was logical, but most unlikely. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.20:28 for discussion of the Levrite law.)
3. They asked an egotistical and blind question. The question was logical, but note two things:
   a. The spirit that lay behind the questioning. The situation was absurd; the spirit was cold and coarse, egotistical and unbelieving, regrettable and revolting. The unbeliever's spirit is often self-incriminating and self-condemning.
   b. The blindness and human frailty of the question. The human mind *cannot know* the spiritual world apart from *revelation*. The Sadducees were thinking that the spiritual world would be just like the physical world, that it would be nothing more than a continuation of this world both in *its nature and in its relationships*.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(20:27) **Sadducees**: these were the religious and political liberals of Jesus' day. They were the wealthy, the aristocratic, the governing class of leaders in Israel. Many Sadducees served on the nation's governing body, the Sanhedrin. The Chief Priest himself was usually a Sadducee who presided over the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin ruled the people in behalf of the

Roman empire (Acts 4:1-2; 5:27). The Romans readily saw to it that the Sadducees held the positions of leadership in the nation, for the Sadducees favored Greek customs over Jewish customs. They willingly aided the Romans in doing away with religious practices and instituting Greek and Roman customs (Hellenism).

The Sadducees are thought to have arisen out of the same struggle as the Pharisees around 175 B.C. However, they were always the fewest in number among the various sects of Jewish belief.

Several things should be noted.

1. The Sadducees were secular and materialistic. They were the independent thinkers, the rationalists of their day.
2. They were heavily entrenched in the priesthood of Jesus' day (cp. Acts 4:1-2; 5:17). They readily collaborated with the Roman government in order to protect their position, power, and wealth.
3. They denied the supernatural to a great degree: the resurrection and miracles, life after death, and the existence of beings in other dimensions such as angels and spirits (Mt.22:23; Acts 23:8). To them there was no heaven or hell, no existence whatsoever except on this earth. A man died and was annihilated; he ceased to exist. There was no such thing as rewards or punishment in an afterlife; there was no such thing as life that continued eternally. (See notes—Mt.22:23-33.)
4. The only Scripture they accepted was the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. They felt these books were the only Scripture that was binding. They rejected the Oral and Scribal Law. They did not accept the prophets nor the poetic books of the Scripture.
5. By practice, they bordered on being humanists, believing that man was in control of his own life and destiny. God had little if anything to do with life, for there was no afterlife. Whatever was achieved was to be done by man's own will and energy and effort.
6. They were diametrically opposed to the Pharisees.

The liberal position of the Sadducees caused two things.

1. It caused them to stumble at the spiritual and supernatural. They ridiculed and scorned both. Therefore, in their minds, the teachings of Jesus were the teachings of an unthinking and illogical man, lacking philosophical analysis and natural proof.
2. Their liberal position caused them to feel threatened and to oppose Jesus. The people were flocking to Jesus and soaking up His teachings. This meant the Sadducees were losing their grip on the people. Their position and wealth were being jeopardized; therefore, they were compelled to attack and discredit Him before the people.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(20:28) **Levrite Marriage**: when a husband died without a son, the Levrite law said that his brother was to marry his wife and bear a son. By law, the son was considered the firstborn son of the deceased brother. This assured two things: (a) that the family name continued, and (2) that the property holdings were kept in the family. This was a law that had been given to help preserve and enlarge the nation of Israel (cp. Ruth 4:5).

2 (20:34-35) **Heaven—Marriage—Resurrection**: marriage differs in the two worlds. In this world there is marriage, but in the other world there will be no marriage. There is a very special and wonderful reason why there is no marriage in the other world: *love is perfected*. Future life and relationships will exceed earthly relationships, even the bond of marital relationships. The strong union and bond of earthly marriage will not be less, it will be greater and stronger in heaven, but so will all other relationships.

In heaven our relationships will cease to be as they are on earth. They will be changed in an absolute sense: selfishness and sin will not affect our love and lives. Our love will be perfected; therefore, we will love everyone perfectly. A wife on this earth will not be loved as she was on this earth—imperfectly. She will be loved more, *loved perfectly*. Everyone will love everyone else perfectly. God will change all relationships into perfection, even as the relationships between angels and God are perfected.

3 (20:35) **Worthy—Justification—Heaven—World**: entrance into the two worlds differs. A man has nothing to do with his entrance into this world. He is conceived and born by the act of a man and a woman. But note three facts about the next world.

1. Only those who are *accounted worthy* shall obtain that world. This is significant. A man does not work or earn his way into the next world. He is not worthy; he is only *counted* worthy. Worthiness is accounted to him, merely laid to his account. Scripture says that it is his *faith* that is counted as making him worthy. God takes a man's faith and counts it as "righteousness" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Justification*—Ro.4:22; 5:1. Cp. Ro.4:5; 4:1-3; 4:1-25.)

> **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).**
>
> **"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it [righteousness] was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:23-25).**
>
> **"Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Gal.3:6).**

2. Jesus was speaking of the resurrection of believers only. He did not say "the resurrection *of the dead*" which would mean all the dead, but He said "the resurrection from the dead" which means the resurrection of believers *from among* the dead.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:25).**

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev.20:6).

3. Every man continues to exist after this world, but all will not enter "that world," that is, heaven. Those who have not lived a life of faith in Christ, who are not counted worthy, will not enter "that world," but will enter hell (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22).

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Lk.16:24).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).

"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan.12:2).

4 (20:36) **Death—Eternal Life**: death differs in the two worlds. In the next world there is no death (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Heb.9:27 for more discussion). Note: Jesus said a man "cannot die any more." A man is locked in, given an incorruptible body and existence, living forever with God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3. Cp. Jn.1:4.)

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:17).

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15:53-54).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

5 (20:36) **Believers, Nature—Reward—Eternal Life—Heaven**: personal being, that is, man's nature, differs in the two worlds. Two things are said about believers.

1. Believers shall be "equal unto the angels." The Greek word *isangelloi* means that believers shall have a nature like the angels: be glorified, be their peers, living in the joy of working and serving God just as the angels do. It means believers will have all the glorious being and privileges and responsibilities that angels have.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:49-53).

2. But there is even more than what angels have. Believers are the children of God, the adopted children of God. (See note—Gal.4:5-6.)

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal.4:4-7).

"That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:7).

6 (20:37-38) **Life—Eternal Life—Heaven**: life differs in the two worlds. In the other world, it is a *resurrected life*, a real life, a life that is more real than the life of this world. It is a perfect life that lives for God perfectly. Note three facts.

1. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus meant at least two things in this point.
   a. God's relationships are active relationships, not inactive. God says, "I am the God of...." not, "I was the God of...." His relationships with His subjects are maintained even after departing this world. God is eternal; therefore, He creates and maintains eternal, active relationships. God's subjects enter into the spiritual realm of His presence and actively relate to Him. The resurrection is a fact.
   b. God's relationships are good and rewarding. The patriarchs of old were promised very personal rewards (cp. Heb.11:13-16). There has to be a resurrection if our relationship with God is good and rewarding. To die and to be left dead as a decayed corpse is not good nor rewarding. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a good and rewarding relationship with God. They are more alive today than they were while on earth, for they are perfected and eternal. They are with God Himself, and so shall we be. The resurrection is a fact.

2. *God is—God exists*. Note the two simple words in v.38. The fact that *God is*, that God exists, proves the resurrection. The Greek (ego eimi) means the self-existent, eternal One (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20; note—18:4-6).

"I am the God...." (Mt.22:32).
"He that cometh to God must believe that He is" (Heb.11:6).

Since God exists, He is God with omnipotent power—power that is perfect and eternal. God can do anything and all things, perfectly and eternally. He can call the elements of a decayed body back together again and raise it up to live in the spiritual dimension, both perfectly and eternally.

Note carefully: *God exists* (lives)—the argument is irrefutable. Note carefully the great passage in Ephesians dealing with the spiritual blessings that are ours in Christ.

"We have obtained an inheritance....That we should be [exist]" (Eph.1:11-12).

The resurrection is a fact. It will be experienced by all men of all ages because *God is*. God has willed to give us an inheritance—an inheritance *to be*, that is, *to live eternally* with Him. We will undergo a transformation of nature, a transformation of perfection and permanency. For this reason, we need to pay close attention to what Scripture says.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he [God] is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

We must believe that *God is* and that *He is a rewarder* of all those who diligently seek Him; that is, He rewards all of us who seek to live eternally with Him.

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Ph.3:11).
"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).
"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).
"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away....Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful" (Rev.21:1, 5).

3. God is not the God of the dead but of the living. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not the God of dead and decayed corpses. When Moses wrote these words, the three patriarchs had been dead for centuries. If they were dead, God was not their God. Since He was their God, they were alive; they were living in God's presence and in a relationship to Him that was perfect and eternal. There is to be a resurrection.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:7-9).

One simple fact comes to the forefront ever so clearly in these points made by Jesus: *since God is*, God is not the God of the dead but of the living.

"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8).
"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

Note also that all believers live. They live unto God, for God is the God of the living. Death cannot break the believer's relationship to God. The believer goes to live with the Lord forever. (See notes, *Reward*—Lk.12:41-48; 16:10-12; DEEPER STUDY # 3—19:15-19 for more discussion.)

	H. The Question of David's Son: Two Misunderstandings Corrected, 20:39-47 (Mt.22:41-46; 23:6-7, 14; Mk.12:35-40)	Sit thou on my right hand, 43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool. 44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?	b. David himself called the Messiah "Lord"
1 The response of the religionists to Jesus a. Some were impressed b. All were silenced	39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said. 40 And after that they durst not ask him any question at all.	45 Then in the audience of all the people he said unto his disciples, 46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;	**3 Misunderstanding 2: Religionists are genuine** a. Their desire & love: Self-esteem & praise
2 Misunderstanding 1: The Messiah is David's Son[DS1] a. David said that God called the Messiah "Lord"	41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son? 42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord,	47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.	b. Their terrible sin: Devour widows c. Their condemnation: Is to be greater

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

H. The Question of David's Son: Two Misunderstandings Corrected, 20:39-47

(20:39-47) **Introduction**: there are two ideas among men that desperately need correcting. It is absolutely essential that they be corrected, for they both lead to gross error and damnation (v.47). What are the erroneous ideas?

1. The response of the religionists to Jesus (v.39-40).
2. Misunderstanding 1: the Messiah is David's Son (v.41-44).
3. Misunderstanding 2: religionists are genuine (v.45-47).

1 (20:39-40) **Religionists, Response to Jesus**: the response of the religionists to Jesus was twofold.

1. Some were impressed with the Lord's answers to their questions (cp. Lk.19:47-20:38). They shared very honestly with Him, "Master, thou hast well said." This was an amazing statement, for remember, the religionists were out to kill Jesus. They had engaged Him in argument time and again, trying to entrap Him in His words. They tried their best to turn the people against Him. They had to break His hold on the people before they dared arrest Him. But He had answered their questions so wisely and with so much authority, some of the very ones engaged in the plot were impressed.
2. All the religionists were silenced. They had been so routed and embarrassed before the people that they dared not ask any more questions.

2 (20:41-44) **Messiah—Jesus Christ, Claims**: the first misunderstanding was that the Messiah was David's Son. Many believed that Jesus was a mere man, of human origin. The idea that the Messiah might be of divine origin, of God Himself, was unacceptable, and still is unacceptable, to some people. However, Jesus makes Himself perfectly clear. He is not the son of David, not born of man. He is the Lord from heaven. His argument is *forceful*.

1. David said in Scripture that God called the Messiah, "Lord." Note four facts.
   a. Fact 1: David called the Messiah "Lord" in the Psalms. That is, David's words are recorded in Scripture under the *inspiration of the Spirit*. God was directing him (cp. Mt.22:43; 2 Pt.1:21; 1 Cor.12:3).
   b. Fact 2: David said that "the Lord [Jehovah God] said to *my* Lord [the Messiah]." David unquestionably called the Messiah "*My Lord*."
   c. Fact 3: David said that *my* Lord "sits on God's right hand." The Messiah is *Lord*, for He is *exalted* by God.

> **"[God's mighty power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:9).**
>
> **"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb.8:1).**

   d. Fact 4: David said that my Lord's "enemies are to be made His footstool." The Messiah is Lord, for all His enemies are to be subjected under Him (Ph.2:10-11).
2. David himself called Messiah "Lord." Jesus asked a pointed question. How could the Messiah be both David's Lord and his Son? Jesus was doing at least two things by asking this question.
   a. Jesus was saying this: to think of the Messiah only in human terms is totally inadequate. It is not enough to think in terms of earthly power, of national, political, military, and institutional leadership. There is no way a mere man can bring perfect deliverance, leadership, and utopia to this earth. The Messiah is not only man; He is the Lord from heaven.

b. Jesus was claiming to be the Son of God Himself. Man's concept has to go beyond the mere human and physical. Man's idea has to stretch upward into God's very own heart. God loves this earth; therefore, God sent His Son to earth, sacrificing Him in order to save it and all those within it.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16).**
>
> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:67-69).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(20:41) **Messiah—Son of David**: The common title for the Messiah was *the Son of David*. The Old Testament definitely said the Messiah was to come from the line of David. It was from such passages as these that the Messiah was known as *the Son of David*. (See notes—Lk.3:24-31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45 for most verses and their fulfillment dealing with the Messiah's being the Son of David.)

> **"Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me" (Ps.89:35-36).**
>
> **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Is.9:6-7).**
>
> **"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Is.11:1-5).**

The Messiah was to do four specific things. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23. These notes will help in understanding concept of the Messiah.)

1. He was to free Israel from all enslavement. Enslavement was to be abolished and all men set free under God's domain.
2. He was to give victory over all enemies. Israel was to be established as the seat of His rule. This, of course, meant Israel was to be the leading nation of the world.
3. He was to bring peace to earth. All were to serve God under the government established by the Messiah.
4. He was to provide plenty for all. The Messiah was to bring all the benefits of both God's rule and care in providing the necessities of life and in bringing utopia (the Kingdom of God) to earth.

3 (20:45-47) **Religionists—Widows—Dress**: the second misunderstanding was that religionists were genuine. Jesus was forceful in this fact. He said to all men: "Beware of the scribes" (religionists).

1. Their "desire...and love" was self-esteem and praise.
   a. They dressed to draw attention to themselves. There were two ways this was done.

      First, a person could desire to wear the clothing of the extravagant and wasteful. The long robe was the dress of the nobility, the rich, the well-known, the person of style. It was a long robe reaching to the ground. A man was unable to work in it; therefore, it was the sign of *higher society* and of a man of leisure. Note: Jesus was not speaking against fine clothing. What He said was, "Beware of [those] who *love* to go in long robes" (fine clothing). He condemned the person who was extravagant and wasteful, whose mind was on attracting attention, on self, on appearance.

Thought 1. A person's mind is not to be on clothing, but...

> **"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).**

Thought 2. A man's life consists not in the things he has, but in the service he renders to others. The world is desperate, swamped with enormous needs. God wills for all persons to be wrapped up in meeting the needs of others and not wrapped up in clothing—especially the believer. The believer's concern is to be righteousness. He is to work for Christ and His kingdom, not for expensive, flamboyant, ostentatious clothing (cp. 1 Pt.3:3-4).

> **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**

Second, a person can change his clothing and his appearance *in order to attract attention*. He desires and loves the attention, so he seeks to attract by being different and by making himself stand out. This was a prominent sin of the religionists in Jesus' day.

⇒ They wore phylacteries. These were little leather-type boxes which contained a piece of parchment with four passages of Scripture written on it. The scriptures were Ex.13:1-10; 13:11-16; Dt.6:4-9; and 11:13-21. The use of the phylacteries seems to have arisen from a literal translation of Ex.13:9 and Pr.7:3. However, the true meaning of these two passages seems to be that we are to have the Word of God in our minds just as clearly as if we had them before our eyes. The great fault of these religionists was that they not only interpreted the passages literally and wore the little leather boxes, but they enlarged the boxes to draw attention to themselves as being religious.

⇒ They also enlarged the borders of their garments; that is, they wore tassels on their outside robes. God had instructed the Jews to make fringes or tassles on the borders of their outer robes. When a person noticed them, he was to be reminded to keep God's commandments. Again, the error was that the religionist changed his appearance from others; he enlarged his tassels, drawing attention to his being more religious than others.

Thought 1. A person can wear clothes to attract attention by either overdressing or underdressing. A person can overdress to attract and focus attention upon himself, and a person can wear clothes that expose the body, that actually attract attention to certain parts of the body. A person can wear clothes that are too tight, too low cut, too high cut, too thin. A person can wear too little clothing and clothing that fails to cover enough of the body.

Jesus very simply says to beware of dressing to attract attention. The religionists did it to appear *righteous*. Others do it to appear *worldly* (appealing).

> **"Neither yield ye your members [bodily parts] as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Ro.6:13).**
>
> **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim.2:9-10).**
>
> **"Whose [wives] adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Pt.3:3-5).**

b. The religionists loved the greetings and titles that exalted men with honor. Note: the title was "Rabbi" which meant teacher or master. It was only a simple title, yet some loved and revelled in the recognition above other men. It took a man that was supposed to be God's messenger and said, "Here he is; this is he." It honored the man and not the Lord.

> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).**
>
> **"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**

c. The religionists loved the front seats and high places in the synagogues and feasts that were seen, admired, and showed their prominence. In the synagogue the leaders and distinguished persons sat on a bench in front of the ark (where the Scripture was kept), and they sat facing the congregation. No leader could be missed. On social occasions the most honored sat at the right hand of the host, then the next honored at his left hand, and so on, alternating from the right to the left down the table. Position and recognition were set.

Thought 1. Some love the titles and esteem, the special seats and places of recognition. There are those who love the restricted neighborhoods and clubs, the preferred lists. They love the preeminence. Note what is condemned: not being in these positions and places, but the *love* of them. Someone has to hold the upper positions and fill the major places. It is the *love* and feeling of pride because of the title and the place and position that is wrong.

> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).**
>
> **"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not" (3 Jn.9).**

2. The terrible sin of the religionists was that they devoured widows' houses; that is, they used widows for gain. This was and is a gross sin, and it is common. There are some preachers and leaders, professing hypocrites, who court the attention and favor of people (especially widows) for the purpose of securing money. They seek large donations, endowments, trusts, investments, and gifts *to promote themselves and their institution*. The great tragedy is that such false and hypocritical hearts use the guise of religion to promote themselves and their false ideas. Their call to people is to institutional religion, not to the honor of God and the spirit of self-denial. Vain men, of course, are succeptible to such appeals; but widows in particular are exposed to those who seem to be so devoted to God.

3. The condemnation of religionists and any one else who is guilty of such sins is to be greater. There are some sins more horrible than others. Using religion for selfish ends is one of them. Such will receive a greater damnation. A fact should be noted here: widows hold a special place in God's heart. He has always instructed His people to care for them in a very special way.

> **"He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Dt.10:18).**
>
> **"Cursed be he that perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow" (Dt.27:19).**
>
> **"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation" (Ps.68:5).**
>
> **"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is.1:17).**
>
> **"And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Lk.18:3-7).**

	CHAPTER 21 **I. The Widow's Mite: The Question of Giving, 21:1-4** (Mk.12:41-44)
1 **Jesus sat & rested**[DSI] a. Saw the rich give b. Saw a poor widow give	And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.
2 **Giving must be in the right spirit**	2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.
3 **Giving must not be based on the amount given, but on the amount kept back**	3 And he said, of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all:
4 **Giving must be sacrificial, given because a person has need**	4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

DIVISION VIII

THE SON OF MAN'S DRAMATIC ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM: HIS CLAIM AND CONFLICT, 19:28-21:4

I. The Widow's Mite: The Question of Giving, 2l:1-4

(21:1-4) **Introduction—Stewardship**: giving to the church and charity is a thorn in the side of many. Most persons give a little money or a few worn out or unwanted items, but few give much of value. However, if the needs of a world that reels in desperation are to be met, many must begin to give and to give sacrificially. Something needs to be seen: giving may be debated among men, but it is not debatable with Jesus. Jesus answered the questions about giving, and He did so strongly—without hesitation and debate. Every person must give *everything he is and has* to meet the needs of a world that has thousands *dying every day*, dying because they lack the very necessities of life and have never heard the gospel of His glorious love and deliverance.

1. Jesus sat and rested (v.1-2).
2. Giving must be in the right spirit (v.2).
3. Giving must not be based on the amount given, but on the amount kept back (v.3).
4. Giving must be sacrificial, given because a person has need (v.4).

1 (21:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Tired—Vision**: Jesus sat and rested. He had suffered a great deal of pressure and tension over the past few hours. The authorities had baited Him time and again with trick questions, trying to trap and discredit Him before the people (Lk.20:1-47). He was tired and mentally exhausted. Note the words, "He looked up." He had walked out of the court of the Gentiles into the court of the women and sat down to rest over by the treasury (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.21:1). His elbows were upon His knees and His face and head were resting in the palms of His hands. Sitting there with His eyes closed and resting, He heard the clanging of the money being dropped into the collection boxes. At some point "He looked up and saw" what must have been an impressive sight. It was Passover week and teeming thousands would be streaming by the boxes making their contributions. In fact, Mark says "*many* that were rich cast in *much*" (Mk.12:41). Jesus saw the rich making their contributions. In some cases the gifts were very large. Then all of a sudden out of nowhere something caught Jesus' eye. A poor widow cast in "two mites," which were the smallest coins—coins that had the least value in that day.

The point is this: Jesus saw in the widow's mite a timely illustration, an illustration that would answer man's question about giving to the work of God and meeting the desperate needs of the world.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(21:1) **Temple—Treasury**: the treasury (gazophulakion) was in the court of the women. A section of the court had thirteen trumpet shaped collection boxes. Each box had written on it the purpose for which the offerings were to be used. People simply dropped their offerings into the box of the ministry they wished to support.

2 (21:2) **Stewardship—Tithing**: giving must be in the right spirit. The widow was very poor. Jesus used two different words for "poor" to describe just how poor the woman really was. In verse two the word is *penichran* which means a person who earns only a meager, pitiful wage. In verse three the word is *ptoche* which means abject poverty, utter destitution, poverty that is visible and unquestionable. It is the poverty that forces one to beg and seek alms in order to survive. In that day there was little work for a widow. Poor widows had to struggle for their very survival. Such was the case of this poor widow; she was desperately poor. Note: she had cast in two mites, and the two coins were all she had (v.4).

1. She was giving to God's work because she wanted to give. She wanted God to have what she had to use in His service. She did not give grudgingly or reluctantly, but willingly.

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor.9:7).

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor.8:12).

2. Her trust was not in money. Her trust was in God. She literally gave all she had to God. Her spirit was right; it was reaching out to God, saying that all she had belonged to God. Both she and her possessions were the Lord's.

"But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you" (Lk.11:41).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim.6:17).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed....Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:3, 5).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Is.26:3).

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is" (Jer.17:7).

3 (21:3) **Stewardship—Tithing**: giving must not be based on the amount given, but on the amount kept back. This is difficult for men to accept, in particular rich men, but it is definitely one of the points Jesus was making. Wealth and money are not for the purpose of hoarding and storing and banking, not in a world reeling with poverty and need, sin and death. The needs of all men must be met and the message of salvation and eternal life must to be proclaimed. The imperative of the need and command of God is unequivocal and irrevocable.

Note what Jesus said. She "hath cast in more than they all." Jesus was not saying that she cast in more than any *one* of them, but she cast in more than *all of them put together*. This was shocking! How could He make such a statement, for some had cast in much more money than she? And all the rich combined had cast in an enormous sum. Very simply, God measured what was kept back, not how much was given.

⇒ The widow had less remaining; the others still had much.
⇒ The widow had given more of what she had; the others had given less of what they had.
⇒ The widow had sacrificed more; the others had sacrificed less.

In proportion to what she had, the widow gave a larger percent. The others gave a much smaller percent. After they had given, they still had 85 percent or 95 percent to spend on themselves.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Lk.18:22).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Lk.19:8).

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor.13:3).

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor.9:8).

4 (21:4) **Stewardship—Tithing**: giving must be sacrificial—given because a person has need. This is a critical point, a truth that must be heeded by all givers of every generation.

1. The rich gave *out of their abundance*. They believed in God and trusted Him, and they were appreciative and thankful for the blessings of God. They were even concerned about the needs and welfare of God's work, concerned enough to give *sizable offerings*. It is important to see this fact in order to clearly see what Jesus was saying. The rich were giving and giving much because they cared deeply about the work of God.

2. The widow gave sacrificially; she gave "out of her need." She "gave all the *living* she had." Why? Because she had a need, a great need. She desperately needed food, clothing, and shelter. She was so desperate she seldom knew where her next meal was coming from. The pressure and pain of being destitute and hungry and exposed to the elements was a daily experience for her, and no one cared or helped. But she knew something: God cared. She could trust God, so she took her need and gave it to God. Her need was financial, so she took what money she had and gave it all to God. She simply said, "God, I have need, the need for money. I do not even have enough money to buy food. If I am to eat, you have to provide—somehow, some way. I have worked as hard as I can at the jobs I have been able to find. Here is all I have. Take it; use it in your kingdom. I cast myself upon You. You take care of me."

She knew the great principle that God would take care of those who give all they *are and have* to Him. She knew that if she were to be *assured* of God's care, she had to give *all* to God. If she gave *all*, God would not deny anything to her. He

would provide all the necessities of life (Mt.6:33). She took her need and all that was involved in it and gave it to God. She sought God to meet her need by giving to God *all that she had*.

Note another fact. Two needs are present and being met.

1. God's temple (church) had need. The widow, though poor, gave to help the temple carry on the ministry of God.
2. The poor widow had need. She gave believing God would see to it that she had food, clothing, and shelter. And note: God saw her, and although we are not told about how He did it, He took her under His wing and took care of her.

> **"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).**
>
> **"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).**
>
> **"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps.24:1).**
>
> **"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies" (Ps.41:1).**
>
> **"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Pr.11:25).**
>
> **"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Pr.22:9).**
>
> **"But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand" (Is.32:8).**
>
> **"And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday" (Is.58:10).**

	IX. THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD,[DSI] 21:5-38 (Mt.24-25; Mk.13)	ing, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?	questions 1) When was it to be destroyed 2) What were the signs
		8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for	c. The warning: Be not deceived
		many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.	**2 Sign 1: False Christs**
	A. The Predicted Signs of the Present Age, 21:5-11 (Mt.24:1-14; Mk.13:1-13)	9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.	**3 Sign 2: Conflict of nations**
1 The disciples admired the temple's beauty a. Jesus predicted the temple's utter destruction	5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, 6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.	10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: 11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.	**4 Sign 3: Natural disasters**
b. The disciples asked two	7 And they asked him, say-		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

A. The Predicted Signs of the Present Age, 21:5-11

(21:5-38) **DIVISION OVERVIEW:** this chapter is known as the *Olivet Discourse* (see outlines and notes—Mt.24:1-25:46; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,*3*—Mk.13:1-37 for more discussion). It deals with *three great subjects* that lay out in the future when they were predicted by Christ.

1. The destruction of Jerusalem (v.6-7; cp. Mt.24:2-3).
2. The Lord's return (v.7; cp. Mt.24:3).
3. The end of the world (v.7; cp. Mt.24:3).

(Matthew and Mark's account of what happens in this passage should be read along with Luke for a clearer understanding.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:5-38) **End Time**: four things will help in understanding what Jesus was doing in the discussion of the end times.

1. It will help to remember that Jesus was preparing His disciples for His death and departure from this world and preparing them to carry on after He was gone. His immediate disciples were to face some terrible times, ranging all the way from personal trials brought on by their witness for Jesus to national trials involving the utter destruction of their nation. In addition, it would be generations stretching into centuries before He returned to earth. No one knew this at that time, but He did. Therefore, He needed to prepare His future disciples as well, for they too were going to face all kinds of trials. There was the danger that His disciples might tire waiting for His return; moreover, they were to see and experience so much trouble in the world, their faith might falter. They, along with many in the world, might begin to ask:

> **"Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt.3:4).**

What Jesus did was use this occasion to reveal some of the events that were to take place upon the earth during these "*last days*," the days of the church (Acts 2:16-17; 1 Jn.2:18). By knowing some of the events, His disciples would be better prepared to endure and to keep their hope for His return alive.

- ⇒ They would know that God is never caught off guard. God is still on the throne and still in control of all world events.
- ⇒ They would not be caught off guard themselves. They would know what to expect in this corruptible and sinful world. Therefore, when the events happened, they would not be as likely to become discouraged.
- ⇒ They would be challenged to *keep themselves* ever so close to God in order to be as strong as possible to face the trials coming upon earth.
- ⇒ They would be encouraged to place their hope in God and in the new heavens and earth and not in this corruptible world. They would be "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:13).

2. Remembering that Jesus was dealing with two questions will also help in understanding what was being said. He was answering the questions: When will the temple be destroyed, and what shall be the sign of His return and of the end of the world?

Note something: Jesus was dealing with *the end of the temple and with the end of the world, the destruction of the temple and the destruction of the world.* He was covering the signs, the events that cause and occur during the judgment of *both the temple and the world.* What is the point? Simply this. Scripture teaches that the same sins and events cause the judgment of anything. That is, the events (sins) that cause judgment upon one thing are the same events that will bring judgment upon everything else. Therefore, the signs that surrounded the destruction of Jerusalem are much the same as the signs that will surround the end of the world. What Jesus was saying has a double meaning and application (see notes—Mt.24:1-14; 24:15-28. Both notes will help to see the double application.)

The Lord's words applied both to the disciples of His day and to all disciples who were to follow in succeeding generations. As long as the earth stands, the disciples of "the last days" (or ages) will face many of the same signs faced by those who experienced the destruction of Jerusalem. However, there is to be one difference. At the end of the world, the signs will *increase and intensify.* The day is coming; it will be so terrible that it can be called *the beginning of sorrows* (Mt.24:8), and the *great tribulation* (Mt.24:21). (See notes—Mt.24:1-28; 24:15-28 for a discussion of these two lessons.)

3. The present age is considered by God to be "the age of the last days" or "the last time." According to God's timetable, the history of the church, its presence on earth takes place in "the last days" or during "the last times."

> **"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16-17).**
>
> **"[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb.1:2).**
>
> **"Little children, it is the last time" (1 Jn.2:18).**

4. A quick overview of the passages in this chapter also helps in understanding what Jesus was doing.
   a. The signs of the present age (Lk.21:5-11).
   b. The tragic sign prior to the end: persecution (Lk.21:12-19).
   c. The destruction of Jerusalem (Lk.21:20-24).
   d. The Coming of the Son of Man (Lk.21:25-28).
   e. The Parable of the Fig Tree: the signs are clearly seen (Lk.21:29-33).

(21:5-11) **Introduction—End Time**: there is a matter of critical importance when looking at the end time. In understanding what Jesus was saying, we have to be very careful not to add to or take away from what He said. Both mistakes were made by religionists concerning Jesus' first coming (Mt.2:4-6).

A major fact to keep in mind is this. The disciples *did think* that all three events (Jerusalem's destruction, the Lord's return, and the world's end) would happen at about the same time. They did think in terms of the Messianic Kingdom of God. Comparing Acts 1:6 with the Jewish concept of the Messiah shows this. (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:23-23.) When Jesus said that the temple would be destroyed, the disciples assumed it would happen at the same time that He returned to end the world, thereby restoring the kingdom to Israel.

Jesus, however, gave no timetable. He did not say when the three events would occur. What He did was give signs that would occur before the events, signs that would point toward His return and toward the end of Jerusalem and toward the end of the world.

It is also important to keep in mind that most of the signs happen *all through history.* However, there is this difference: the signs increase and intensify right before the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world. There will be a period known as *the beginning of sorrows* (Mt.24:8) and a period launched by *the abomination of desolation* known as the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" (Mt.24:21).

The signs of the present age are three.
1. The disciples admired the temple's beauty (v.5-8).
2. Sign 1: false Christs (v.8).
3. Sign 2: conflict of nations (v.9-10).
4. Sign 3: natural disasters (v.11).

1 (21:5-8) **End Time**: the disciples admired the temple's beauty. The temple was magnificent. It sat upon the towering summit of Mount Zion. It was built of white marble plated with gold. The temple was a massive structure that could hold thousands of people. (Cp. Acts 4:4 which perhaps took place in the temple. Five thousand men were saved among a crowd which probably numbered many thousands more.) The temple had several porches such as Solomon's Porch and the Royal Porch that were supported with huge, towering pillars. The pillars were so large that it took three to four men's reaching arm to arm to encircle each one. The temple was a striking sight, one of the building wonders of the world. The disciples apparently stood some place where the temple in all its magnificent beauty struck them with awe, and they wanted Jesus to see the beautiful sight. When they drew His attention to it, three things happened.

1. Jesus used the occasion to arouse the disciples' interest in coming events. He predicted the temple's utter destruction.
2. The disciples were shocked and aroused to ask two questions of the Lord. To understand the questions, the beliefs of the disciples must be remembered. Their thoughts were filled with the idea of Israel's glory as the greatest nation upon earth. They had finally accepted the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, God's appointed instrument to free Israel and to raise the nation to its destined glory. Therefore, when Jesus began to talk about the temple's being razed to the ground, they were utterly shocked. "Master, when shall these things be?" They could hardly believe their ears. The thought that flashed

across their minds was *the end time*. "These things will occur in *the end time*, will they not, Master? Just when will they take place? What signs will there be to show they are about to take place?" (Cp. Mt.24:1-3, 15-31.) In their minds the temple could not possibly be destroyed until the end of all things came about. They were thinking that the glory of Israel was to be set up when all of a sudden, Jesus began to talk about the utter destruction of the temple, the very center of their nation. They wanted to know two things.

⇒ When was the temple to be destroyed?

⇒ What would be the signs "when these things shall come to pass," that is, the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the world, and the Lord's return (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.21:5-38)?

3. Jesus warned His disciples not to be deceived. This can mean one or two things.
   a. A person can be easily deceived when dealing with end time prophecies.
   b. A person can be easily deceived when facing the end time events. He can be deceived into thinking that certain cataclysmic events are infallible signs that the end is at hand. Too often cataclysmic events result in wild guesses about the end time. They result in...
      - universal predictions.
      - the deceiving of others.
      - discouragement of one's faith when the end does not come.

2 (21:8) **Messiah, False**: the first sign will be *false messiahs*. Jesus said three things about this sign.

1. There will be *many*, not just a few but *many,* false messiahs.
2. They will make two claims.
   a. The claim of deity. Note the words, "I Am" (eimi). This is the name which was used by God to reveal Himself to Moses. It is the most basic name of Deity. "I Am" equals *Being*, the most basic Being of the Universe. It is the claim used by God to tell man that He is the Supreme Being of the universe, the Messiah, the Deliverer of all mankind (see note—Jn.6:20).
   b. The claim that the end time—the Messianic Age, the age when Israel and the world are to be delivered—*is at hand*. (How often this claim is made, even by some well-meaning men! But note what Jesus said in the next point.)
3. "Go...not...after them." They are false messiahs. The real Messiah has already come, Jesus Christ, the Son of God Himself. It is He and He alone who has "the words of eternal life." As Peter exclaimed:

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

Thought 1. Note to whom Christ was speaking: His disciples. Disciples can be misled by false teachers and prophets.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Mt.24:5).

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (Mt.24:11).

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Mt.24:24; cp. Mk.13:22).

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Ro.16:18).

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" (2 Cor.11:13).

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:3-4).

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision [the doctrine of the law, of works]: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Tit.1:10-11).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went

out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:18-19).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

3 (21:9-10) **World Violence—War**: the second sign will be *conflict of nations*. Four things were said here.

1. Believers will hear of wars and commotions (akatastasias), which means tumults, uproars, riots, terrorism, insurrections, treasons, confusions of governments. There will be uprisings within governments, and governments will be overthrown. Believers can become extremely disturbed over the news.

2. Believers are not to be "terrified" (ptoethete). They are not to let their hearts "be troubled" (Jn.14:1). World violence can trouble people; but the believer's heart and life are to be centered upon God, trusting His presence, care, and security—eternally.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn.14:1-2).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Lk.12:4-5).

3. World violence "must first come to pass." It does not come to pass because God destines it, but because men's hearts are gripped by passion, lust, greed, and evil.

"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" (Mt.18:7).

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not" (Jas.4:1-3).

4. World violence can so dominate the news that men are led to believe that the end is at hand. However, Jesus warned, "The end is not by and by," not yet. Remember the words just spoken, "Take heed that ye be not deceived."

"And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (2 Chron.15:6-7).

"My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD. And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumor that shall be heard in the land; a rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler" (Jer.51:45-46).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

4 (21:11) **Nature—Earthquakes—Famines—Pestilence**: the fourth sign will be *natural disasters*. Five disasters in nature were mentioned in particular.

1. Earthquakes. Great earthquakes cause enormous damage to buildings, disrupting and destroying the lives of people, cities, and communitites. Earthquakes are one of the most alarming and frightening disasters among men. Josephus records the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. He even hints that the natural disasters which happened were a sign of coming destruction.

"...there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds, with the largest showers of rain, and continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth, that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and any one would guess that these wonders forshowed some grand calamities that were coming" (Josephus, *Wars*. 4. 4:5).

Earthquakes will occur in many places during the last days of the earth (Rev.6:12; 11:12-13, 19; 16:17-19).

2. Famines. Food is one of the most basic necessities of men. Without food men die. Jesus said that in the last days, right before Jerusalem's fall and right before the end of the world, there shall be terrible famine. Scripture speaks of a "great famine throughout all the world which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (Acts 11:28-30). Josephus describes the famine as being so terrible that when flour "was brought into the temple...not one of the priests was so hardy as to eat one crumb of it... while so great a distress was upon the land" (Josephus, *Ant*. 3. 15:3). He says in another place,

"A famine did oppress them [Jerusalem]...and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food" (Josephus, *Ant.* 20:25).

In the very last days before Jerusalem's fall, Josephus speaks of another terrible famine:

> *"It was now a miserable case, and a sight that would justly bring tears into our eyes, how men stood to their food, while the more powerful had more than enough, and the weaker were lamenting (for want of it)" (Josephus, Wars. 5. 10:3).*
>
> *"Then did the famine widen its progress, and devoured the people by whole houses and families; the upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying by famine; and the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged; the children also and the young men wandered about the marketplaces like shadows, all swelled with famine, and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them"* (Josephus, *Wars.* 5. 12:3).

There is evidently to be terrible famine in the last days. The black horse of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse indicates terrible famine (see note—Rev.6:5-6). The unbearable pain and terrible evil that hunger can cause is graphically described by Scripture.

> **"They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. The hands of the pitiful women have sodden [boiled] their own children: they were their meat [food] in the destruction of the daughter of my people" (Lam.4:9-10).**

Luke adds a third disaster of nature: pestilence. Earthquakes and famines, of course, cause disease and pestilence (see note—Mt.24:7).

3. Pestilence. Disease is often the result of war and widespread disasters such as earthquakes. Pestilence shows no partiality. The rich may be able to buy food during a famine, but they cannot buy their way out of an epidemic of disease. Death by disease and other natural causes shows no partiality.

Josephus' record of a great pestilence that struck during the days of Herod is evidence of the fact.

> *"When he [Herod] was in the way, there arose a pestilential disease, and carried off the greatest part of the multitude, and of his best and most esteemed friends [the wealthy]"* (Josephus, *Ant.* 15. 7:7).

Pestilence will also be one of the terrible sufferings at the end time. Part of the suffering caused by the pale horse of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse includes pestilences.

> **"Power was given unto (Death and Hell) over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword [war], and with hunger [famine], and with death [pestilence resulting from war and famine]" (Rev.6:8; see note—Rev.6:8).**

4. Astronomical happenings. There will be "fearful sights and great signs" happening in the sky at the end of the world. Very practically, such astronomical happenings occur now. The earth is sometimes darkened by dust from earthly catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, wind storms, and smoke from huge fires. Of course, whatever darkens the sun, hides the light of the moon from earth. The stars, that is, meteorites of varying sizes, fall through space often. The point is, the events of the end time are going to trigger astronomical happenings worldwide, universally. (See notes—Mk.13:24; Mk.13:24-25 for more discussion.)

> **"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken" (Mk.13:24-25).**
>
> **"But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk.17:29-30).**
>
> **"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Lk.21:25-26).**
>
> **"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:19-20).**
>
> **"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:12-17).**

	B. The Tragic Sign Prior to the End: Persecution, 21:12-19 (Mt.24:9-10, 13; Mk.13:9, 11-12)	ye shall answer: 15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.	defense 2) A supernatural answer will be given
1 The persecution of believers a. The persecutors: Religious & civil authorities b. The reason: Believers are followers of Christ c. The result: A glorious testimony d. The preparation 1) Do not prepare a	12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. 13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before	16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls.	**2 The betrayers of believers** a. Relatives b. All men **3 The promise to believers** a. God is in control b. Eternal security: *If* endure

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

B. The Tragic Sign Prior to the End: Persecution, 21:12-19

(21:12-19) **Introduction**: the discussion of the present passage focuses upon the signs of the end time (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.21:5-38). There is one sign of the end time that must be proclaimed to all believers. It is the sign of *persecution*. It is true that believers are persecuted in every generation, but right before the end time there will be a great intensification of persecution throughout the whole world. Believers will be persecuted as never before. Note the words, "But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you." Believers must be prepared. This is the purpose of the present passage. The passage can be applied to believers in every generation to prepare them for facing persecution.

1. The persecution of believers (v.12-15).
2. The betrayers and traitors of believers (v.16-17).
3. The promise to believers (v.18-19).

1 (21:12-15) **Persecution, Reasons; Results**: the persecution of believers. Note three facts.

1. The persecution will be carried out by both civil and religious authorities. Both the government and religion will persecute true believers right before the end time. The idea is, of course, an intensification of persecution in the end time (see note—Lk.21:5-8). This is the very reason Jesus made a distinction between the end time and the church age persecutors. Right before the end of the world, believers will be opposed, abused, arrested, tried, and martyred as never before in human history. Both the courts of the world and the councils of religion will take believers and rake them over the hot coals of persecution. Believers will be...
   - afflicted (cp. Acts 4:3; 8:1; 12:4; 13:50; 14:19; 2 Cor.11:23-25).
   - killed (Acts 7:59; 12:2).
   - hated by all nations (Acts 28:22. See outline and notes—Mt.10:16-23. Cp. Jn.15:20; 16:2.)
2. The reason believers will be persecuted is clearly stated by Jesus: "*For my name's sake.*" The world will try to stamp out and silence believers because they are true followers of Christ. Their intense hatred of the believer will be due to at least three reasons.
   a. The standard of true godliness. The believer sets before the world a different standard—the standard of true godliness. The world is not godly nor is its standard godly. Therefore by his *very nature*, any man who lives for the world and does not wish to change opposes godliness.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

   b. The life of purity. The genuine believer lives a life of purity, clean and just. True morality and godliness controls the mind, dresses modestly, converses respectfully, and behaves justly. The worldly live to fulfill the lust of their flesh and to have possessions as they wish. Therefore, the believer is opposed by any person who does not wish to live a pure and just life.

> **"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which**

I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:19-24).

c. The message of repentance and of self-denial. The genuine believer proclaims the message of Christ: repentance and self-denial. Very practically, few men are willing to change (repent) to the degree that self is totally denied (person and possessions) in order to meet the needs of desperate people. Therefore most, even the religious, oppose the idea that men are to live sacrificially in order to save a starving and dying world (both a physically and spiritually starving and dying world). (See outline and notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23-26.)

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Ro.14:21).

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth [welfare]" (1 Cor.10:24).

3. The result of the persecution will be a glorious witness for the Lord. The persecutors will try to silence the believer, but the very persecution itself will turn out to be a glorious witness for the Lord. How? The believer, standing there suffering, will show such loyalty and supernatural strength that some, even some of the persecutors, will be attracted to Christ. The believer will show that Christ and eternity are real, and he will be a testimony even as he receives the beatings and the swords of the persecutors.

"For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16).

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor.1:3-4).

"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).

4. The preparation of a defense will not be necessary. When the genuine believer has to give an answer or a defense to his persecutors, God will fill his heart and mouth with a reply. The believer will be so filled with wisdom that his persecutors will not be able to resist his defense.

Note: Jesus was not promising the believer that he would be freed. He was promising a strong, unanswerable testimony. It will be time for many believers to go on home with the Lord. The end time will be filled with the blood of many martyrs for the Lord.

"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:16-18).

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb.13:6).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up" (Is.50:9).

2 (21:16-17) **Persecution**: the betrayal of believers will be heartrending. Believers will be betrayed by their *own families and relatives*, friends and neighbors. Some believers will even be put to death because of their betrayal. Note three points.

1. Jesus was speaking of the end time. Betrayal by loved ones will intensify in the end time.

2. The reason for the betrayal will cut the human heart. Families and friends will hate the believer because of Christ (v.17). The believer will stand for the name and righteousness of Christ; therefore, loved ones will betray him...

- to save their own lives
- to secure some favor
- to escape embarrassment
- to secure vengeance
- to escape persecution themselves
- to gain the favor of authorities
- to escape fear
- to preserve selfish honor or position

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death" (Mt.10:21).

3. *All* shall hate the believer. Few will be kind, tender, and loving; dissension and division will prevail in the last days. Most will begrudge what another has or is doing or is not doing. Unfortunately, such behavior has been the case down through the centuries, and too often the church has experienced one person's disliking and opposing another person. Envy, greed, and concern for security and recognition—all the sins of selfishness—have caused too many to stand against another person's position, beliefs, abilities, and leadership. Criticism and judging, dissension and division among believers have been and are some of the most visible traits of the church, both locally and universally. Jesus said that such hatred will increase and intensify in the end time.

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt.10:17).

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake" (Mt.24:9; cp. Lk.21:12-13).

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:1-3).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me" (Ps.7:1).

"My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me" (Ps.31:15).

"All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute me wrongfully; help thou me" (Ps.119:86).

"For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead" (Ps.143:3).

3 (21:18-19) **Persecution**: the promise is glorious and assuring to the believer. It is twofold.

1. First, the promise is that God is in control of the believer's life, total control. "Not an hair of your head shall perish." Jesus meant, of course, spiritual security. He had just said some would "be put to death" (v.16). God knows every hair on the believer's head (Lk.12:7); God is in total control of every single thing concerning the believer. Therefore, if the believer is persecuted, he is under God's care; and if he is being killed, he is under God's care. No matter the persecution and suffering...
   - God sees and is in control. He holds the believer in His hands.
   - God turns the suffering into a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" and reward (2 Cor.4:17).
2. Second, the promise is the eternal security of the believer's soul. If the believer endures the persecution, he shall possess his soul eternally. The idea is that endurance to the end is *required*. The genuine beliver *will* stand fast and endure. He will *not deny* his Lord; he could never give in to such, for he knows the presence and salvation (deliverance) of the Lord. (See note—Mk.13:13.)

Very simply, persecution is not to be feared by the Christian believer. Persecution, even martyrdom, is nothing in light of eternity (cp. Rev.6:9-11). Despite death (v.16) and hatred (v.17), Jesus promised "there shall not a hair of your head perish" (v.18). The believer is secure in the arms of Jesus eternally.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev.2:10).

"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, *eternal life*: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile (Ro.2:7-9).

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [trial]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas.1:12).

"Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy" (Jas.5:11).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into this marvellous light (1 Pt.2:9).

	C. The Destruction of Jerusalem, 21:20-24 (Mt.24:15-28; Mk.13:14-23)	vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.	
		23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.	**4 A time of woe: Distress & wrath, death & captivity**
1 A sign for which to look: Jerusalem surrounded by armies	20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.		
2 A time to flee	21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.	24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.	**5 A time numbered by the Gentiles**
3 A time of vengeance[DSI]	22 For these be the days of		

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

C. The Destruction of Jerusalem, 21:20-24

(21:20-24) **Introduction—End Time**: this passage is definitely dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and with the Jewish nation throughout history (v.24).

⇒ The desolation mentioned is the desolation of Jerusalem, not the *abomination of desolation* (that is, the antichrist spoken of by Matthew and Mark, Mt.24:15; Mk.13:14).

⇒ Verse 24 makes it clear that the period covered by Jesus stretches from the time "ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies" (v.20) "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (v.24).

However, the points of this Scripture can also be applied to the end time as well. Matthew and Mark definitely give a double meaning to the words of Jesus. The disciples had asked two questions. First, when was Jerusalem to be destroyed? They thought it could be destroyed only in the end time. Second, what were the signs of the end time, or the destruction and remaking of all things which would usher in the Kingdom of God? (See note—Lk.21:5-8. Cp. notes—Lk.21:5-38 for more discussion.) What Jesus says in Matthew and Mark can be applied here in Luke. The fall of Jerusalem is judgment upon sin, and the fall of the world will be judgment upon sin. The questions asked by the disciples (v.7) refer to similar conditions that bring about judgment. Therefore, the signs of both the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world are similar. The only difference is that there will be an intensification of the signs in the end time (see notes—Mt.24:15-28; Mk.13:14-23).

1. A sign for which to look: Jerusalem surrounded by armies (v.20).
2. A time to flee (v.21).
3. A time of vengeance (v.22).
4. A time of woe, distress and wrath, death and captivity (v.23).
5. A time numbered by the Gentiles (v.24).

1 (21:20) **Jerusalem**: a sign to look for is that of Jerusalem's being surrounded by armies. In A.D. 66-70 Jerusalem experienced one of the most terrible sieges in history. In A.D. 66 the Jews revolted and the Roman army was swift to attack. However, the city was difficult to take primarily for two reasons. It sat upon a hill, well protected by the terrain, and the leaders of the revolt were religious fanatics. Well over a million people had fled into the city behind its protective walls.

Jesus made two points.

1. Some standing there with Him were to *see* and be witnesses of the sign. They were to actually see judgment fall upon Jerusalem.
2. All of His followers were to be *looking* for and alert to the sign. They were to be prepared at all times for the coming judgment.

> **Thought 1.** The point is clear. We are to be prepared for the coming judgment of the end time. Some of us will be the actual witnesses of the sign. (See outline, note, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.24:15 for more discussion and application.)

2 (21:21) **End Time—Judgment**: the sign of Jerusalem's being surrounded will be a time to flee. Jesus warned His disciples to flee and to flee immediately. The danger would be imminent and urgency would be needed. Believers...

- in the *surrounding areas* around Jerusalem are to flee to the mountains.
- in the *midst* of Jerusalem are to get out and leave the city immediately.
- in other countries are to stay away and give no thought to entering Jerusalem (Israel).

Note two things.

1. The believers did heed the warning of Jesus. They fled Jerusalem before the attack, sometime around A.D. 66. They fled to a small town called *Pella* in the district of Decapolis.

2. Matthew points out that Jesus said to forget all comfort of home and personal possessions, that the danger was so close and terrible that believers should think only about escaping. Nothing else mattered, nothing except fleeing the coming judgment.

Thought 1. Too many minds are centered upon comfort and possessions, the world and money. The coming judgment is so close and terrible, it alone should consume our thoughts. We must flee to Christ for safety when the signs are seen, and they are definitely seen today. We who live in these "last days" must heed the warning of Christ even as believers of the first century heeded.

Thought 2. The judgment that fell upon Jerusalem is a picture of the coming judgment upon the world. We must be prepared to flee to Christ for safety.

> **"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Mt.7:24-25).**
>
> **"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).**
>
> **"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).**
>
> **"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb.13:5).**

3 (21:22) **Judgment—End Time**: the sign of Jerusalem's being surrounded will be a time of vengeance. Note two points.

1. "The days of vengeance" will be the fulfillment of Scripture, the days of God's wrath (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Vengeance*—Lk.21:22). God had been patient and long-suffering with Israel for generations, in fact, from the very beginning of their history. But Israel had always rejected God's pleadings. Therefore, the predicted judgment had to fall. What Israel had sown was to be reaped. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22.)
2. The terrible desolation that took place upon Jerusalem and that is to take place at the end of the world—all the desolation—is due to sin. Jerusalem committed the most heinous sin in human history: the people rejected God for centuries and eventually killed God's very own Son. Therefore, Jerusalem was utterly destroyed.

Thought 1. There is a severe warning here for believers and nations. Sin results in desolation. Rejection of God's Son will bring judgment upon any person and any nation of people.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:22) **Vengeance** (ekdikeseos): executing perfect justice, retribution, satisfaction. It is judgment that flows out of righteousness and justice. It is not the retaliation that flows from human anger and hurt feelings. There is no self-gratification or selfish reaction in the word at all. It is judgment that executes perfect justice. It is judgment that makes things right, exactly as they should be.

> **"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Ro.12:19).**
>
> **"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:7-8).**
>
> **"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb.10:30-31).**
>
> **"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste" (Dt.32:35).**
>
> **"O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud" (Ps.94:1-2).**
>
> **"And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them" (Ezk.25:17).**
>
> **"And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard" (Mic.5:15).**
>
> **"God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies" (Nah.1:2).**

4 (21:23) **End Time—Judgment**: the sign of Jerusalem's being surrounded will be a time of woe, distress and wrath, death and captivity. Four pictures are painted to describe the awfulness of the hour.

1. Women who were pregnant and carrying small children would find it difficult to flee. They would be too slow to escape the onrushing judgment.

2. There would be great "distress" in the land. As the siege wore on, the predictions of Jesus were literally fulfilled. There was the killing and maiming of loved ones in war, the famine and pestilence and false deliverers (messiahs). There was the betrayal and murder of neighbors in stealing food and seeking the favor of authorities in order to survive. Everyone was fending for himself. There was the utter chaos and collapse of order. There was the pressure and tension, the suffering and pain that one's nation and people were about to be wiped off the face of the earth. Distress swept over the whole land.

3. The wrath of man (Rome) and the wrath of God fell upon the people.

4. An unbelievable number fell by the sword; over one million people died and about ninety-seven thousand were taken captive (see notes—Mt.24:7; 24:10; 24:11. See Josephus, *Wars* 5. 12:3; 6. 3:4; 6. 8:5.)

> *"It appears to me that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were"* (Josephus, *Wars*. Preface 4).

In the end time, the world will experience great tribulations—unparalleled in history. Note that Jesus did not describe the great trials beyond what He had already said in these verses. A quick glance at the great tribulation period covered in Revelation will give some idea of the trials (see outlines and notes—all of the following. Cp. Dan.12:1-2.)

⇒ Thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake (Rev.8:5; cp. 8:1-5).
⇒ Natural catastrophes (Rev.8:6-12).
⇒ Demonic-like locust or plagues (Rev.8:13-9:11).
⇒ Demonic-like army (Rev.9:12-21).
⇒ Nations angry, destroying the earth (Rev.11:18; cp. 11:14-19).
⇒ An evil political ruler (Rev.13:1-10).
⇒ A false religious ruler (Rev.13:11-18).
⇒ Terrible destruction and suffering both upon nature and men (Rev.16:1-21).
⇒ An evil, deceptive world power (Rev.17:1-18:24).

5 (21:24) **Gentiles, Times of**: the sign of Jerusalem's being surrounded will be a time numbered by the Gentiles. The Jewish nation was to be scattered and Jerusalem trodden down until "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Note two things.

1. The word "fulfilled" (plerothosin) means that God is in control of the times. There is a purpose to "the times of the Gentiles" and to what has happened and is yet to happen to Israel. God is in control of history.

> **"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**
>
> **"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph.1:10).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
>
> **"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour" (Tit.1:2-3).**

2. There is to be an end to the Jews' captivity and to Jerusalem's being trodden down. The nation will be restored to its land. When? When "the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (See outline and notes, *Israel's Restoration*—Ro.11:25-36; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:25-26 for more discussion.)

> **"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Ro.11:25-27).**

	D. The Coming of Jesus: The Son of Man, 21:25-28 (Mt.24:29-31; Mk.13: 24-27)	for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.	& fearing d. Reason reemphasized: Heavenly bodies shaken
1 The signs of astronomical happenings & their results a. Distress of nations b. Oceans affected	25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;	27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.	**2 The actual coming of Jesus, the Son of Man**
c. Men's hearts failing	26 Men's hearts failing them	28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.	**3 The great encouragement to the believer: Look up—your redemption is near**

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

D. The Coming of Jesus: The Son of Man, 21:25-28

(21:25-28) **Introduction**: the Lord now begins to cover the most significant event yet to occur in human history: His own personal return. The language points toward the Lord's personal return to earth (Lk.21:27, 35). The point is this: there are signs that precede His coming, signs that will enable His followers to be prepared and strengthened to the utmost in endurance.

1. The signs of astronomical happenings and their results (v.25-26).
2. The actual coming of Jesus, the Son of Man (v.27).
3. The great encouragement to the believer: look up—your redemption is near (v.28).

1 (21:25-26) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return—Heavenly Bodies—Outer Space**: the signs of astronomical happenings and their results. There shall be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. What will happen is described in both Matthew and Mark (Mt.24:29; Mk.13:24). Mark says...

- "The sun shall be darkened."
- "The moon shall not give her light."
- "The stars of heaven shall fall."
- "The powers that are in heaven shall be shaken."

Very practically, such astronomical happenings occur now. The earth is sometimes darkened by dust from earthly catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, wind storms, and smoke from huge fires. Of course, whatever darkens the sun, hides the light of the moon from earth. The stars, that is, meteorites of varying sizes, fall throughout space often. "The powers of the heavens" being shaken could mean the heavenly bodies outside our solar system that are called by the Bible "the host of heaven" (Dt.4:19).

Something should be mentioned about the power of the atom. The atom exploded on earth is powerful enough to darken the sun and moon from earth's view. Worldwide atomic warfare would cause so much dust and pollution it would be difficult for any man to see anything in outer space. But as the atom is known today, it could not affect the axis or rotation (the falling or shaking) of the sun and moon and stars unless there were to be an inter-galactical war of some sort way out in the future, and unless there was a power much greater than what we know today. This is not to say that atomic warfare will never happen. There will be wars and rumors of war as long as the earth stands. But what the Bible teaches is that God is going to end all things, not man. When the world ends, it will be God's ending it by His own will and act.

An extreme literalism needs to be avoided when interpreting these verses, for there is so much we do not know about the laws (powers) of nature and the forces God has put in motion throughout the universe. However, there is absolutely no reason for not understanding the Lord's words as actual or literal events.

What the present passage seems to mean is that the whole universe is going to be affected by Christ's coming to earth. The sun and moon, the stars and powers (laws) of heaven will be affected in the sense that they will *open up and receive Him* and serve notice that He is the Creator, the Son of Man, God's very own Son, who is now coming to earth in great power and glory. Imagine a spectacular universal fireworks display, and perhaps what Christ is saying is being pictured. A simple question is: Why would not everything, including the heavenly bodies, put on a display (that would be terrifying to man) when its Creator, the Son of God, returns?

The astronomical bodies are affected because of the *evil of men and the wrath of God*. The scene of falling stars (meteorites) will not be for man to witness a spectacular event; it will be to point to the Son of God, to His judgment falling upon the earth. Every man is going to know beyond any doubt that Jesus Christ is coming in all the power and the glory of God Himself. As Jesus said, "with power and great glory" He is coming. He is coming that "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:10-11). (See notes—Mt.24:29 for more discussion.)

The astronomical happenings will, of course, have devastating results upon earth. These results are the very point of Luke.

⇒ There will be distress and perplexity of nations. The picture is that of leaders' and governments' meeting and trying to figure out what is happening to the heavenly bodies in the sky above. However, they will not know nor be able to cope. They are perplexed and distressed, sensing the doom of the universe.

⇒ There will be the roaring effect upon the oceans and the upheaval of their waves and tides. This, of course, is to be expected since the oceans are controlled by the heavenly bodies.

⇒ There will be men's hearts' failing them; men will be gripped by fear, a desperate fear, sensing the end of the world is at hand. And note: the end *will* be at hand.

> **"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken" (Mk.13:24-25).**
>
> **"But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Lk.17:29-30).**
>
> **"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Lk.21:25-26).**
>
> **"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:19-20).**
>
> **"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev.6:12-17).**
>
> **"For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger" (Is.13:10-13).**
>
> **"Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison...." (Is.24:17-22).**
>
> **"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come" (Joel 2:30-31).**
>
> **"The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel" (Joel 3:15-16).**

2 (21:27) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the actual coming of Jesus, the Son of Man. There are three significant points in this verse.

1. It will be the Son of Man who comes. Jesus claimed to be the Son of Man, God's very own Son incarnate in human flesh as Perfect Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). In that day, there will be no doubt about who He is (cp. Mk.14:61-62). Right now He is recognized only by believers, but then His identity will be unmistakable: He is the Son of Man.

2. Every eye, all men, shall see Him return. This is what is meant by "they." Matthew actually says, "All the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming" (Mt.24:30). His return will be visible to every man on earth, and every man shall then acknowledge Him to be Lord, God's very own Son (Ph.2:9-11; cp. Rev.1:7).

3. He is coming "in the clouds with great power and glory." Picture the scene. The backdrop of heaven is pitch dark, without any major light from the sun and moon. And then, suddenly, as quickly as the flash of lightning, the most brilliant focus of light ever known to man appears. The Shekinah glory of God will shine in the person of Jesus Christ as He appears to the world. The Son of Man is there, in the clouds, having returned in great power and glory just as He said He would.

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day" (2 Th.1:7-10).

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Th.2:8).

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev.1:7).

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev.19:11-16).

3 (21:28) **Jesus Christ, Return**: the great encouragement to the believer. What a glorious hope the believer has! When the terrible events come in the heavens and upon the earth, he is...

- not to be distressed and perplexed, as the nations will be.
- not to fear and have a failing heart, as men will have.

Believers are not to be discouraged, but encouraged. They are to look up and lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth near. The consummation of their salvation and hope is about to take place.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:12-14).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:14).

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled [redeemed] in the body of his flesh through death, to [eternally] present you holy and umblameable and unreproveable in his sight" (Col.1:21-22).

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us [eternally] from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:13-14).

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev.5:9-10).

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help" (Ps.121:1).

"Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD" (Ps.113:1).

"To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth" (Is.40:25-26).

	E. The Parable of the Fig Tree: The Signs are Clearly Seen, 21:29-33 (Mt.24:32-35; Mk.13:28-34)	your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.	b. Will show the Kingdom of God is at hand
1 The signs can be seen—are discernable a. Will be seen just as the leaves of a fig tree are seen when they first appear	29 And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of	32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. 33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.	**2 The signs will occur within one generation** **3 The signs are sure—eternally set**

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

E. The Parable of the Fig Tree: The Signs are Clearly Seen, 21:29-33

(21:29-33) **Introduction**: when will Christ return to earth? The signs covered in v.5-28 will be clearly seen. The day and hour are known only by God, but believers are to be ready. There will be no excuse for being caught off guard.

1. The signs can be seen—are discernable (v.29-31).
2. The signs will occur within one generation (v.32).
3. The signs are sure—eternally set (v.33).

1 (21:29-31) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: the signs can be seen; they are discernable. Jesus said two things.

1. The signs are to be just as clear as the leaves appearing on a fig tree. Note exactly what Jesus said.
   a. Behold the fig tree and all the other trees. Observe and study this truth. If a person is not looking and thinking about the fact, he will miss the truth. Looking, observing, studying, thinking about the fact is essential in order to see the truth.
   b. When the leaves shoot forth, if a person sees and notices them, he *knows* something. Summer is *now* near.
2. The signs will show that the Kingdom of God is at hand, that Jesus Christ is ready to return to earth and set up the Kingdom of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24). Note that Jesus used the word "know." When the signs are seen, believers are to *know* that the end is at hand and not question, wonder, doubt, disbelieve, or fall away.
   ⇒ When believers see false messiahs and prophets arise, they can *know* that a large number of the lost and carnal will be tragically deceived.
   ⇒ When believers see conflict of nations, they can *know* terrible times lie ahead.
   ⇒ When believers see natural disasters, they can *know* that the worst periods of human suffering ever experienced are about to occur.
   ⇒ When believers see intensified persecution, they can *know* God is about to straighten out the injustices and crimes of men.
   ⇒ When believers see armies amassing against Jerusalem, they can *know* the time of the Gentiles is about to end and Israel restored once-for-all.
   ⇒ When believers see astronomical happenings, they can *know* the Lord's return is at hand.

The point is strikingly clear: signs are just that, signs. And signs do at least four things.

1. They point toward an object, helping us to see the object (Christ) and to anticipate knowing the object (Christ).
2. They focus attention upon an object (Christ). Signs keep our thoughts upon Christ and His glorious return.
3. They give direction, keeping us on the right track, helping to guard and protect us from going astray.
4. They give assurance and confidence, assurance that we will not be caught off guard and taken by surprise.

2 (21:32) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: the signs will occur in one generation. Jesus warned: the events will occur rapidly. They will happen in one generation. Just what is meant by "generation" is often disputed, but it must *always* be kept in mind that the disciples had asked two questions: one about Jerusalem's destruction and one about the end of the world. In answering their questions, Jesus nowhere drew a definite line between the two questions. The signs and events that precede one shall precede the other. Therefore, just as the signs and destruction of Jerusalem took place within a generation, the signs and destruction of the world will also occur within a generation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, pt.2—Mt.24:1-31 for more discussion.)

3 (21:33) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return**: the signs are sure, eternally set. The events are sure and irrevocable. Jesus was definite about what He had said. "Heaven and earth *shall* pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Note two things.

1. Heaven and earth shall pass away. Jesus was saying they were actually going to be done away with (2 Pt.3:10-11).
2. All that He had said—all about the great tribulation and His return—would happen. The great tribulation and His return were more sure than heaven and earth.

In the eyes of men, it has been a long, long time since Jesus spoke these words; and an innumerable list of events have happened. Therefore, they assume the whole idea of the second coming is a fable, the figment of hopeful imagination. God knew this would happen.

> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to this promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-13).**

Three things are certain to happen in human history:

⇒ "the beginning of sorrows" (Mt.24:8).
⇒ "the great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world" ((Mt.24:21).
⇒ "the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Lk.21:27).

Heaven and earth shall pass away but not the words Jesus spoke, not what He said would happen. What He said would happen will happen. The three events are certain.

> **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Pt.3:10).**
>
> **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev.21:1).**
>
> **"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever"(1 Jn.2:17).**
>
> **"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor.7:31).**
>
> **"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor.4:18).**
>
> **"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed" (Ps.102:25-26).**
>
> **"The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish" (Is.24:4).**
>
> **"And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree" (Is.34:4).**
>
> **"Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished" (Is.51:6).**
>
> **"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Lk.12:19-20).**

	F. The Warning: Watch & Pray for The Day of Jesus' Return, 21:34-36 (Mt.24:42-44; Mk.13:35-37)
1 It demands taking heed a. By not engaging in worldliness 1) Partying & drunkenness 2) Cares of life	34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.
b. Reason: Lest the believer be caught unaware—snared—trapped[DSI]	35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.
2 It demands watching & praying always a. To be counted worthy b. To escape the things coming to earth c. To stand justified	36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

F. The Warning: Watch and Pray for the Day of Jesus' Return, 21:34-36

(21:34-36) **Introduction**: the universe is to suffer much in coming days. Sometime out in the future, the world will experience disasters and calamities as never before. There will be an increase...

- in wars and conflicts of nations (v.9-10).
- in natural disasters such as earthquakes, famines, disease (v.11).
- in persecution of believers (v.12-19).
- in attacks upon Israel (v.20-24).
- in astronomical happenings (v.25-26).
- in distress of nations (v.25).
- in ocean disturbances (v.25).
- in men's hearts' failing and fearing (v.26).

Jesus warned the believer. The believer must watch and pray for that day.

1. It demands taking heed (v.34-35).
2. It demands watching and praying always (v.36).

1 (21:34-35) **End Time—Jesus Christ, Return—Indulgence—Drunkenness—Worldliness**: that day (the end time and the day of the Lord's return) demands taking heed. The word "take heed" (prosexete) means to give attention, to focus one's mind, to guard, to beware, to take care. Note the believer is to take heed to *himself*, that is, to guard his life. *How*? By not engaging in worldliness. His heart is not to be overcharged (barethosin): heavy, weighed down, burdened, overloaded, filled up, indulged. Three worldly acts in particular are mentioned.

1. Surfeiting (kraipale). The word means to be lighthearted, silly, frivolous, giddy. Medically, it referred to drunken nausea or headaches. It is the kind of lightheartedness, silliness, frivolity, and giddiness that comes from partying and drinking. It is the loose, giddy, suggestive movements and talk that take place...

- at parties
- at social gatherings
- on dates
- behind closed doors
- at luncheons and dinner engagements
- at dances
- at clubs
- on business trips
- in the dark (cp. 1 Th.5:5-10)

2. Drunkenness (methei). The word comes from the word meaning *wine* (methu). It means to be drunk with wine (or any other strong drink or drug), to be intoxicated. Drinking wine (or any other strong drink or drug) has several bad effects:

⇒ It indulges the lust, the appetite of the flesh.
⇒ It *loosens up* a person's moral restraints and allows the indulging of sexual and immoral cravings.
⇒ It dulls the mind to responsibility.
⇒ It burdens the heart and conscience and causes guilt, at least until a person becomes hardened in his sin.
⇒ It deadens feelings for spouses and loved ones, causing distance and withdrawal (such is seldom, if ever, regained).
⇒ It harms the body.

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting [revelling, carousing, partying] and drunkenness, not in chambering [immorality] and wantonness [debauchery, sensuality, licentiousness], not in strife and envying" (Ro.13:13).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these...drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19, 21).

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18).

3. Cares of this life. This means to indulge one's cravings for more and more of the things of this world. Man too often gives his attention and focuses his mind upon more and more of this world. *He desires far more than what he needs*, more...

- food and delicacies
- clothes and the latest styles
- houses and furnishings
- property and holdings
- cars and other vehicles
- free time and recreation
- money and wealth
- recognition and esteem

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (1 Pt.4:3-4).

"But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party, indulge] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Pt.2:12-13).

Why is the believer to take heed, to guard himself against these things? The point is crucial. The believer can be focusing upon the things and possessions of the world so much that he is caught unaware, snared and entrapped in the end time. That day, the day of the Lord's return, can catch him unexpectedly and unprepared.

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:38-39).

"For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them" (Eccl.9:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:35) **Snare—End Time—Jesus Christ, Return—World, Judgment Upon**: the word "snare" (pagis) means to trap as in a net. That day, the end time, is going to catch the whole world unprepared. The terrible events and calamities of the end times are going to fall upon the earth and entrap all. All who dwell upon the earth shall be caught in the disastrous events, the destruction and devastation, distress and misery, misfortune and loss, suffering and affliction. (See outline and notes—Lk.21:5-33.)

Jesus warned the believer. He must "take heed," for in the end time the world will experience great tribulations unparalleled in history. A quick glance at the great tribulation period covered in Revelation will give some idea of the trials (see outlines and notes—all of the following. Cp. Dan.12:1-2.)

⇒ Thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake (Rev.8:5; cp. 8:1-5).
⇒ Natural catastrophes (Rev. 8:6-12).
⇒ Demonic-like locust or plagues (Rev.8:13-9:11).
⇒ Demonic-like army (Rev.9:12-21).
⇒ Nations angry and destroying the earth (Rev.11:18; cp. 11:14-19).
⇒ An evil political ruler (Rev.13:1-10).
⇒ A false and evil religious ruler (Rev.13:11-18).
⇒ Terrible destruction and suffering both upon nature and men (Rev.16:1-21).
⇒ An evil, deceptive world power (Rev.17:1-18:24).

2 (21:36) **End Times—Watching—Praying—Believers, Duties**: that day (the end time and the day of the Lord's return) demands watching and praying *always*. The word "watch" (agrupneite) means to be sleepless, awake, on guard. It means a spirit of being wakeful, of being restless, of guarding.

Praying always means the believer is to live in a spirit of prayer...

- praying all day, as he walks throughout the day.
- praying on all occasions and about everything.
- praying at appointed times, times set aside for nothing but prayer and devotions or quiet times.

There are three reasons why the believer is to watch and pray.

1. Watching and praying cause God to count the believer "worthy." The man who watches and prays for the Lord's return truly believes in the Lord, and God takes that man's belief and counts it worthy. Note: God does not *make* the man worthy; He counts the man worthy. The man's faith, his watching and praying, are counted as righteousness. (See note, *Justification*—Lk.20:35; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.4:22; 5:1. Cp. Ro.4:5 and 4:1-3; 4:1-25.)

2. Watching and praying cause the believer to escape the things coming to earth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Snare*—Lk.21:35). This can mean...
   - to escape the presence of the coming judgments altogether (by being raptured away).
   - to escape the sufferings of the judgments (by being supernaturally protected; for example, Israel was protected during the Egyptian plagues, Exodus 5:1f).

3. Watching and praying cause the believer to stand justified before the Son of Man (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Son of Man*—Mt.8:20). The picture is that the faithful believer will have no fear or dread, no apprehension or hesitation in facing the Son of Man. He will stand before his Lord...
   - justified.
   - ready to be "fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Ph.3:21).
   - ready "to be conformed to His image" (Ro.8:29).
   - ready to "behold the face of the Father" (Mt.18:10).
   - ready to "serve God day and night in His temple" or world (Rev.7:15).

"Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Mt.25:13).

"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Lk.12:37).

"Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Th.5:5-6).

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev.3:11).

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev.16:15).

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).

	G. The Daily Ministry of Jesus, 21:37-38
1 The daytime: Jesus taught in the temple 2 The night: Jesus was alone with God[DSI]	37 And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.
3 The morning: Jesus began early in the morning	38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

DIVISION IX

THE SON OF MAN'S PROPHETIC SIGNS: HIS PREDICTION CONCERNING THE FATE OF JERUSALEM AND THE WORLD, 21:5-38

G. The Daily Ministry of Jesus, 21:37-38

(21:37-38) **Introduction**: this passage very simply tells how Jesus spent His days and nights during the last days of His life. The picture is both interesting and informative.

1. The daytime: Jesus taught in the temple (v.37).
2. The night: Jesus was alone with God (v.37).
3. The morning: Jesus began early in the morning (v.38).

1 (21:37) **Jesus Christ, Teaching**: during the daytime Jesus taught in the temple. Several facts are seen in this point.

1. Jesus was a tireless teacher. He taught not only on Sunday, but every day of the week. He taught at every opportunity, and He made as many opportunities as He could. He taught all through the day. He sought the chance to teach, using day-to-day events and experiences to teach. He never tired of teaching even in the face of exhaustion. (Cp. all that happened during this last week of His life, beginning with the Triumphal Entry. Despite the pressure, tension, and fatigue, He continued to teach.)

> **"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk.2:49).**
>
> **"And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him" (Lk.19:47).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**

2. Jesus was a fearless teacher. The authorities were seeking to arrest and kill Him. The opposition was constant: questioning, arguing, plotting, and threatening. However, He did not flee, nor did He retaliate. He simply went about fulfilling God's will, teaching those who so desperately needed God's message.

> **"And he taught daily in the temple, But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, and could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him" (Lk.19:47-48).**

3. Jesus was a faithful teacher, ever meeting the needs of people. Men needed the gospel of God, needed to hear the glorious message of the Kingdom of God. The only way they could ever know how to live day by day was to be taught. Christ wanted to grasp every opportunity He could before He departed this world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24.)

> **"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none" (1 Cor.7:29).**
>
> **"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).**

4. Jesus was a teacher of conviction. Note where He taught: in the temple. The temple was corrupt, being misused and abused and made into a center of commercialism. Yet, the temple was supposed to be God's house of prayer. Jesus refused to desert it; He used the temple as it should be used, making it the center for teaching the gospel of God.

> **"And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (Jn.2:17).**

2 (21:37) **Devotion—Mount of Olives--Preparation**: during the night, Jesus got all alone with God. This is a striking point, for it is information about our Lord that deeply moves and touches the heart. "At night, He went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives." He was facing so much, the final preparation of His disciples and His

own final hours on earth, and He was facing it all in just *one week's time*. He needed time alone with God, a very special time, for He needed great strength, and the source of His strength was God. Every muscle in His body and every thought of His mind must have been craving for God's presence and wisdom and strength. He needed...

- to make maximum use of time in teaching the disciples, teaching exactly what they needed in these final hours.
- to have His own heart prepared to the maximum, ready to bear all the punishment of sin that was to be laid upon Him.

> **"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).**
>
> **"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray" (Mk.6:46).**
>
> **"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Lk.5:16).**
>
> **"And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?" (Lk.9:18).**
>
> **"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed" (Lk.22:41).**
>
> **"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).**
>
> **"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).**
>
> **"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession of us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:37) **Mount of Olives or Olivet**: the mountain range was a little more than one-half mile from the city limits of Jerusalem. The range of mountains lie on the east of Jerusalem and stretch only about one or two miles across. The mountain range was loved by Jesus. It was...

- where Jesus often resorted (Lk.22:39).
- where Jesus often spent the night when in Jerusalem (Jn.7:53-8:1).
- where Jesus spent the nights of His last week on earth—praying and seeking God (Lk.29:37).
- where Jesus first went when He approached Jerusalem to face His last week on earth (Mt.21:1f; Mk.11:1f).
- where the great sermon on the end time was preached (Mt.24:3f; Mk.13:3f).
- where (at the descent) the Triumphal Entry began (Lk.19:37f).
- where Jesus' terrible agony in the Garden of Gethsemane took place. The Garden of Gethsemane was on the side of the mountain (Mt.26:30f; Mk.14:26).
- where the ascension took place (Acts 1:12).

3 (21:38) **Teaching—Prayer**: Jesus began early in the morning. Note four significant facts.

1. The first thing Jesus did after prayer and spending time alone with God was teach.
2. Jesus spent time alone with God before teaching. The *presence and power* of God was necessary before teaching.

> **"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up" (Ps.5:3).**
>
> **"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Ps.55:17).**
>
> **"Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early" (Ps.57:8).**
>
> **"I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word" (Ps.119:147).**
>
> **"Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?" (1 Th.3:10; cp. Dan.6:10).**

3. The first duty of Jesus after prayer was teaching the gospel. He did not seek relaxation, recreation, fellowship or some social function. After praying, He sought to teach the message of the glorious gospel.

> **"And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth" (Mk.1:38).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent" (Lk.4:43).**

4. The people hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Note the word "all." All the people came early in the morning to hear Him.

> **Thought 1.** What a difference between the people of that day and other generations! Why? Is it because people's hearts no longer cry out for righteousness? Or, is it because ministers do not seek the face of God *all night* in prayer like Jesus was doing?

"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh" (Lk.6:21).

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from me" (Ps.38:9).

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

	CHAPTER 22	might kill him; for they feared the people.	a. Used deception b. Feared the people
	X. THE SON OF MAN'S LAST SUPPER: HIS TRAITOR, INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS, 22:1-38	3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.	**3 Satan: Used an available disciple**
	A. The Plot Against Jesus, 22:1-6 (Mt.26:14-16; Mk.14: 1-2, 10-11)	4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.	**4 A covetous man: Went his own way** a. Was a professing disciple b. Communed with world c. Made the enemies of Jesus glad d. Coveted money e. Made a covenant with the world
1 The Passover is tied to the death of Christ *DS1*	Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.	5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.	
2 The unbelieving religionists *DS2*	2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they	6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.	

DIVISION X

THE SON OF MAN'S LAST SUPPER: HIS TRAITOR, INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS, 22:1-38

A. The Plot Against Jesus, 22:1-6

(22:1-6) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Opposition**: Jesus Christ was seriously opposed by formidable foes. The religionists rejected Him lest they lose the favor, security, and position of the world. Satan opposed His work of salvation lest men give their lives and worship to God. Men rebelled against His demand for self-denial, for the commitment of all one is and has to the cause of God.

1. The Passover is tied to the death of Christ (v.1).
2. The unbelieving religionists (v.2).
3. Satan: used an available man (v.3).
4. A covetous man: went his own way (v.4-6).

1 (22:1) **Passover**: the Passover is tied to the death of Christ. This passage begins the final stage of Jesus' life before He was killed. In dramatic fashion Luke sets the stage for what was coming. He mentions the Passover and then points out those who are plotting Jesus' death, two scenes as opposite from one another as can be imagined. The Passover was a feast, a joyous and festive occasion. It was a feast when all of God's people were to be celebrating God's glorious deliverance of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt. However, during the very days of this joyous celebration, Jesus' murder was being plotted. Tragically, it was being plotted by religionists, the very people who should have been taking the lead in the Passover. On the one hand is the celebration of deliverance, the saving of life; on the other hand is the plotting of death, the taking of life. This passage deliberately sets the stage for what was to come. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Passover*—Mt.26:2.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(22:1) **Feast of Unleavened Bread**: this feast is another name for the Passover Feast (see Lev.23:5-8; Lk.22:1). However on the first day of the Passover week, the Feast of Unleavened Bread had special significance. It was the day that all preparations were made to celebrate the Passover. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2; cp. Ex.12:1-51, esp. v.11-28 for the background of the Passover.) Preparations included securing the lamb and taking it to the temple to be sacrificed. Preparations also included securing the items of food and drink necessary for the Passover and arranging the room for the Feast. However, there were two preparations from which the Feast of Unleavened Bread received its name.

1. There was the baking of unleavened bread. On the night of the Passover, God had told Israel to make final preparations for being delivered from Egyptian bondage. However, the Israelites did not have time to bake leavened bread. They had to bake bread without leaven because of the time it takes for leavened bread to rise. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is simply one of the Passover ceremonies by which Israel remembered God's glorious deliverance of their forefathers from Egyptian bondage. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:2.)
2. There was a ceremony by which all leaven within the house had to be removed. It must be remembered that leaven was a symbol of evil to the Jews. In removing all leaven, they were picturing the need for putting evil out of their lives and household. There was an actual search made throughout the rooms of the house. The people looked for any crumb of leaven that might have fallen upon the floor and under or between some furniture. Whatever leaven was found, no matter how small a crumb, it was removed from the house. By removing all leaven from their households, the Jews were saying they wanted to be included among the faithful of their forefathers. They wanted to be counted as the faithful who purified and cleansed their lives and households for the journey of deliverance from bondage and slavery.

2 (22:2) **Religionists**: the first opponents to Jesus were unbelieving religionists. Luke paints a dramatic picture. While the people were in the streets openly preparing to praise God for His delivering power and the saving of life, the religionists were behind closed doors plotting to murder the very One who had come to be their great Deliverer (Savior). Note two facts.

1. The religionists plotted to use deception and lies (Mt.26:4; Mk.14:1).

> **"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Ro.3:13).**
>
> **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived" (1 Cor.6:9).**
>
> **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal.6:7).**
>
> **"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:6).**
>
> **"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:7-8).**
>
> **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas.1:22).**
>
> **"For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful" (Ps.36:2).**
>
> **"All the ways of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord weigheth the spirits" (Pr.16:2).**
>
> **"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).**
>
> **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).**

2. The reason they sought to get rid of Jesus was because they feared the people. This means that they feared both losing the support of the people and the reaction of the people against them if the people knew they were killing Jesus. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Religionists*—Lk.22:2 for more discussion and application as to why the religionists opposed Jesus.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(22:2) **Religionists**: the religionists' conflict with Jesus is often misunderstood. This is because so much of the conflict had to do with rules and regulations that seem petty and meaningless to modern minds (cp. Mk.2:23-28; 3:1-6; 3:22-30. See notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9.) Four facts will help in understanding why the conflicts happened and were life threatening, ending in the murder of Jesus Christ.

1. The Jewish nation had been held together by their religious beliefs. Through the centuries the Jewish people had been conquered by army after army, and by the millions they had been deported and scattered over the world. Even in the day of Jesus, they were enslaved by Rome. Their religion was the binding force that kept Jews together, in particular...
   - ⇒ their belief that God had called them to be a distinctive people (who worshipped the only true and living God).
   - ⇒ their rules governing the Sabbath and the temple.

   This belief and these rules protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other peoples through intermarriage. Their religion was what maintained their distinctiveness as a people and as a nation.

   Jewish leaders knew this. They knew that their religion was the binding force that held their nation together. Therefore, they opposed anyone or anything that threatened or attempted to break the laws of their religion.
2. The religionists were men of deep conviction. They were strong in their beliefs. Therefore, they became steeped in religious belief and practice, law and custom, tradition and ritual, ceremony and liturgy, rules and regulations. To break any law or rule governing any belief or practice was a serious offense, for it taught loose behavior. And loose behavior, once it had spread enough, would weaken their religion which was the binding force that held their people together. Therefore, Jesus was committing a great offense by breaking their law. He was weakening their religion and threatening their nation.
3. The religionists were men who had profession, position, recognition, esteem, livelihood and security. Anyone who went contrary to what they believed and taught was a threat to all they had. Some religionists felt that Jesus was a threat to them. Every time Jesus broke their law, He was undermining their very position and security.
4. The religionists were exposed by Jesus. In order for the religionists and the people to know the truth, Jesus had to point out where they were wrong and what they needed to do to get right with God. Both the sin of men and the truth of God had to be proclaimed. The religionists could not take it. They refused to accept the fact that they were unacceptable to God. They were, after all, the religious of the day, the very ones who professed God. They felt they had no sin, at least not enough sin to bar them from God. Anyone who accused them of being so wrong and so depraved could not conceivably be of God. He must be of Beelzebub (see outline and note—Mk.3:22-30).

There were at least four responses to Jesus by the religionists.

1. Some were sincere men of deep conviction. They actually thought Jesus was an imposter, a deceiver, a false messiah. Paul, Saul of Tarsus, would be an example of this position.

2. Some were open-minded enough to seek the truth about Jesus. They observed and reasoned, being honest enough to consider what He was saying, and they sought Him out to find the truth. Nicodemus is an example of this.
3. Some did believe and trust Christ (see note—Lk.13:31; pt.4—Mt.23:13-36).
4. Some were just professional priests and ministers who looked upon Jesus as a threat. They held the position because of the prestige, comfort, livelihood, and security they received from it. Therefore, they opposed Christ rather vehemently. Caiaphas and Annas are examples of this response.

The error of the religionists was fourfold.
1. They misinterpreted and corrupted God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; cp. Ro.9:4).
2. They committed serious sin after serious sin in God's eyes (see notes—1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.2:17-29).
3. They rejected God's way of righteousness, God's Messiah, which is Jesus Christ (see notes—Ro.11:18; 1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.10:1-21, esp. 1-4, 19-21).
4. They allowed religion in its tradition and ritual, ceremony and rules, to become more important than meeting the basic needs of human life: the need for God and the need for spiritual, mental, and physical health. Jesus, being the true Messiah, was bound to expose such error. Therefore, the battle lines were drawn.

The Messiah had to liberate people from such enslaving behavior. He had to liberate them so they could be saved and worship God in freedom of spirit. The religionists had to oppose anyone who broke their law. They had to oppose Jesus because He was a threat to their nation and to their own personal position and security.

3 (22:3) **Satan, Work of**: the second opponent to Jesus was Satan. Satan is the spiritual being who is out to destroy the relationship between God and men. In wrath and bitter hostility he opposes God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Satan*—Rev.12:9 for more discussion on just who Satan is and on his terrible work.) Satan is seen entering Judas, stirring him to strike up a bargain to betray Jesus. Later Satan will enter Judas again and urge him to go ahead and finish his work of betrayal (Jn.13:27. See note, pt.4—Mk.14:10-11.) The point is, if Satan could destroy Jesus, keep Him from fulfilling His work on earth, then man could never be saved. Satan, of course, had no idea that God was going to save the world through the death of Jesus. Satan is not omniscient; he could not know the future any more than anyone else. Therefore, he had attempted to have Jesus killed time and again, even as a child (Mt.2:13, 16, 22; Lk.4:8, 29). Satan's opposition to God and man is clearly seen in Scripture.

1. He tempts to disobey God (Gen.3:4-5; Mt.4:4; 1 Th.3:5).
2. He snatches the Word out of man's heart (Mt.13:19).
3. He plants unbelievers in the midst of believers, the church (Mt.13:38-39).
4. He afflicts people with sickness and disease (Job 2:7; Lk.13:16).
5. He tries to sift, shake men in their faith (Lk.22:31).
6. He causes murder and killing (Jn.8:44; 1 Jn.3:12).
7. He lies and is the father of lies (Jn.8:44).
8. He enters men's lives (Lk.22:3; Jn.13:27).
9. He plants evil into the hearts of men (Jn.13:2).
10. He leads men to steal from God (Acts 5:3).
11. He tempts married couples sexually (1 Cor.7:5).
12. He tries to keep people from forgiving others (2 Cor.2:10-11).
13. He blinds the minds of unbelievers lest they believe (2 Cor.4:4).
14. He deceives the minds of men (2 Cor.11:3).
15. He transforms himself into a messenger of light to deceive man (2 Cor.11:14).
16. He transforms some ministers into ministers of righteousness to deceive men (2 Cor.11:15).
17. He works in the disobedient (Eph.2:2).
18. He launches powerful strategies against believers (Eph.6:11).
19. He rules the principalities and powers, the darkness and spiritual wickedness, of this world (Eph.6:12; Col.2:15).
20. He hinders the work of believers (1 Th.2:18).
21. He works with power and signs and lying wonders (2 Th.2:9).
22. He leads men to blaspheme (1 Tim.1:20).
23. He condemns men and causes men to condemn themselves (1 Tim.3:6).
24. He snares and entraps people (1 Tim.3:7; 2 Tim.2:26).
25. He turns people aside to go after him (1 Tim.5:15).
26. He did hold the power of death (Heb.2:14).
27. He seeks to prey upon men and devour them (1 Pt.5:8).
28. He sins and works against men and God (1 Jn.3:8).
29. He opposes the angels of God (Jude 6).
30. He possesses, rules, and controls some churches and worship centers (Rev.2:9; 3:9).
31. He causes believers to be cast into prison (Rev.2:10).
32. He deceives the whole world (Rev.12:9; 20:7-8, 10).
33. He accuses believers before God (Rev.12:10).
34. He causes great havoc upon the earth (Rev.12:12).

(See notes, *Satan*—Col.2:15; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:7; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9 for more discussion.)

4 (22:4-6) **Judas—Unbeliever—Devil—Apostasy**: the third opponent to Jesus was a covetous man, a man who went his own way in life. Judas was such a man. Several facts show this.

1. Judas was a professing disciple. In fact, he was one of the twelve apostles. Just think about the fact: Judas had been personally chosen by Jesus. Judas had some great potential, some unique qualities that attracted the Lord, and the

Lord gaveJudas the most honored opportunity in all the world to develop his abilities, the privilege of walking with Him personally.

⇒ Judas knew Jesus face to face.
⇒ Judas walked with Jesus day after day.
⇒ Judas heard most, if not all, that Jesus taught.
⇒ Judas saw most, if not all, that Jesus did—miracles and wondrous works.
⇒ Judas was trained to be an apostle by Jesus Himself.
⇒ Judas served as an apostle even on witnessing tours under Jesus' personal command (Mk.6:7f).
⇒ Judas was warned of sin's consequences by Jesus Himself.

Despite all this, Judas' life was a terrible tragedy. He was so gifted and had so much opportunity, yet he lost it all. Why? Simply because he turned his back on the Lord Jesus Christ. He went to the chief priests of this earth and put his fate into their hands instead of placing his life into the hands of Jesus. He had allowed his craving for more and more to blind him to the truth about Jesus—that He was truly the Son of God who demanded loyalty—even when man cannot understand the events and happenings that surround Him (see note—Mt.26:14. This note will explain what is behind this statement.) Judas simply did not believe that Jesus was truly God's Son. Therefore, he did not give his heart and life to Jesus—not really. He was a follower of Jesus; he was even one of the first twelve apostles, but he was not a genuine believer who entrusted his life to Jesus.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it" (Lk.9:23-24).**

2. Judas communed with the world. He was definitely worldly; his mind and heart were upon worldly acceptance, position, recognition, prestige, influence, power, and wealth. Note: he approached and communed with the world, the chief priests of the world. He thought they who were of the world were the winning side and could offer much more than Jesus.

> **"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:26-28).**
>
> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**

3. Judas coveted the world and its money. Judas' gnawing sin was greed and the love of money. Various commentators pose different reasons why Judas may have betrayed Jesus, but the Scripture pointedly says that the reason was greed: "What will ye give me, and I will give [betray] Him to you."

Judas' gnawing greed was a growing sin. This is seen by looking at what is said about him in the Scripture.

a. Judas was chosen by Jesus to be an apostle (Mt.10:4). Therefore, we know he was sincere in the beginning. There was something within Judas—qualities that attracted Jesus, qualities that Jesus knew could mean a lot to the Kingdom of God.

b. Judas was a gifted man in financial affairs. Apparently he was even more gifted in financial affairs than Matthew, the wealthy tax collector, and the businessmen who were among the apostles such as Peter, James, and John (see Subject Index under each name for references to notes on their business background). Among all these, Judas was placed in charge of the Lord's funds and the purchasing of whatever was needed (Jn.12:6; 13:29; cp. Lk.8:2-3 for some who supported Jesus' ministry). His appointment from among so many was bound to be due to unusual spiritual qualities as well as financial management.

c. Judas, at some unknown point, began to embezzle from the Lord's funds. John says unmistakably that Judas was a thief (Jn.12:6). John relates this fact when he says that Judas was greatly disturbed with Mary, the sister of Martha. Mary used some very expensive perfume to annoint Jesus instead of selling it to secure money for the Lord's treasury. John says the reason for Judas' disturbance was because Judas was a thief and could have embezzled some of the money (Jn.12:5-6).

d. Judas refused to repent, and he hardened his heart more and more in his sin. Jesus knew of Judas' embezzlement and hinted at it, giving Judas opportunity time and again to repent.

> **"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him....Jesus answered them, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve" (Jn.6:64, 70-71).**

Judas was bound to feel the pangs of guilt at such times, yet he continued to deceive himself, believing that Jesus did not really know and had no real proof. Judas kept right on taking what he felt he could safely embezzle, hardening his heart more and more.

e. Judas apparently followed Jesus out of a heart of greed and worldly ambition, not out of a heart of love and faith in Him as the Son of God. This seems to be indicated by two facts.

1) He felt that wealth, power, and position would be his when Jesus set up his kingdom. The other apostles thought the same, but there was a vast difference. They mistook the Messiah's method of saving the world, not His person. Judas mistook both the Lord's method and person. He did not believe and trust the Lord to be the Son of God, whereas the others did.
2) He apparently was disillusioned in Jesus after the triumphal entry. Jesus did not immediately set up His kingdom, and as the days passed, the fact that He was not going to set up His kingdom became more and more apparent. The authorities were mobilizing against Jesus to kill Him, and it seemed as though they were going to be successful. Jesus had even been teaching that they were to be successful. He was to be killed by their hands (Mt.16:21).

   Judas became convinced he had been mistaken about Jesus. Jesus was not the real Messiah; He was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah; He was doomed and there was no way out. Judas experienced his dreams of wealth and power and position with Jesus being shattered. Therefore, what he was trying to do was to get what he could out of the situation. He wanted to be in good standing with the winning side and to secure a sizeable amount of money for betraying Jesus. Note: Judas apparently expected to get much more from the religionists than he got. Once he had approached the religionists, he had to follow through with the betrayal and accept whatever they offered.

f. Judas filled his heart with the lust for more and more instead of filling it with Jesus. He went too long without repenting and letting Jesus into his life, and the devil was able to fill his being. The devil blinded and took control of his rationale, hence Judas was able to justify his betrayal in his own mind. He was, after all, helping the religious body and himself. Therefore, he betrayed Jesus of Nazareth who apparently in Judas' mind was just another mistaken self-proclaimed messiah.

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).

"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase" (Eccl.5:10).

4. Judas makes a covenant with the world. Note the words, "He promised, and sought opportunity to betray Him." Judas made a covenant with the world, a pact to betray Jesus. The picture is that of being on the prowl, searching and seeking, looking here and there for the right moment. Judas' heart was set, full of intrigue, plotting evil and planning its strategy. He did not believe, but unbelief was not enough. He willed to do evil against Jesus, to hurt Him, to destroy Him. And he sought opportunity to do so. Just how deceitful Judas was can be seen by noticing that immediately after bargaining with the authorities, he sat down to eat with Jesus. He sat at the very table where the Lord's Supper was being instituted.

Thought 1. Judas not only rejected but sought to destroy Jesus. Many reject Christ, but not all seek to harm and destroy Him. Some do, but not all.

⇒ Some curse and curse Him, consciously and unconsciously dishonoring His name.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His divine nature, saying that He is not the Son of God.
⇒ Some talk and teach against the written revelation of Himself and the truth, that is, the Word.
⇒ Some talk and teach against His active presence in the life of the genuine believer.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Mt.7:15).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim.4:1-2).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:1-5).

B. The Lord's Supper, 22:7-23
(Mt.26:17-30; Mk.14: 12-25; Jn.13)

1 The great purpose of the Lord's Supper[DS1]
a. To show how Christ fulfilled the Passover Feast: Delivers man from judgment
b. To stress the need to remember & celebrate the Lord's death
1) Despite obstacles
2) The prearranged sign
c. To stress the need for cautious preparations in approaching Christ & His death

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.
8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.
9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?
10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.
11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?
12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.
13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.
14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.
15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:
16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.
17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:
18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.
19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.
20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.
21 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.
22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!
23 And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

2 The great significance of the Lord's Supper
a. It is tied to the Lord's death & the Passover
b. It pictures a greater supper, a glorious promise

3 The great meaning of the Lord's Supper[DS2]
a. The Bread: Symbolizes Christ's body, broken for us
b. The Cup: Symbolizes Christ's blood, shed for us

4 The great appeal of the Lord's Supper
a. It is used to appeal to a sinner
b. It is used to warn a sinner
c. It is used to stir the searching of hearts

DIVISION X

THE SON OF MAN'S LAST SUPPER: HIS TRAITOR, INSTRUCTIONS, AND WARNINGS, 22:1-38

B. The Lord's Supper, 22:7-23

(22:7-23) **Introduction**: this is a great passage on the subject of the Lord's Supper.
1. The great purpose of the Lord's Supper (v.7-14).
2. The great significance of the Lord's Supper (v.15-18).
3. The great meaning of the Lord's Supper (v.19-20).
4. The great appeal of the Lord's Supper (v.21-23).

1 (22:7-14) **Lord's Supper**: the great purpose of the Lord's Supper is threefold.

1. It shows how Jesus fulfilled the great Passover Feast (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:7).
2. It stresses the great need and helps a person to remember the Lord's death. Scripture is pointedly clear about this. The Lord's Supper helps us to keep our minds upon Christ, and at the same time it demonstrates that our minds are upon Him.

> **"This do in remembrance of me" (Lk.22:19; 1 Cor.11:24-25).**
> **"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Cor.11:26).**

The Lord's Supper is to be kept even in the *face of difficulty*. Note the difficulty Jesus faced. There were those who were seeking to find out where He was so they might arrest and kill Him. Even one of His own disciples had betrayed Him and was only waiting for an opportunity to inform the authorities where He was and where He could be quietly arrested. However, despite this terrible difficulty, Jesus was determined to observe the celebration. (What an indictment against *loose attitudes and approaches* to the Lord's Supper! Believers are to be obedient to the religious ordinances despite difficulty.)

3. It stresses the need for cautious preparation in approaching Christ and His death. Note the words "made ready" in all three gospels.

> **"And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they *made ready* the passover" (Lk.22:13).**
>
> **"And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they *made ready* the passover" (Mt.26:19).**
>
> **"And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they *made ready* the passover" (Mk.14:16).**

The point is this: detailed preparations were required for observing the Passover (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:7). The stringent preparations taught that God was to be *approached carefully*, exactly as prescribed. Why? Because God is holy, and there is only one way to approach Him—through the blood of the Passover Lamb. Three acts in this passage stress the need for approaching Christ carefully.

⇒ He went to great pains to keep the Passover despite extreme danger.
⇒ He had personally made preparations for the observance (v.9-12).
⇒ The disciples found the arrangements made just as He had said and did their part in preparing the observance.

Thought 1. Christ kept the Passover even in the face of death. How few value the Lord's Supper enough! How many observe it too little! How many could care less if it is observed or not! How many place the comfort of home, recreation, and the doing of one's own thing before observing the Lord's Supper!

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(22:7) **Passover—Lord's Supper**: historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex.11:1f). He had pronounced judgment, the taking of the firstborn, upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As He prepared to execute the final judgment, those who believed God were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out upon the sacrificial lamb. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house. Those who believed God applied the blood to their homes and were saved, but those who did not believe did not apply the blood to their homes, and they were destroyed.

Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The *lamb without blemish* pictured His sinless life (cp. Jn.1:29), and the *blood sprinkled on the door posts* pictured His blood shed for the believer. It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn. The "eating of the lamb" pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The unleavened bread (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one's life and household. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Feast of Unleavened Bread*—Mt.26:17.)

In addition to the lamb and unleavened bread, the Jewish Passover Feast was celebrated by using four food and drink items. (1) A bowl of salt water was conspicuously placed on the table to remind the family of the tears shed by their forefathers in their 430 years of Egyptian bondage. (2) A bitter salad-like plate was to remind them of their forefather's bitter experiences of slavery. (3) A paste-like mixture of fruit (charosheth) with cinnamon sticks was to remind them of their forefather's toil in making bricks from clay and straw for the Egyptian cities and buildings. (4) Four cups of wine were used to remind them of God's four promises in Ex.6:6-8 to deliver their forefathers from Egyptian slavery.

The one thing to be noted about the Passover celebration is that it is all historical. It is celebrating an act of the past, whereas the Lord's Supper is much more than mere history. It is a celebration of the living Christ in the heart and life of the believer until He returns. It is a remembrance of the potential power of the living Christ within the life of the believer right now—an explosive power that is made possible through the cross (cp. 1 Cor.11:26).

2 (22:15-18) **Lord's Supper**: the great significance of the Lord's Supper is shown by two things.

1. The Lord's Supper is tied to the Lord's death. Note the Lord's words:
   ⇒ "Before I suffer" (v.15).
   ⇒ "I will not any more eat thereof, *until*...." (v.16).
   ⇒ "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, *until*...." (v.18).

Jesus was definitely tying both the Passover and the Lord's Supper to His death. And, of course, His death is what the Lord's Supper is all about (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.22:19-20).

2. The Lord's Supper pictures a great supper, a glorious promise (v.16-18). Note carefully the promise of Jesus. He said He was going to eat and drink again when all things were "fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Jesus was *promising* to celebrate the Supper with His followers in the future. Believers shall sit down with Christ at the great *Marriage Feast of the Lamb* (see outline and notes—Mt.20:1-16; 20:2). It is the promise of sitting with Christ in His glorious kingdom, of being a part of the new heavens and earth, of being perfected and living forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24; *Rewards*—Lk.16:10-12).

> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).

"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed" (1 Pt.5:1).

"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pt.1:11).

3 (22:19-20) **Lord's Supper**: the great meaning of the Lord's Supper.

1. There is the meaning of the bread. Jesus took the bread and broke it. This symbolized His broken body. His body was broken, that is, sacrificed, as a victim for man's deliverance (Is.53:5). This act was so significant that the early church sometimes called the Lord's Supper simply *the breaking of bread* (Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor.10:16). Under the Old Testament the broken bread pictured the sufferings of the Israelites. Now, under the New Testament, the bread was to picture the broken body of Christ (1 Cor.11:24).

Note: Jesus said His body was broken and given for us. He suffered and died *for us*: in our behalf, in our stead, in our place. He bore the judgment of God against sin by dying *for us*.

"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).

"And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor.11:24).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

2. There is the meaning of the cup. Jesus identified the cup as His blood of the New Testament. He simply meant that His blood establishes a new covenant with God; His blood allows a new relationship between God and man. Note the Lord's exact words.

a. "This is my blood": His blood, which was shed from His body, was to become the sign or symbol of the new covenant. His blood was to take the place of the sacrifice of animals.

b. "The new testament": His blood, the sacrifice of His life established a New Testament, a new covenant between God and man (cp. Heb.9:11-15). Faith in His blood and sacrifice is the way man is now to approach God. Under the Old Testament, a man who wanted a right relationship with God approached God through the sacrifice of the animal's blood. The Old Testament believer believed that God accepted him because of the sacrifice of the animal. Now, under the New Testament, the believer believes that God accepts him because of the sacrifice of Christ. This is what Jesus said: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many" (Mk.14:24. See note Mt.26:28; cp. Eph.1:7; 1 Jn.2:1-2; Heb.9:22.) A man's sins are forgiven and he becomes acceptable to God by believing that Christ's blood was shed for him (1 Jn.1:7).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:54-58).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(22:19-20) **Lord's Supper—Passover**: note the words "in remembrance of me." By fulfilling the Passover with the shedding of His own blood, Jesus was tying the Lord's Supper to the Passover Feast. In instituting the Lord's Supper, Jesus was showing His disciples that He was, first of all, the great Liberator. A *liberator* differs from a *deliverer*. A deliverer might deliver a person into something as bad or even worse than that which enslaves him, but not a liberator. A liberator sets a person free from whatever bondage grips him. As the disciples partook of the Supper, they were to:

1. Remember how God liberated Israel from Egyptian slavery.
2. Remember how the Lord's blood liberated them from earthly and sinful slavery. The Lord's Supper is to remind the disciples how the blood of the Lamb keeps them safe from the terrible hand of God's judgment.
3. Remember how the blood of Christ makes it possible for Him to return and to liberate them into the eternal presence of God's glory.

4 (22:21-23) **Judas Iscariot**: the great appeals of the Supper. Jesus used the Supper to make three appeals.

1. Jesus used the Supper to appeal to a sinner. Judas had forsaken Jesus. He thought his sin was hid and unknown, but Jesus knew. He had seen all, everything that Judas had done.

2. Jesus used the Supper to warn the sinner. "*Woe* unto that man," Jesus said. The word "woe" means wrath and sorrow, anger and pity. It was a grieving denunciation, a heartrending pronouncement of judgment. Terrible judgment was a sure thing for the sinner Judas, and it broke the heart of God.

Thought 1. Jesus knows the destiny of the sinner, the terrible fate that awaits him. It would be better never to be born than to deny and betray Christ. Note the grace of God in warning the sinner of judgment.

1) The sinner is told in *advance*, before judgment ever comes or is ever pronounced. Judas was told. The sinner can still repent when he *first* hears about judgment. He can still be saved as long as he is living. It is God's grace that warns us of the consequences of our sin, of coming judgment.
2) The sinner is never compelled to repent of his denial or betrayal of Christ. Judas was not forced to turn from his evil; neither is any other sinner. It is God's grace that respects our will and desires. God loves and cares, warns and speaks frankly, but He never forces obedience.

> **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3, 5).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**

3. Jesus used the Supper to stir the searching of hearts. The disciples were stirred to ask, "Is it I?" (Mt.26:22; Mk.14:19). They looked at themselves. They were not accusing one another; rather each one feared lest he be so weak he might fall.

> **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).**
>
> **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor.16:13).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**

	C. The Dispute Over Greatness, 22:24-30 (Mt.20:20-28; Mk.10: 35-45)	er; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.	b. To act as a servant
1 The disciples argued over position and power	24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.	27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.	c. To follow the example of the Lord—to be as He that serveth
2 The world's attitude about greatness a. To hold authority over people b. To be recognized & honored as a benefactor	25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.	28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.	**4 The Lord's encouragement to serve faithfully** a. He gives assurance: They have proven themselves
3 The Lord's attitude toward greatness a. To act as the youngest	26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the young-	29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.	b. He makes a covenant 1) They are to inherit a kingdom[DS1] 2) They are to rule

DIVISION X

THE SON OF MAN'S LAST SUPPER: HIS TRAITOR, INSTRUCTIONS, AND WARNINGS, 22:1-38

C. The Dispute Over Greatness, 22:24-30

(22:24-30) **Introduction**: men desire recognition, prestige, position, honor, power, authority. The disciples had such desires. Jesus used their power struggle to teach the world a much needed lesson, a lesson that speaks directly and forcibly to every person.

1. The disciples argued over position and power (v.24).
2. The world's attitude about greatness (v.25).
3. The Lord's attitude about greatness (v.26-27).
4. The Lord's encouragement to serve faithfully (v.28-30).

1 (22:24) **Division—Strife—Position**: the disciples argued. Note three facts.

1. The word "strife" (philoneikia) means being eager and ready to argue and contend; being alert to strive for one's position. It conveys the idea of giving no ground, of standing up no matter what, of being stubborn, of resisting regardless of circumstances.
2. The disciples were still thinking about an earthly kingdom. They thought Jesus was about to lead an uprising against the Romans and free Palestine, establishing the Messiah's kingdom in Israel. From Israel the Messiah was to rule and reign over the whole earth in behalf of God. (See note, pt.2—Lk.7:21-23. Also see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; note—22:42.)
3. The disciples were in the upper room *jockeying* for position. As in most societies, the highest in position sat on the right of the host and the next highest on the left. The highest in position continued to alternate between the right and left until everyone was seated.

Since Jesus was about to set up His kingdom, now was the time to seize the positions of rule and power in His kingdom. Now was the time to assume the seats of honor and authority in His presence. The disciples were trying to assure themselves of key seats and positions in His government. (See outline and notes—Mt.18:1-4.)

2 (22:25) **Greatness**: the world's attitude about greatness involves two key concepts.

1. There is the concept that greatness is holding authority over people or *lording it over* people: holding position and authority, influence and power, rank and dominion, money and property. Men seek position and wealth for the sake of power. They want to rule or manage people, exercise authority over them, and control their lives.
2. There is the concept of being known and called a benefactor (euergetai), a man who gives and helps others.

Note the word "called." The worldly benefactor wants to be known and called a benefactor, recognized and honored for his help and contribution. He desires to be known as a great man, a man who is generous, thoughtful, concerned, honorable.

> **"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).**
>
> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth" (Ps.10:3).**
>
> **"Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Pr.25:14).**

"For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me" (Is.47:10).

"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).

3 (22:26-27) **Greatness**: the Lord's attitude about greatness. The Lord rejected the world's attitude of greatness. True greatness does not seek to hold authority nor to lord it over people; it does not seek position for the sake of authority and power, nor to give and help for the sake of being known and called a benefactor. True greatness is not self-centered and selfish, not worldly-minded.

Note a crucial point: Jesus did not forbid a man from holding a position of greatness or authority. What He was doing was giving instructions to the person who is "greatest among you" (v.26). The Lord's attitude of greatness involves two key concepts.

1. There is the concept of acting as the *youngest*, that is, of taking the last seat, of assuming the lowliest position. In the ancient world, the younger always honored and gave way to the older. Age was looked up to and honored. Jesus was saying that the person who was truly great was the person who took the lowest seat and last place, the person who did not seek the recognition and honor, the credit and esteem, because he held some position or had done some special work or made some unusual gift or given extraordinary help.

"But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee" (Lk.14:10).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not too think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pt.5:5-6).

2. There is the concept of acting as a servant. The chief person is to serve. The picture Jesus painted is descriptive. The truly great man will serve others just as a table waiter serves the guests at a banquet. The table waiter in Jesus' day was a bond-slave (doulos). The bond-slave was bound every moment of his life, always serving, no matter the hour or call or difficulty (see note, *Slave*—Ro.1:1).

The truly great person looks for people to help and for ways to help them, whether at work, home, play, or church. He is always seeking those who need a visit, care, attention, company, food, clothing, shelter, money. He seeks for the sake of ministering (cp. Mt.25:34-40).

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

3. There is the concept of following the example of the Lord. The follower is to be like his Lord, yet he is to humble himself and serve and minister to men. Of course, the man who sits at the table is greater than the man who serves. He holds a higher position, but he is not to *act* like it, lording it over the servant. He is to behave like the Lord, serving and ministering to men, even to the servants who are waiting upon him. (See notes—Mk.10:45 for three supreme ways Christ served.)

"After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded" (Jn.13:5).

"With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:7).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:5-8).

4 (22:28-30) **Faithfulness**: the Lord's encouragement to serve faithfully.

Jesus gave assurance to the disciples who proved themselves. The disciples who *continued* with Jesus, who were faithful, standing by Him and clinging to Him, were given a great promise. The promise was a covenant. Note the word "appoint." The promise was set and fixed in eternity. It could not be revoked nor changed in any form or fashion. The covenant was twofold.

1. The faithful disciple is to be a citizen of the Lord's kingdom (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24). The picture is that of the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. (See note, pt.2—Lk.22:15-18. Also see note—Mt.20:2.)
2. The faithful disciple is to rule (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:30).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(22:30) **Reward**: Jesus said that the disciples would be rewarded with twelve thrones, each one governing one of the twelve tribes of Israel. When are they to govern? "In the regeneration" when the new order of things shall be set up under the rule and reign of Christ. But when is the new order of things to be? There are two possible answers: either the millenial reign of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; note—Rev.20:4-6) or the new heavens and earth (Rev.21:1f; cp. 1 Cor.15:23-28).

There are three passages where Christ dealt with the regeneration as predicted here.

> **"Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mt.19:28).**
>
> **The request of James' and John's mother: "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom....And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father" (Mt.20:21, 23).**
>
> **"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Lk.22:28-30).**

The fulfillment of this promise seems to be the Messianic kingdom or millenial reign of Christ on earth. This seems to be the way Christ's promise to Israel will be fulfilled.

> **"And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Is.1:26).**

Note three things.

1. Some commentators find great difficulty in saying there is ever again to be a distinction between Jew and Gentile, for Christ came to bring peace between all men, breaking down the wall of partition between all. They say that the great weight of Scripture is opposed to there being a distinction between Jew and Gentile again. This interpretation simply says that when Christ returns, that is it: He sets up His *eternal reign and rule forever*. Therefore, the apostles are to rule and reign over the church, spiritual Israel, the true Israel of God (Gal.6:15-16; cp. Ro.2:28-29).
2. Jesus said He will reward the disciples with *a particular honor*. Why? The disciples believed and followed Christ in the embryo stage of Christianity. They adhered to their belief and endured in the face of unbelievable odds.
   - ⇒ Imagine standing before a man who looked like all other men, merely a man, and believing that man to really be the *Son of God*.
   - ⇒ Imagine clinging to and continuing to follow Christ when everyone else turned away from Him (cp. Jn.6:67).
   - ⇒ Imagine following immediately upon the heels of the risen Lord and being instantly responsible for reaching the world. (No wonder God had to plan for His Spirit to infill the disciples and to live within our bodies as He does. See notes—1 Cor.3:16; 6:19-20.)
   - ⇒ Imagine continuing on and on, trying to be obedient and to reach the world for Christ, despite unbelievable odds.
   - ⇒ Imagine confronting and enduring through unbelievable persecution launched from both an immoral government and a fierce religion.

   The disciples were not only responsible for more and faced more than most of us will ever know; they were responsible for and faced more than we can ever imagine (cp. 1 Cor.4:9-13; 2 Cor.11:24-28).
3. The disciples were not the only ones to be rewarded. Every true follower of Christ will be greatly rewarded (see notes—Mt.19:29; Lk.16:1-13 for discussion).

	D. The Denial of Peter Foretold: The Great Warning of Satan's Attack, 22:31-38 (Mt.26:31-35; Mk.14: 27-31; Jn.13:36-38)	thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.	
		35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing.	b. Not forgetting Jesus' resources
1 The warning: Satan's desire is to sift—separate from God	31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:	36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.	c. Knowing difficult days lie ahead 1) Friends will forsake 2) Enemies will be fierce
2 The answer to Satan's attack a. Jesus' interceding b. Turning back c. Helping others	32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.	37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.	d. Knowing Jesus is the Suffering Servant 1) Prophecy refers to Him (Is.53) 2) He is counted as a sinner 3) Salvation will be fulfilled
3 The preventions against Satan's attack a. Knowing the difference between carnal & spiritual commitment	33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.		
	34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that	38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.	**4 Conclusion: The disciples still do not understand—still think in terms of earthly Messiah**

DIVISION X

THE SON OF MAN'S LAST SUPPER: HIS TRAITOR, INSTRUCTIONS, AND WARNINGS, 22:1-38

D. The Denial of Peter Foretold: The Great Warning of Satan's Attack, 22:31-38

(22:31-38) **Introduction**: Satan attacks God's people. Knowing and understanding this fact helps the believer tremendously. It helps him...

- to recognize and stand against the attacks.
- to recover himself when caving in to the attacks.
- to strengthen others in their stand against the attacks.

Jesus knew the attack which was about to be launched against the disciples. This passage shows how He prepared His disciples. It is a strong warning that Satan does attack the believer.

1. The warning: Satan's desire is to sift the believer, to separate him from God (v.31).
2. The answer to Satan's attack (v.32).
3. The preventions against Satan's attack (v.33-37).
4. Conclusion: the disciples still do not understand—still think in terms of an earthly Messiah (v.38).

1 (22:31) **Temptation—Satan—Spiritual Struggle**: there is the warning. Satan's desire is to sift the believer, that is, to separate him from God. This verse reveals a great deal about temptation. Note three things.

1. The word "you" is plural in the Greek. Satan desires to tempt all the disciples. Jesus addressed the warning to Peter because he was the leader of the group and because he was to go beyond desertion and actually deny Jesus. Peter needed some very special attention.

2. The word "desired" (exeitesato) means to beg for something, to obtain by asking. Jesus pictured Satan as begging permission of God to trip the disciples. It is the same picture that is found in Job (Job 1:6f). The Bible is clear in its teaching: God is supreme; anything that goes on in the universe goes on because God allows it, even temptation. Just why He allows temptation is covered in the next point. The truth to see right now is that...

- Jesus did give a glimpse into the spiritual world.
- Satan begged God to let him test and try the disciples.
- Satan is subject to God and has no right or power to *tempt believers* unless God allows it.
- The Lord's prayer does include the words, "Deliver us from the evil one" (a po tou poneron) (see DEEPER STUDY # 9—Mt.6:13).

3. The word "sift" (siniasai) means to shake, to sift in a sieve in order to separate the good grain from the chaff. The picture is that Satan wished...

- to sift and shake the disciples.
- to test and try them.
- to prove they were not genuine.
- to cut the heart of God by showing they were not genuine.
- to disgrace God by proving their disloyalty.

Satan's primary purpose in temptation is to disgrace and cut the heart of God. He does this by challenging God to remove the *sense* of His presence and His blessings from the believer. Satan feels that the believer will fall and turn from God. He suggests to God that the believer will not stand by faith through trial after trial, not without the evidence of some

physical or *material* blessing. His suggestion seems to be that the believer loves God not for Himself, not because of what Christ has done for him, but because of what he gets out of God. (Cp. Job 1:6-12.)

The presence of Jesus *was* about to be removed from the disciples. He was to die. And the disciples were thinking in terms of a physical kingdom and material rewards (cp. Lk.22:24-30). They did, of course, fail in the trial. However, we must always remember they did not yet know the full meaning of the cross and resurrection. They were living through the events while we are looking back upon them; we have complete understanding of what took place. Their love and devotion for Jesus ran deep. They did repent, returning and committing their lives fully to Him.

Thought 1. Satan's purpose in temptation is to disgrace and cut the heart of God. This should drive us to stand firm through all temptation, no matter the cost—by faith in the power of the Lord. (See note, *Satan*—Lk.22:3 for a list of the works of Satan.)

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor.2:11).

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor.11:3).

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph.6:12-13).

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim.6:9).

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (Jas.1:14).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).

2 (22:32) **Repentance—Discipleship**: there is the answer when failing and falling under Satan's attack. Jesus wanted Peter to know three things.

1. Jesus is the believer's Intercessor. He was Peter's advocate before God. He had prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. This means Jesus prayed that Peter would not *permanently fall*, that his faith would not *totally fail and be absolutely ruined*, that he would not make a *final and lasting denial* of Jesus. Peter and the others would stumble and fall, but Jesus prayed that they would...
   - not remain down.
   - not stay in sin.
   - not make a final and lasting rejection.
   - not desert forever.

Jesus prayed that they would be kept by the power of God and not be plucked out of God's hand (Jn.10:29; 1 Pt.1:5).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

2. The believer is to turn back to God after falling. The word "converted" (epistrepho) means to turn around, to turn back to, to turn again. The believer is to repent, turn back to God (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Repentance*—Acts 17:29-30).

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 8:32).

3. The believer is to strengthen his brothers once he has returned to God. The believer is to take what he has learned from falling and...
   - teach others how to find the mercy of God.
   - help others who have fallen to return.
   - strengthen the faith of others to keep them from falling.

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas.5:19-20).

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:1-2).

"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations" (Ro.14:1).

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Th.5:14).

"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Ps.51:12-13).

3 (22:33-37) **Commitment—Cross—Flesh—Carnal—Desires—Persecution**: the prevention against Satan's attack is fourfold.

1. Prevention 1: knowing the difference between a carnal and a spiritual commitment. Peter immediately declared his loyalty to Jesus. He did not know the difference between a carnal and spiritual commitment to God. There are three differences.

a. There is the difference between purposes and desires.

⇒ A carnal commitment purposes and desires to have *earthly and material things*.

⇒ A spiritual commitment purposes and desires to have *spiritual and heavenly things*.

Peter was committed to Jesus in the establishment of an earthly kingdom. That was what he wanted, and he was willing to follow Jesus to achieve the end—even to the point of dying in combat against the Romans (cp. Jn.13:33, 36-14:3). However, when he saw Jesus arrested and tried and apparently powerless, Peter's personal ambition was being crushed. Therefore, his succumbing to temptation was inevitable—not because of his lack of commitment, but because his *purpose and motive for committing himself was wrong*.

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).

"Many seek the ruler's favor; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD" (Pr.29:26).

b. There is the difference between seeing and being blind to the cross.

⇒ A carnal commitment ignores or rejects or spiritualizes the real meaning of the cross.

⇒ A spiritual commitment sees the cross and leads a person to crucify his flesh by the cross. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23. Cp. Ro.6:6; 8:13; Gal.2:20; 5:24; Col.3:5.)

Peter's overconfidence was caused by being blind to the cross. It was Jesus hanging upon the cross that was going to cause Peter to deny Jesus. Jesus had told him all about the cross; but Peter had refused to believe it (see notes—Mt.17:22; 18:1-2). The fact that human flesh was so sinful and so depraved that God would have to crucify it was just too much to grasp (see outline and notes—Mt.26:33-34; Ro.6:6-13; pt.2—Gal.2:19-21; 5:24; 6:14-17. Cp. Ro.6:2; Col.3:3.)

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Ro.6:6).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

"Mortify [put to death] therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col.3:5).

c. There is the difference between knowing and not knowing the weakness of the human flesh. Peter boasted confidence in himself, in his own natural strength. *As with all men*, his natural strength failed. The need for the Lord's strength, the presence of the Holy Spirit to conquer self and evil, was the great lesson Peter had to learn. Very simply, he and the others had to learn to trust the strength of Jesus, not their own flesh, not if they wished to please God and to be acceptable to Him.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Ro.8:5-8).

"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil" (Pr.3:7).

Note: the cock's crowing was probably mentioned to trigger the warning about the weakness of the flesh in the mind of Peter and the others. For the person who has the privilege of hearing the rooster crow, it is a good trigger to remind him of the weakness of his own flesh and the great need to walk with the Spirit of God. (See note, pt.2—Mt.26:33-35.)

2. Prevention 2: not forgetting Jesus' resources. Jesus reminded His disciples how God had taken care of them when He sent them out to preach (see outline and notes—Lk.9:3-5; 10:4 for the background of this event). God provided everything they needed. One of the preventatives against Satan's attacks is to remember God's glorious provisions.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Ph.4:11-13).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

3. Prevention 3: knowing that very difficult days lie ahead. Jesus was warning of the perilous days that lay ahead and the need for the disciples to prepare for those days. He was speaking symbolically—of spiritual warfare and spiritual preparation. Two things were to happen to the followers of the Lord.

a. Their friends were to forsake them. They would have to earn their own livelihood while preaching and ministering. They would need their purses and money. No man would help them nor provide housing or upkeep; no man would free them to preach the gospel or minister. They should, but they would not.

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim.5:17-18).

b. Their enemies would be fierce. Jesus was not telling His disciples to arm themselves. He was simply using symbolic language to stress a spiritual truth. The persecution they were to face would be so fierce that they must clothe themselves with courage, the kind of courage...

- that is determined to stand and conquer.
- that considers a weapon more important than clothing.
- that gives up its last possession before surrendering.

4. Prevention 4: knowing that Jesus is the Suffering Servant of God. Jesus said three things.

a. The Scripture included prophecies of Him and they "must yet be accomplished *in me*." He was claiming deity, to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God. He was claiming that the prophecy of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 concerned Him. He was the Suffering Servant of God.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:4-5).

b. He was to be reckoned and counted among the transgressors. This means that God was to look at Him and count Him as a sinner just like all other men. He was to become one with man even in sin, yet He was to be without sin. Why? So that He could take the place of sinful men, bearing their sins for them. He was to become the substitute for men in bearing both their sins and the guilt and judgment of their sins (see note—Lk.22:43-44).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (1 Jn.3:5).

c. The things concerning Him "have an end" (telos echei): an accomplishment, fulfillment, completion. The Suffering Servant of God would fulfill Isaiah 53, and man's salvation would be finally settled, finished. He was to proclaim upon the cross "It is finished" and then bow His head and give up the ghost.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn.17:4).

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (Jn.19:30).

4 (22:38) **Conclusion**: the disciples still did not understand. The warning was not grasped. They still thought in terms of an earthly Messiah, of a Messiah who needed their help in the fight against the evil forces of the world. They still refused to accept the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah. Jesus' words "it is enough" did not mean that two swords were enough, but "enough of this kind of talk."

	XI. THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56		**cup of suffering**[DS1]
	A. Jesus' Great Agony: Bearing Unbelievable Weight, 22:39-46 (Mt.26:36-46; Mk.14: 32-42; Jn.18:1; cp. Heb.5:7-8; 12:3-4)		**4 The awful weight of His intense agony**[DS2] a. Seen in the angel's visit b. Seen in His intense praying c. Seen in His sweat
1 Jesus in the Mount of Olives a. His custom to withdraw there for prayer b. His disciples follow	39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives and his disciples also followed him.	42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done. 43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. 44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.	
2 The weight of His disciples' great trial	40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.	45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, 46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.	**5 The weight of the disciples' continued weakness**
3 The weight of His own	41 And he was withdrawn		

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

A. Jesus' Great Agony: Bearing Unbelievable Weight, 22:39-46

(22:39-46) **Introduction**: this passage shows the great weight of suffering Jesus underwent in facing the cross.

1. Jesus in the Mount of Olives (v.39).
2. The weight of His disciples' great trial (v.40).
3. The weight of His own cup of suffering (v.41-42).
4. The awful weight of the intense agony (v.43-44).
5. The weight of the disciples' continued weakness (v.45-46).

1 (22:39) **Prayer—Jesus Christ, Prayer Life of**: Jesus entered the Mount of Olives. His disciples were with Him. The significant thing to note is this: it was His custom to seek time alone with God on the mount when in Jerusalem. During the last week of His life, He was spending every night in prayer (see note 2 and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.21:37).

2 (22:40) **Jesus Christ, Sufferings—Discipleship**: Jesus bore the weight of His disciples' great trial. The greatest trial the disciples were to ever know was at hand, and they did not know it. In just a few hours they were going to fall away. They desperately needed to pray that they "enter not into temptation" (v.40), that they not be so gripped by temptation and sin that they would be too weak to repent when Jesus arose and confronted them. Jesus knew the enormous temptation that was coming upon these men, and He loved and cared for them, so He was bound to feel the pressure of their trial.

> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**
>
> **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph.6:12-13).**
>
> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).**

3 (22:41-42) **Jesus Christ, Sufferings**: Jesus bore the weight of His own cup of suffering. In confronting death Jesus turned to God, crying with *strong cries and tears* (cp. Heb.5:7). Four things are seen in this verse.

1. Jesus got all alone and prostrated Himself before God. Luke says He withdrew "about a stone's cast" from the three disciples. Note two significant points. (1) He needed to be alone with God—He was desperate. (b) He fell on His face—the pressure and weight were unbearable.
2. Jesus prayed, "Father (pater)." It is the address of a child's love and dependency and trust. The child knows that His father will hear and turn to him when he calls "Father." But note also the words, "*O my* Father." Jesus was broken and weighted down; He had fallen prostrate upon the ground with His face buried in His hands. In desperation He cried out "*O my* Father" (cp. Mt.26:39). Just like a child, He cried out to His Father in brokenness and dependency, knowing that His Father would hear Him and turn to help Him.

3. Jesus asked God to remove the cup from Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Cup*—Mt.26:39. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44; cp. Mt.20:19.) The human nature and will of Jesus is clearly seen in this experience. He was as much flesh as any man is; therefore, He begged God to choose another way other than the cup, if possible. The experience of being *separated from God* upon the cross was too much to bear.

4. The divine nature and will of Jesus is also clearly seen in this experience. Note the Lord's words: "Let this cup pass from me: nevertheless...." The first act, the first impulse and struggle of His will, had come from His flesh: to escape the cup of separation from God. But immediately, the second act, the second impulse and struggle of His will, came from His Godly nature: not to do as He willed, but as God willed.

Jesus' surrender to do God's perfect will in the Garden of Gethsemane was critical.

⇒ It was in His surrender that He was made perfect and was able to stand before God as the Ideal, Perfect Man.

⇒ It was in His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that His righteousness was able to stand for every man.

⇒ It was in His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that He was able to bear the cup of God's wrath against sin *for every man*.

⇒ It was in His surrender to be the Ideal, Perfect Man that His sacrifice and sufferings were able to stand for every man.

> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:9-10).**
>
> **"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(22:42) **Cup**: Jesus Christ was not fearing nor shrinking from death itself. This is clearly seen in Jn.10:17-18. Death for a cause is not such a great price to pay. Many men have died for causes fearlessly and willingly, some perhaps even more cruelly than Jesus Himself. Shrinking from betrayal, beatings, humiliation, and death—increased by foreknowledge—is not what was happening to Jesus. As stated, some men have faced such trials courageously, even inviting martyrdom for a cause. The Lord knew He was to die from the very beginning, and He had been preparing His disciples for His death (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:22). It was not human and physical suffering from which Jesus was shrinking. Such an explanation is totally inadequate in explaining Gethsemane. The great cup or trial Jesus was facing was separation from God (see note, pt.1—Mt.26:37-38). He was to be the sacrificial *Lamb of God* who was to take away the sins of the world (Jn.1:29). He was to bear the judgment of God for the sins of the world (see note—Mt.27:46-49; cp. Is.53:10). Jesus Himself had already spoken of the "cup" when referring to His sacrificial death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23; note—Mk.14:41-42; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.18:11).

Scripture speaks of the cup in several ways.

1. The cup is called "the cup of the Lord's fury" (Is.51:17).
2. The cup is associated with suffering and God's wrath (cp. Ps.11:6; Is.51:17; Lk.22:42).
3. The cup is also associated with salvation. Because Jesus drank the cup of suffering and wrath for us, we can "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps.116:13). He bears the judgment of God for the sins of the world (Is.53:10).

4 (22:43-44) **Jesus Christ, Suffering**: Jesus bore the awful weight of intense agony. This is seen in three facts.

1. God had to send an angel to strengthen Jesus. What did the angel do? We are not told, but certainly the angel would have shared how His death...
   - was an act that glorified and honored God because it was doing exactly what His Father wanted. It was an act of obedience, of love and adoration for God. It was an offering, the perfect offering to God (see note—Eph.5:2).
   - was to result in His own glory and honor and exaltation (Heb.12:2; Ph.2:6-11).
   - was the only way man could be saved eternally.

Also, the angel probably did some very practical things. We can imagine the angel's embracing His Lord, just holding Him ever so tightly, perhaps infusing strength into His being. The scene of our Lord's being so weak that He had to be embraced and engulfed in the arms of an angel should break the believer's heart. Perhaps the angel wiped the perspiration and blood and tears off His brow. Whatever the scene, we need to see the awful weight and intensity of our Lord's agony.

2. He prayed "more earnestly," more intensely. The reason is seen in the Greek words for "being in an agony" (genomenos en agonia). The Greek (aorist participle) means Jesus experienced a growing agony. The weight upon Him was not only intense, it grew more and more intense. The pressure and sense of suffering became heavier and heavier. The picture is that of His becoming engrossed and embodied in agony. Thus, He prayed more and more earnestly. His prayer grew and increased in intensity even as His agony intensified.

3. He sweat great drops of blood. The words "great drops" (thromboi) mean thick clots of blood. Apparently Jesus was under so much pressure the capillary veins right under the skin burst and the blood mingled with sweat and poured through the enlarged pores. What Jesus was experiencing can never be known (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus Christ, Suffering*—Lk.22:43-44).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(22:43-44) **Jesus Christ, Suffering**: words could never express what Jesus experienced. Words to describe the suffering of Jesus are totally inadequate. Using all the descriptive words in the world would be as inadequate as using a syringe to drain an ocean.

1. There was the *mental and emotional agony*: the weight, pressure, anguish, sorrow, and excessive strain such as no man has ever experienced. He was the Son of God, the Maker of heaven and earth; but *now* pressing in ever so heavily upon His mind and spirit were the images, the thoughts of...
   - the *hardness and unbelief* of all men everywhere.
   - the *rejection* of His own people, the Jews.
   - the *malice* of the world's leaders, both Jew and Gentile, religious and civil.
   - the *betrayal* of one of His own, Judas.
   - the *desertion* of all His men.
   - the *denial* by the leader of His own men, Peter.
   - the *injustice and condemnation* of His trial.
   - the *ridicule and pain* of being scourged, spit upon, slugged, cursed, mocked, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross and killed.
   - the *wrath of God* that was soon to be cast upon Him as the Sin-Bearer of the world.
   - the *departure of God's Spirit* from Him as He bore the sins of the world.
2. There was the *physical experience of death while being the Son of God*. What was it like for the Son of God to die just as all men die? If just the physical aspect of Jesus' death is considered, His death was still different from all other men.
   a. Jesus as the Son of God possessed the very seed of life within His being (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3).
   b. Jesus as the Son of God possessed no seed of death (Jn.14:6; 1 Tim.6:16; 1 Jn.1:1-2. Cp. Jn.1:4.) But man does. Man possesses the seed of corruption and death; man's sinful nature knows nothing and expects nothing but death. However, the sinless nature of Jesus knew nothing of sin and death. Therefore, the agony and pain of death was bound to be as different from man's death as white is different from black.

      There is another fact to note as well. Man suffers the depth of humiliation in death. No matter how much man struggles to live, he irrevocably wastes and wastes away until he is carried into the grave and dust of the ground. But not Jesus. Again He was sinless, perfect even in His human nature. Imagine the humiliation: the Son of God—Perfect Man, Perfect God—having to die upon this earth! No wonder He "began to be sorrowful and *very heavy*!" No wonder He could say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death*." In some mysterious way, God made Jesus to become sin for us (2 Cor.5:21).
3. There was *the spiritual experience of death* while being the Son of Man (see note—Mt.5:17-18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—8:20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.8:3). There is so much in this fact, yet so little can ever be known.
   a. First, what is it like to be without sin? Although being fully man, Jesus was sinless. He lived as all men live facing all the trials and temptations that men face, yet He never sinned. He became the Perfect Man, the Ideal Man—all that God wants man to be. Therefore, He became the Pattern for all men.

      "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15; cp. 2 Cor.5:21; 1 Pt.2:22; 1 Jn.3:5).

      "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).

   b. Second, what is it like to bear all the sins of the world? What is it like to be perfect and sinless, and then *all of a sudden* to have all the sins of the world laid upon Oneself? In some mysterious way, God took all the sins of the world and laid the whole *body of sin* upon Jesus. In some mysterious way, God made Jesus to become sin for us (2 Cor.5:21). Jesus, as the Ideal Man, became the Ideal Sin-Bearer. He bore all the sins and all that sin causes, all the...

      - darkness
      - pollution
      - filth
      - dirt
      - poison
      - weight
      - pressure
      - anxiety
      - turmoil
      - corrosion
      - worry
      - guilt
      - savagery
      - conflict
      - consumption
      - strife
      - warring
      - torture
      - enmity
      - disturbance

      "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).

      "In due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

      "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

c. Third, what is it like to bear all the judgment and condemnation of sin for all men? What is it like to be judged and condemned for *all the sins ever committed*? Jesus suffered for the sins of *the whole world*, suffered *separation* from God. The terrifying mystery of this hellish experience is seen in His cry upon the cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (See notes—Mt.27:26-44; 27:46-49; 1 Pt.2:21-25.)

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

5 (22:45-46) **Jesus Christ, Suffering**: Jesus bore the weight of the disciples' continued weakness. The disciples were weak, so weak in fact that they were of no help to Jesus as He faced the most severe crises of His life. Jesus had to face the cross knowing the terrible weakness of His own men. Note what happened.

1. Jesus arose from prayer and went to the three who were supposed to be praying with Him. They were asleep. The companionship and spirit of prayer and comfort He had sought were not there. All were asleep. He had been left alone to wrestle with God by Himself.

2. Jesus warned them of temptation. They had failed to pray for Him, but they must not fail to pray for themselves. Jesus said, "Watch and pray." Both were important. *Watchfulness* sees and *praying* prepares. They must watch in order to see temptation's coming, and they must pray in order to be prepared when temptation struck.

3. Jesus warned of the flesh and its weakness. They were sleeping because of the emotional strain and distress of the evening. As Luke says, they slept because of "sorrow," that is, sadness (Lk.22:45). The evening had been shocking and taxing. They were weary, fatigued, and preoccupied. Concentration in prayer was difficult. They probably fought to stay awake and to pray for their Lord, but the importance of prayer and of spiritual dependancy upon God in facing trials had not yet been learned. They were making two mistakes common among believers.

   a. They were depending upon their own wisdom and strength instead of God's Spirit to fight whatever battles lay ahead.

   b. They were taking God's deliverance for granted instead of assuring themselves of His deliverance through the testimony of prayer. They believed Christ to be the Messiah; therefore, they believed that God was going to deliver them from the Romans no matter what. As carnal, fleshy men are apt to do, the disciples no doubt thought prayer mattered little. They were just presuming upon God, taking His deliverance for granted. What Jesus said was, "Watch and pray, for only as you watch and pray can you keep from falling when the trial comes."

A point needs to be noted here: watchfulness and prayer bear *testimony* to God. When men watch and pray, they demonstrate that dependency and trust in God are well founded. When God answers the prayers of men, He demonstrates that He loves and delivers those who truly look up to Him. Without watching and praying, God allows the disciples to fall in order to teach that dependency and trust in Him are absolutely essential.

4. They were failing to stay awake to pray, to watch and be watchful in prayer. Their spirits were not alive and alert enough to overcome the flesh. The drowsiness and slumber of the flesh were stronger than the spirit (see note, pt.2—Mt.26:42-44; cp. Eph.6:18).

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (Col.4:2).

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).

	B. Jesus' Arrest: Terrible Sins Against Jesus, 22:47-53 (Mt.26:47-56; Mk.14: 43-52; Jn.18:3-11)	sword? 50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.	
1 Deserting Jesus: The betrayer a. A professing disciple b. A leader of sinners	47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.	51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.	b. Jesus rebuked the disciples
c. A deceptive commitment	48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?	52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?	**3 Being blind to the Son of God: The religionists**
2 Misunderstanding the Lord's will: The disciples a. The disciples misunderstood & ignored Jesus' will	49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the	53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.	**4 Joining forces with the power of darkness**

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

B. Jesus' Arrest: Terrible Sins Against Jesus, 22:47-53

(22:47-53) **Introduction**: it took only a few minutes to arrest Jesus. However, in those few minutes was painted a dramatic picture of four terrible sins against the Lord, sins that are repeated by too many in every generation.

1. Deserting Jesus: the betrayer (v.47-48).
2. Misunderstanding and ignoring the Lord's will: the disciples (v.49-51).
3. Being blind to the Son of God: the religionists (v.52).
4. Joining forces with the power of darkness (v.53).

1 (22:47-48) **Unbelief—Desertion—Apostasy—Judas**: deserting the Lord, the sin committed by Judas the betrayer. Three things are seen in Judas' desertion.

1. He was a *professing* disciple, a man who claimed to be a follower of the Lord. In fact, he had actually been with the Lord and His followers for over two years. On this very evening, just a few hours before, he had been eating and fellowshipping with the Lord and the other disciples; but ever so quickly, he had turned away.
2. He was a *leader* of sinners, leading the world in its opposition to Jesus. Note the words "went before them." As pointed out earlier, he chose the world before Jesus—the world's money, position, and recognition (fame). (See note—Mk.14:10.)

The crowd which Judas led is identified by Matthew and Mark as being arresting officers or temple police from the Sanhedrin. John says they included Roman soldiers. Matthew and Mark say they were armed. The soldiers, of course, had their swords; the elders and other officials of the High Priest had armed themselves with boards and sticks (cp. Mt.26:47).

3. He had a *deceptive* commitment to the Lord. Note what happened. It was dark. How would the temple guards be able to recognize Jesus in the dark and keep Him from slipping away? Judas thought and came up with a plan. He would identify Jesus for them by walking up and greeting Jesus with a kiss. A kiss was a sign of friendship and commitment among people in the East, in particular among friends. Judas felt he could deceive the disciples; they would never suspect his sin.

What Judas planned, he did. The sin was bad, but the deception was worse. Jesus' question was searching: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" Note: the question was not a rebuke or reproach. Jesus was forcing Judas to think, to search his deceptive heart. He still wanted to reach Judas, if possible (see note—Mt.26:48-50).

> **Thought 1.** How many profess Christ but do not really know Christ nor live for Christ? How many are deceivers just as Judas was: trying to make others think they are followers of Christ when they are really living *for themselves*? How many began to follow Christ but are now falling back into sin just as Judas did?
>
> **"And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity" (Jer.9:5).**
>
> **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer.17:9).**
>
> **"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).**
>
> **"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:13).**
>
> **"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers" (Tit.1:10).**

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"[These] shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot [party] in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you [the church]; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children" (2 Pt.2:13-14).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

2 (22:49-51) **Flesh—Commitment—Carnal**: misunderstanding and ignoring the Lord's will, the sin committed by the disciples. Note two things.

1. The disciples misunderstood the Lord's will and the spiritual nature of His kingdom. They were ready to *war in the flesh*. The disciple referred to in v.50 was Peter, and the servant whose ear was cut off was Malchus (Jn.18:10). Jesus restored the ear, miraculously healed it (Lk.22:51).

Peter thought the Messiah's hour had come, that Jesus was now ready to free Israel and establish the throne of David as the dominant nation in the world (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). Peter drew his sword (note he had one) and struck, slashing off the ear of Malchus.

2. Jesus rebuked the disciples: their carnal commitment, their warring in the flesh.
   ⇒ He told Peter to put his sword back into its sheath where it belonged (Mt.26:52).
   ⇒ He healed Malchus' ear (Lk.22:51).

The picture painted by the disciples' behavior is carnal commitment, that is, acting and struggling in the flesh. The disciples took their stand for Jesus *in the flesh*. Therefore they failed, and eventually they deserted Jesus. Acting in the flesh will always result in failing and deserting Christ. The disciples' carnal commitment is seen in four mistakes. Each mistake is too often seen in the life of believers.

1. The disciples misunderstood the Lord's Word. First, they thought Jesus was to establish an earthly kingdom. They thought in terms of the earthly, the physical, the material. Therefore, they *failed to grasp the spiritual and eternal kingdom* proclaimed by Jesus. Second, they never accepted the Lord's Word. Jesus had predicted His death and forewarned the disciples, giving them extensive training for months (see notes—Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27). Yet they refused to give up their preconceived ideas to accept what Jesus was saying. Therefore, they did not see the eternal world of the Spirit nor the eternal salvation which Jesus was securing.

2. The disciples did not wait for instructions from Jesus. They acted on their own, took matters into their own hands. The disciples had asked, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" But Jesus had not yet answered. However, this did not stop them; they went ahead and acted on their own.

Thought 1. How like so many of us! Too often, we act without waiting on the Lord.

3. The disciples did not ask Jesus what to do, not again and again. They did not *persist* until Jesus answered.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt.26:41).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Lk.21:36).

"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually" (1 Chron.16:11).

4. The disciples did not think clearly nor act wisely. Their actions could have led to the failure of God's will. It could have led to the death of many. That is what Jesus was saying: "Violence leads to violence. If you draw the sword, the soldiers will cut you down." Among God's people, the place of the sword is in the sheath, not drawn and slashing at people. God's people are to proclaim love and peace, not war and violence, not carnal and fleshly behavior.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech.4:6).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev.3:19).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

3 (22:52) **Sin—Unbelief—Blindness**: being blind to the Son of God, the sin committed by the religionists. The religionists refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.14:1-2). The question of Jesus was piercing. Why did the world treat Him as a thief? They acted as though He stole from them. He did not preach a message that allowed them to live as they wished; it was as though He took the right to live as they wished away from them. He did not praise them, boost their egos, honor their service and gifts. Rather, He told them they were lacking in discernment and sinful, dying and doomed if they did not repent and begin to live as God said (see note—Mt.26:55-56).

Thought 1. Note a crucial point so often not seen. Jesus had to tell the truth in order for men to be saved. God is love, but His love is not like a grandfather's indulgence that accepts wrongdoing. His love is the father's ache and acceptance of repentance and obedience. *Only through repentance and obedience can a man ever know the love of God* (cp. Jn.14:21, 23-24; 15:10, 14). God does not accept a man who does wrong and lives unrighteously. Jesus

had to tell men the truth, for He could not deceive men. If men wanted to be acceptable to God and live in His love, then they had to turn away from sin and come to God, believing that He exists and diligently seeking Him.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).**
>
> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).**
>
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (Jn.15:10, 14).**

4 (22:53) **Satan**: joining forces with the power of darkness. What Jesus said was alarming: "This is your hour, *and* the power of darkness." Those who opposed Jesus had joined forces with the power of darkness against Jesus. The power of darkness refers to the forces of evil, the evil one himself, Satan (Eph.6:12; Col.1:13). Note these points about the word "hour."

1. An hour is only a short time. It soon passes. Therefore, the power of darkness and those who oppose the Lord will last but a short time. Their hour will soon pass.
2. The power of darkness is always broken and conquered by light. When light appears, the presence and power of darkness are destroyed. So it is with God's Son, the Light of the world. The power of darkness and those who oppose Christ may have their hour now, but their hour is to end. He, the Light of the world, will arise and dispel the darkness and completely do away with it.
3. An hour soon passes, but then what is left? All the hours of life and of eternity. The power of darkness and those who oppose Christ may have an hour, but that will be all. However He, the Light of the world, will give Light to the world forever.

> **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph.6:12).**
>
> **"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).**

	C. Peter's Denial: The Great Tragedy of Denial, 22:54-62 (Mt.26:57, 69-75; Mk.14:53-54, 66-72; Jn.18:15-18, 25-27)	not. 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. 60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.	**3 The denial of discipleship: Denying that one is a follower of Jesus** **4 The denial of ignorance: Claiming to know nothing about what is being said** a. The charge: Emphatic—was with Jesus b. The denial: Emphatic—know nothing about Him **5 The answer to denial** a. Remembering the Lord's word b. Getting alone c. Expressing godly sorrow[DSI]
1 The cause of denial a. "Followed afar off" b. "Sat down" in the midst of the crowd	54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off. 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.		
2 The denial of pretension: Pretending not to know Jesus a. The charge: Was with Jesus b. The denial: Pretends not to know Jesus	56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him		

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

C. Peter's Denial: The Great Tragedy of Denial, 22:54-62

(22:54-62) **Introduction**: denying Jesus is one of the greatest tragedies in all of life. Yet Jesus is denied often, not only by unbelievers but by believers as well. This passage is a study of denial, the awful tragedy of denying Jesus.

1. The cause of denial (v.54-55).
2. The denial of pretension: pretending not to know Jesus (v.56-57).
3. The denial of discipleship: denying that one is a follower of Jesus (v.58).
4. The denial of ignorance: claiming that one knows nothing about what is being said (v.59-60).
5. The answer to denial (v.61-62).

1 (22:54-55) **Apostasy—Jesus Christ, Denied**: the cause of denial given in these verses is twofold. Peter failed Jesus and failed Him miserably.

1. "Peter followed afar off." *Following Jesus afar off* means not walking close to Him, not standing and being identified with Him. A man who follows *afar off* is not focusing on Christ. His mind and life are not fixed upon the Lord. His commitment is weak; therefore, he is easily...
   - distracted by the world and drawn into its ways.
   - stricken with fear—the fear of ridicule, embarrassment, abuse, persecution, being cut off, shunned, ignored, ostracized.

> **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim.1:7-8).**

2. Peter "sat down among" the crowd, the crowd which represented the world of rejecters. Very frankly, Peter was failing Jesus miserably. Sitting down among the crowd was the last place he should have been. He, of course, should have never forsaken Jesus. But having fled, he should have been off alone with God in prayer, seeking answers and understanding from God (see notes—Mt.26:51-52; 26:55-56). Or he should have been with the other apostles, leading them to seek the face of God for understanding and direction.

> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**

2 (22:56-57) **Apostasy—Jesus Christ, Denied**: the denial of pretension—pretending not to know Jesus. When confronted, this denial says, "I have nothing to do with Christ."

Note what happened. A maid "earnestly looked" at Peter. She stared at him, observed him closely, thinking she had seen him with Jesus. She concluded that Peter was one of the Lord's followers: "This man was also with Him." There seems to be no threat or danger in this statement to Peter. At worst it seems that it would have led only to some bantering and ridicule. The rejecters standing around were naturally bantering back and forth about Jesus and His claims, considering Him to have been a fool. Peter had an opportunity, perhaps, to be a witness for Jesus, humbly sharing about the love and

enormous care of Jesus for people. Perhaps he could have helped to turn some who were standing there to Jesus, or at least stopped some of the mob's ridiculing. We must always remember that John was somewhere in the palace as well, and as far as we know, he was maintaining his composure and testimony for Jesus.

Peter cracked under his fear. He denied Jesus, pretending he did not know Him or have anything to do with Him.

Thought 1. Weak believers fear the crowd. When in church they readily profess Christ, but out in the world, at work or at school, they fear being known as believers. They pretend not to know Christ.

> **"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).**
>
> **"A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that speaketh lies shall not escape" (Pr.19:5).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

3 (22:58) **Apostasy—Jesus Christ, Denied**: the denial of discipleship—denying that one is a follower of Jesus. When confronted, this denial is more emphatic and vocal, "I am not a disciple, not a follower of Christ."

Note the charge: "Thou art also *of them.*" The charge was true.

⇒ Peter had been with Jesus. He was an apostle; in fact, he was the leader of the apostles.
⇒ Peter was the disciple who had professed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God (Mt.16:16).
⇒ Peter was the disciple who had sworn loyalty to Jesus even if it meant death (Mt.26:33-35).

Peter emphatically denied that he was a disciple, a follower of Jesus: "I am not!" Peter was falling (progressing) more and more into sin. He was denying Jesus because he was not by His side, but *standing among* the Lord's rejecters.

⇒ He was standing among the Lord's rejecters because he had fled the Lord.
⇒ He had fled the Lord because he had acted in the flesh (see note—Lk.22:49-51).
⇒ He had acted in the flesh because he had not accepted the Lord's words for what they said.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).**
>
> **"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).**
>
> **"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).**

4 (22:59-60) **Apostasy—Jesus Christ, Denied**: the denial of ignorance—claiming that one knows nothing about what is being said. This is the denial that claims ignorance, "I do not know what you are talking about; I know absolutely nothing about the matter." Matthew and Mark say Peter began to curse and swear, *denying any knowledge whatsoever about Jesus*.

Note: this accuser is sure Peter was a follower of Jesus. The man "confidently affirmed," insisted upon the fact. He even identified Peter's nationality, a Galilaean Jew. It was common knowledge that Jesus' disciples were Galilaeans.

Peter's chest was bound to be pounding with emotion and fear. His thoughts were flying, trying to figure how to escape. His emotions just burst forth in cursing and swearing, a forceful denial: "I know not what thou sayest." Note that this denial occurred about one hour after the last one. Peter's failure was a deteriorating failure.

⇒ At first, he pretended not to know Jesus.
⇒ Then he fell even farther. He emphatically denied being a disciple.
⇒ Now, he claimed total ignorance of all. He cursed and swore that he knew absolutely nothing about Jesus.

This is the point: Peter stayed in the crowd, still stood around the rejecters of Jesus—even after they had led him to deny Jesus twice. He was trying to be *of the world*, one of the crowd, when he should have been off praying and seeking to understand the ways of God.

> **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Pr.4:14).**
>
> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).**
>
> **"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).**

5 (22:60-62) **Repentance—Confession**: three steps were involved in Peter's repentance.

1. Remembering the Lord's words. Apparently while the rooster was crowing, the Lord, standing in the chamber of the palace, turned around and caught the eye of Peter (Lk.22:61). And Peter, eye to eye with the Lord, remembered the words the Lord had spoken to him:

> **"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Lk.22:31-32).**

In the midst of all His own pain and suffering, the Lord's look told Peter that His Lord had not forgotten him. The Lord still loved and cared for Him and wanted his loyalty and service. Jesus had prayed for Peter, and the power of that prayer was now moving in Peter's heart and life. Peter now remembered His Lord's word and that word began to take effect.

2. Getting alone. Peter left as fast as he safely could from the porch or courtyard through the gate out into the night to get alone at last with God. He was broken, full of anguish and pain for having failed his Lord: he "wept bitterly."

3. Expressing godly sorrow: repentance (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6).**
>
> **"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land" (Ezra 10:11).**
>
> **"For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps.38:4).**
>
> **"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me" (Ps.51:3).**
>
> **"Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins" (Ps.73:21; cp. Jn.16:8).**
>
> **"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).**
>
> **"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(22:62) **Repentance**: see note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30.

	D. Jesus Tried Before the Sanhedrin Court: The Phenomenal Claims of Jesus, 22:63-71 (Mt.26:57-68; 27:1; Mk.14:53-65; 15:1; Jn.18:12-14, 19-24)	and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,	
1 The attitude of religion & the world toward Jesus' claims	63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him,	67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe:	**2 Claim 1: He is the Messiah**
a. There is physical & verbal abuse	64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?	68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.	
	65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.	69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.	**3 Claim 2: He is the Son of Man, exalted**
b. There is formal & legal abuse—a formal trial[DSI]	66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people	70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.	**4 Claim 3: He is the Son of God**
		71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.	**5 Conclusion: The claims understood, but rejected**

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

D. Jesus Tried Before the Sanhedrin Court: The Phenomenal Claims of Jesus, 22:63-71

(22:63-71) **Introduction**: this is the first trial of Jesus covered by Luke. The thrust of the trial was the phenomenal claims of Jesus, claims which demand a decision from every man.

1. The attitude of religion and the world toward Jesus' claims (v.63-66).
2. Claim 1: the Messiah (v.67-68).
3. Claim 2: the Son of Man, exalted (v.69).
4. Claim 3: the Son of God (v.70).
5. Conclusion: the claims understood, but rejected (v.71).

1 (22:63-66) **World, Response to Jesus—Persecution, of Jesus Christ—Jesus Christ, Trials of**: the attitude of religion and the world to Jesus' claims. The world and formal religion opposed Jesus. This is clearly seen in the treatment of Jesus during the night while He was being held for trial the next morning.

1. There was (and is today) physical and verbal abuse. They ridiculed and mocked and shamed and beat Him. Why? Because of His claims.

> **"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20. Also refer to Jn.15:20-25.)**

2. There was ridicule of His spiritual power. If He were the Son of God, He should know all things, so they mocked and challenged His power: "Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?" But God gives no signs, not to the mocking and obstinate and devilish unbeliever. (See note—Mk.8:12.)
3. There were all kinds of blasphemy and cursing spoken against Him. (How tragic! Yet, how much like men today!)

Note the setting for the formal trial of Jesus. This was a trial by the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews which included both religious and lay leaders (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sanhedrin*—Mt.26:59). Jesus stood before them all on trial for His life. Note the words "came together": they gathered, resorted, *flocked together* just as a body of vultures over their prey. There is also the idea of accompanying. The picture is that of the Jewish leaders flocking or herding together around Jesus, of being called to accompany one another to their respective seats, ready to pounce on Jesus. There is no question about the evil of their hearts. They *were* ready to pounce on and eliminate Him.

The court was stacked against Jesus. The leaders, both lay and religious, had already *determined* to reject and oppose Him. He was a threat to both their nation and their personal security and position. They feared the loss of both, so they were set on killing Him. (For a discussion of the reasons for their opposition, see notes—Mt.12:1-8; note and DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:10; note—15:1-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—15:6-9; DEEPER STUDY # 3—16:12.)

> **Thought 1.** The religionists rejected and opposed Christ for two primary reasons, the same two reasons that men reject and oppose Him today.
> 1) Men are unwilling to deny self, to surrender all they are and have to Christ. They fear the loss of something—some security, money, position, power, or pleasure. They love the world and self more than they are willing to love God.

2) Men are unwilling to deny their institutional religion: their religious practices that are *man-made*, *man-conceived*, *man-honoring*.

Thought 2. Men do *flock together* to oppose Christ. It is easier to oppose Him in the presence of others.

> **"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (3 Jn.11).**
>
> **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas.4:17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(22:66-71) **Jesus, Trials of**: there were at least six trials.

1. An informal trial during the night before Annas (Jn.18:12-14, 19-23).
2. An informal trial by night before Caiaphas and some Sanhedrin officials to find a charge against Jesus (Mt.26:57-68; Mk.14:53-65; Lk.22:54, 63-65).
3. An early morning formal trial before a quickly assembled Sanhedrin to secure the verdict of the full Sanhedrin and to formulate the charge against Jesus (Mt.27:1; Mk.15:1; Lk.22:66-71).
4. A preliminary questioning by Pilate (Mt.27:2, 11-14; Mk.15:1-5; Lk.23:1-5; Jn.18:28-38).
5. A preliminary questioning by Herod (Lk.23:6-12).
6. The formal Roman trial before Pilate (Mt.27:15-26; Mk.15:6-15; Lk.23:13-25; Jn.18:39-40).

The other events following Jesus' arrest seem to be:

1. Peter's denial (Mt.26:58, 69-75; Mk.14:54, 66-72; Lk.22:54-62; Jn.18:15-18, 25-27).
2. Judas' suicide (Mt.27:3-10; Acts 1:18-19). Both of these events took place between the first and second trial.
3. Jesus crowned with thorns and severely beaten by the Roman soldiers (Mt.27:27-30; Mk.15:16-19; Jn.19:1-3).
4. Simon's carrying Jesus' cross (Mt.27:31-32; Mk.15:20-21; Lk.23:26).
5. Jesus' warning the women of the coming judgment upon Jerusalem (Lk.23:27-31). (See note—Mt.26:57; 26:59.)

2 (22:67-68) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. The council did not come right out and accuse Jesus. They wanted Him to incriminate Himself; therefore, they questioned Him: "Art thou the Christ [Messiah]? Tell us." But Jesus could not answer, not directly. Note two facts.

1. They did not understand the true Messiahship of God. God's Messiahship is spiritual and eternal, not physical and material (see note—Eph.1:3). Jesus had come to save men spiritually, not materially. Therefore if He told them, they would not believe; and if He asked them questions which would lead them to the truth, they would not answer. He had done this often (Lk.20:7, 26, 40).
2. Jesus did not deny His Messiahship. The way He answered the council was an affirmation. Note His exact words, "If I *tell you*, ye will not believe." It was as though He said, "I am, but if I tell you, declare it vocally, you will not believe it." (See notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; note—Lk.19:36-38 cp. Mk.11:1-11 for concepts of Messiah.)

> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).**

3 (22:69) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: Jesus claimed to be the Son of Man who will be exalted. Jesus was really making three claims.

1. That He is the Son of Man (see notes—Lk.4:20-21; Jn.1:51; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20. Cp. Dan.7:13-14.)
2. That He will not remain dead even if they kill Him. He will be raised into God's presence.
3. That He will be exalted to sit on the right hand of the power of God.

> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**
>
> **"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:32-36).**
>
> **"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph.1:19-21).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth,**

and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

4 (22:70) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Note several facts.

1. "They all" now questioned Jesus. The picture is that of an outroar, voices reacting to His claim to be the Son of Man, voices bursting forth together shouting: "Art thou then the Son of God?"
2. The definite article "*the*" is important. They were not asking if He were *a* son of God like many men claim. They asked if He were "*the* Son of God."
3. Jesus unquestionably claimed to be "*the* Son of God." (See note—Mk.14:62 for more discussion.)

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Mt.14:33).

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk.1:1).

"And I [John the Baptist] saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

5 (22:71) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: the claim of Jesus was understood, but the leaders rejected His claim. Jesus had both accepted and claimed the charge being made against Him. He was...

- The Messiah.
- The Son of God.
- The Son of Man.

They had heard enough. In their obstinate unbelief, they condemned Him to death—condemned the Man who had come to save the world from its terrible plight of sin and death, from its desperate need for health and love and for salvation and life.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

	CHAPTER 23		
	E. Jesus' First Trial Before Pilate & Herod: The Shirking of Duty & Personal Concern, 23:1-12 (Mt.27:11-14; Mk.15: 1-5; Jn.18:28-38)	6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. 7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.	e. The attempt to escape one's duty
1 The Sanhedrin dragged Jesus to Pilate[DS1]	And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.	8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.	**3 The questioning before Herod: Shirking concern**
2 The trial before Pilate: Shirking duty	2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.	9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.	a. He sought the spectacular
a. The charges[DS2] 1) He is a revolutionary 2) He opposes taxes 3) He claims to be a King	3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered and said, Thou sayest it.	10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.	b. He was the only man Jesus never answered
b. The questioning of Pilate & the claim of Jesus	4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.	11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.	c. He listened to false charges by religionists
c. The verdict by Pilate: Jesus was innocent	5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.	12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.	d. He did not take the Jews seriously: Joked contemptuously
d. The bitter protest & enlarged charge			**4 Conclusion: Pilate & Herod were brought together in their opposition to Jesus**

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

E. Jesus' First Trial Before Pilate and Herod: The Shirking of Duty and Personal Concern, 23:1-12

(23:1-12) **Introduction**: this passage is a clear portrait of two men who shirked duty and personal concern.

1. The Sanhedrin dragged Jesus to Pilate (v.1).
2. The trial before Pilate: shirking duty (v.2-7).
3. The questioning before Herod: shirking concern (v.8-11).
4. Conclusion: Pilate and Herod were brought together in their opposition to Jesus (v.12).

1 (23:1) **Religionists**: the Sanhedrin dragged Jesus to Pilate. Feelings ran deep. The depth of their obstinate unbelief is seen in the fact that "the *whole multitude* of them arose and led Him to Pilate." Just picture the scene. All members present (seventy one when a full body was present) marched Him to Pilate. They were so opposed to Him that they wanted the full weight of their position and their comrades standing against Him.

> **Thought 1.** Observe obstinate unbelievers. They try to convince and secure as much support as possible against Christ and His followers. Why? To protect their worldly desires and security, their position and authority and wealth.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(23:1-7) **Pilate**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.23:13.

2 (23:2-7) **Jesus Christ, Trials—Pilate**: the trial before Pilate, a picture of *shirking duty*. Note five points.

1. The political charges against Jesus were three (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Lk.23:2).
2. The questioning of Pilate and the claim of Jesus. This was one of the charges brought against Jesus, and in the eyes of Rome it would be the most serious. Pilate, somewhat surprised by the charge, scornfully asked Jesus, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus strongly claimed that He was: "Thou sayest it." However, as John points out, Jesus clearly stated that His kingdom was not of this world. His kingdom was spiritual (Jn.18:36-37).

Thought 1. Jesus is not a political revolutionary, not a threat to any civil government. He is the King of man's spirit and of heaven, of the spiritual dimension of being, not of earth. He came to rule and reign in the hearts and lives of men, in the realm of the spiritual and eternal, not in the realm of the physical and temporal (see note—Eph.1:3).

3. The verdict of Pilate: Jesus was innocent. Note: this is a public verdict. Pilate actually pronounced Jesus innocent to the leaders and the people. However, as shall be seen and as is the case with so many, he lacked the *inner strength* to stand by his convictions. He gave in to the world, going along with their wish.

4. The bitter protest and enlarged charge. The unbelievers, fitfully aroused, accused Jesus. They were closeminded: obstinate, bitter, spiteful. They said He was guilty of leading a revolution throughout all Israel, from Galilee to Jerusalem.

It should be noted that Jesus' purpose was not to defend Himself nor to escape death. His purpose was to surrender to the *sinful behavior* of men. The *sinful behavior* to which He submitted was...

- the very depth of sin itself.
- the ultimate demonstration of sin.
- the greatest sin that could be committed.

The act of sin to which He subjected Himself was the rejection and killing of the Son of God. Standing there before His accusers, He said nothing, enduring their awful indignities. He endured because He was purposed to die for the sins of men.

Note that Pilate actually declared Jesus innocent four different times (Lk.23:4, 14, 15, 22; cp. Jn.18:38; 19:4, 6).

5. The attempt to escape one's duty (Pilate). Pilate wished to release Jesus, for he knew the Lord was innocent. However, he had to guard against upsetting the leaders of the Jewish nation. He was in a dilemma. When he heard Galilee mentioned, he saw a way out of his dilemma. Herod, who was ruler of Galilee, was in town for the Passover. He could send Jesus over to Herod and let him pass judgment. As a Galilaean, Jesus belonged under the jurisdiction of Herod.

The point to note is this: Pilate lacked the courage to do what was right. He knew Jesus was innocent, yet he sought to *escape his duty* to declare the truth. He made four attempts to shirk his duty. (1) He tried to get the Jews to handle the matter themselves (Lk.18:31). (2) He sent Jesus to Herod (Lk.23:7). (3) He tried to get the Jews to accept Jesus as the prisoner to be released at the Passover (Lk.23:17-19; Mk.15:6). (4) He suggested flogging Jesus and then letting Him go (Lk.23:16).

Thought 1. A man who seeks to escape his duty is an unworthy leader. He is not worthy of the responsibility (position, call, or duty).

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:8).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk.16:13).

"Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty" (Hos.10:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(23:2) **Jesus Christ, Charges Against**: three political charges were levelled against Jesus.

1. He was charged with perverting the nation, that is, of treason, of being a revolutionary and committing sedition against Rome. The charge, of course, was false. Jesus was not out to pervert people from an earthly nation; He was out to convert people to a heavenly world, to God and His kingdom which were not of this earth (Jn.19:36).
2. He was charged with disobeying the laws of the nation, in particular for not paying taxes. Of course this charge was also false. Jesus had taught that obedience to earthly government was absolutely essential for the believer. (See outline and notes—Lk.20:19-26.)
3. He was charged with claiming to be King, with being a rival to Caesar. Again, this charge was false.
   a. The very reason the Jewish leaders were not accepting Him (so they claimed) was because He had come in the meekness and love of God, not in the armed might of God, liberating their nation from the Roman conquerors (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18).
   b. Jesus had actually refused to let the people set Him up as King (Jn.6:15).

3 (23:8-11) **Herod's Hardened Heart**: the questioning before Herod, a picture of shirking personal concern. Herod showed no concern whatsoever for the truth, nor for his own soul. The possibility that the true Messiah might actually be standing before Him never crossed his mind. (See note, pt.3—Lk.3:1. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2, *Herod*—Mt.14:1-14 for more discussion.)

1. Herod sought only the spectacular. He had heard many things about Jesus, the amazing power and miracles He had manifested. As a ruler, a very special person, Herod wanted and felt he deserved...
   - the privilege of some sign.
   - the privilege of gazing.
   - the privilege of some spectacle.

Jesus' power, of course, was not to be used for the spectacular, not for the purpose of satisfying an unbeliever's curiosity. (See notes—Lk.4:9-12; 11:20 for more discussion.)

2. Herod was the only man Jesus never answered. Herod's own household had been penetrated with the gospel. Chuza, Herod's personal steward (Lk.8:3), and Manaen, Herod's foster brother (Acts 13:1), were believers. The noble-

man or court official mentioned in the story shared by Jesus was also probably of Herod's court (Jn.4:46). Apparently, the gospel as lived by these persons had little effect upon Herod. Their sharing was but religious foolishness to him. He treated their reports with disdain, perhaps with some abuse. Jesus, knowing the hopelessness of his unresponsive heart, wasted no time and no words upon him. Jesus said nothing to him at all.

3. Herod listened to false charges by the religionists. He had failed to listen to John the Baptist (Lk.9:7-9) and to the witnesses in his own household. He had heard "many things of Christ" (v.8), yet he had refused to listen, to truly hear and heed. But now, with Jesus standing before him, he listened to the false charges of those who opposed Jesus.

4. Herod set Jesus at nought, treated Him as unimportant. The word "nought" (exouthenesas) means to count as nothing, to make nothing of, to think something is unimportant, to count as zero—therefore, to treat with utter contempt.

Note the contrast in the verse. Herod sat there as King "with his men of war" surrounding him, and Jesus stood there beaten and battered in torn, ragged clothes. Herod, judging by appearance, counted the Man who claimed to be the Son of God as nothing. This Man and His claim did not matter, not to Herod.

Thought 1. Many count Christ as unimportant. They think He does not matter—that He can be excluded from life, that He and His claim are meaningless. Such people go about counting their own lives and worldly ways dear unto themselves. (Cp. Lk.9:24; 17:33.)

> **"Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it" (Lk.17:33).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**

4 (23:12) **World, Rejection of Jesus**: Pilate and Herod became friends; the worldly are brought together in their opposition against Christ.

	F. Jesus' Second Trial Before Pilate: The Tragedy of a Compromising Man, 23:13-25 (Mt.27:15-25; Mk.15:6-15; Jn.18:39-19:16)	man, and release unto us Barabbas. 19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) 20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.	
1 Pilate tried to protect himself, selfishly[DSI]	13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,	21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.	**3 Pilate gave in to worldly pressure**
a. A man who knew the truth	14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: 15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.	22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.	a. He knew the truth: Jesus was innocent
		23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.	b. He faced loud voices against Jesus
b. A man who tried to appease out of fear		24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.	c. He compromised—gave in to the worldly cries
2 Pilate tried to compromise truth & clear evidence	16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him. 17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) 18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this	25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.	d. He allowed injustice & wrong & sin to be done

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

F. Jesus' Second Trial Before Pilate: The Tragedy of a Compromising Man, 23:13-25

(23:13-25) **Introduction**: compromising with the world is sin. Compromise always leads to trouble and tragedy. Pilate is the picture of a man whose compromise led to the greatest tragedy in human history.

1. Pilate tried to protect himself, selfishly (v.13-16).
2. He tried to compromise truth and clear evidence (v.17-21).
3. He gave in to worldly pressure (v.22-25).

1 (23:13-16) **Compromise—Appeasement—Injustice**: Pilate tried to protect himself, selfishly. He called the court back into session. A decision had been made; he was now ready to give his verdict.

⇒ He had examined Jesus and found no fault in Him: Jesus was innocent.
⇒ He had sent Jesus to Herod for a verdict, and Herod found Jesus innocent.
⇒ No crime worthy of death had been committed by Jesus. Pilate had decided, therefore, that he would chastise Jesus and release Him.

Note that Pilate was trying to appease the Jews. He knew the truth: Jesus was innocent. Jesus should be released and the Jews' behavior rebuked, but Pilate feared displeasing and inflaming the Jews. He was afraid they might cause trouble for him, reporting him to Rome and causing him to lose his position and rule (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.23:13). Throughout the whole scene Pilate's primary interest was himself, not truth and justice.

Thought 1. A compromising man is self-centered. He seeks to protect himself even at the expense of the truth and justice. He fears losing...

- position
- power
- influence
- job
- security
- image
- acceptance
- friends

"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour" (Lev.19:15).

"How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked?" (Ps.82:2).

"And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there" (Eccl.3:16).

"Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law" (Mal.2:9).

"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (1 Tim.5:21).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(23:13) **Pilate**: the procurator of Judea. He was directly responsible to the Emperor for the administrative and financial management of the country. A man had to work himself up through the political and military ranks to become a procurator. Pilate was, therefore, an able man, experienced in the affairs of politics and government as well as the military. He held office for ten years which shows that he was highly trusted by the Roman government. However, the Jews despised Pilate, and Pilate despised the Jews for their intense practice of religion. When Pilate became procurator of Judea, he did two things that aroused the people's bitter hatred against him forever. First, on his state visits to Jerusalem, he and his military guard rode their stallions into the city with the Roman standard, an eagle sitting atop a pole. All previous governors had removed the standard because of the Jews' opposition to idols. Second, Pilate launched the construction of a new water supply for Jerusalem. To finance the project, he took the money out of the temple treasury. The Jews never forgot or forgave this act. They bitterly opposed Pilate all through his reign, and he treated them with equal contempt (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.15:1-15). On several occasions, Jewish leaders threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emperor. This, of course, disturbed Pilate to no end and caused him to become even more bitter and contemptuous toward the Jews.

2 (23:17-21) **Compromise**: Pilate tried to compromise the truth despite clear evidence. He saw the evidence: Jesus was innocent, and the religionists were only envious of Jesus, feeling He was a threat to their security. Pilate wanted to declare Jesus innocent, but he felt he had to satisfy the cries of these religious worldlings as well. Therefore, he conceived a compromise. It was a long time custom for Rome to release a popular prisoner to the Jews at the Passover Feast in order to humor and secure more cooperation from the population. Within the prison was a notorious criminal, Barabbas. Pilate had him brought before the people along with Jesus and shouted out that the people could choose which one was to be released.

Pilate felt sure that by pitting Barabbas against Jesus, the people would choose Jesus, the One who had ministered and helped so many of them. How wrong the man of compromise was. (The world will always cry out against Jesus to get rid of Him.)

The point to note is the moral weakness of Pilate. He knew Jesus was innocent. He knew the Jews sought to kill Jesus because they envied Him. Jesus should have been released immediately, but Pilate attempted a compromise instead of standing up for the truth.

Thought 1. Note a crucial point: when the truth is known, it should be proclaimed, not compromised. Compromise results in three tragedies.

1) Compromise weakens character and testimony.
2) Compromise means that the truth is not being done or lived. A person is agreeing to do something less than what he should be doing.
3) Compromise weakens principle, position, and life.

Thought 2. God accepts no compromise concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. A man either stands for Christ or against Christ. There is no neutral ground. Christ is innocent and sinless; He is the Ideal Man, the Son of God in whom all men are to place their trust.

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).

"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:23-24).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:7-10).

3 (23:22-25) **Worldliness—Compromise**: he gave in to worldly pressure. The scene was dramatic, but tragic. The scene can be simply stated. Pilate...

- knew Jesus was innocent (v.22).
- faced loud voices against Jesus (v.23).
- compromised and gave in to the worldly cries (v.24).
- allowed injustice and wrong and sin to be done (v.25).

The point is this: Pilate, the compromising man, was *morally weak*.

- He was not strong enough to do what he knew was right.
- He lacked the moral strength to stand up for Jesus.
- He was too weak to declare the truth.

Thought 1. The pressure of the world to do evil is great. Indecision and compromise are not the way to face the world: decisive dedication to Christ and separation from the world alone can conquer the world.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will unto God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

Thought 2. Most men prefer the company of evil, sinful men to that of the Prince of Life. Note: even worldly religionists choose the world over the Prince of Life.

Thought 3. Note a crucial point. It is when we are indecisive or willing to compromise that the pressure to do evil gets to us. Hesitating and being indecisive will cause us to give in to the pressure of sin.

> **"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb.11:24-25).**
>
> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).**

	G. Jesus' Crucifixion and Its Events,[DS1] **23:26-49** (Mt.27:26-56; Mk.15: 16-41; Jn.19:16-37)	mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.	1) Offering Him vinegar[DS2] 2) His claim to be King
1 The man who bore His cross: A picture of conversion	26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, A Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.	38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.	**9 The inscription on the cross: A misunderstood charge**
2 The great crowd of mourners: A picture of hearts that feel for Jesus	27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.	39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.	**10 The unrepentant thief: A picture of hardness even in death**
3 The prediction of Jerusalem's doom: A picture of coming judgment a. So terrible, people should weep over b. So terrible, people will wish to be childless	28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. 29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.	40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.	**11 The repentant thief: A picture of true repentance** a. Fearing God b. Declaring Jesus' right eousness c. Asking Jesus for a place in His kingdom
c. So terrible, people will wish to be buried alive d. Judgment is inevitable	30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. 31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?	43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. 44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.	**12 The awesome darkness: A symbol of separation & loneliness**
4 The identification with criminals: Being numbered with sinners	32 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.	45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.	**13 The torn veil of the temple: A symbol of open access into God's presence**
5 The crucifixion: The summit of sin & love a. At Mount Calvary b. Between two criminals	33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.	46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.	**14 The great cry of trust: A picture of glorious triumph**
6 The prayer for His enemies: Forgiveness	34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.	47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.	**15 The centurion's declaration: Jesus' righteousness—a confession to be made by many**
7 The gambling for His clothes: Being stripped by greed		48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.	**16 The people's grief: A picture of stricken conscience**
8 The mocking: Misunderstanding His salvation a. By the people & religionists 1) His claim to save 2) His claim to be Messiah b. By the soldiers	35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. 36 And the soldiers also	49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.	**17 The followers of Jesus: A proof that Jesus lived & served well**

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

G. Jesus' Crucifixion and Its Events, 23:26-49

(23:26-49) **Introduction**: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ is both the most shocking event and the most wonderful event of human history. It is the most shocking event in that it is the creature murdering the Creator. It is the most wonderful event in that it is the Creator saving the creature. (Glance at the outline above for the *seventeen events* of the crucifixion as covered by Luke.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(23:26-49) **Crucifixion, The**: see outline, note, and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:26-44 for more discussion.

1 (23:26) **Conversion—Simon of Cyrene**: the man who bore His cross, a picture of conversion. Note several things.

1. God's plan or providence. Nothing happens by chance, not to the Christian believer. God oversees the life of His people. Thus, Simon's being pressed into carrying the cross for Jesus was in the plan of God.
2. Simon was apparently a pilgrim coming to celebrate the Passover. He was standing along the roadway watching the armed procession make its way through the streets. Apparently there was some expression of concern and sympathy for Jesus, something within his heart that was touched and that reached out to Jesus. God knew this, and directed the soldiers to enlist his help in carrying the Lord's cross.
3. Simon was "the father of Alexander and Rufus" (Mk.15:21). The comment by Mark is interesting. Evidently they were known believers (cp. Acts 13:1; Ro.16:13). The indication is that Simon or at least his two sons were eventually converted.

Thought 1. The man who takes up the cross of Christ will be converted.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**

2 (23:27) **Godly Sorrow—Sympathy**: there was the great crowd of mourners—a picture of hearts that felt for Jesus. A great crowd of people followed and felt for Jesus, especially women. The word "bewailed" (ekoptonto) means to cut, strike, smite, beat. They were cut to the core of their hearts, actually feeling pain for Jesus. The word "lamented" (ethrenoun) means to cry out loud, to mourn, groan. They were crying out, unable to hold back the pain cutting their hearts. Some of the people, of course, had been followers of Jesus for a long time and were feeling the depth of their Lord's sufferings; whereas other onlookers, as in any crowd witnessing severe suffering, felt only a natural tenderness and lament over one's suffering so much.

Thought 1. A natural response to the Lord's sufferings is not enough. A person must *understand* why Christ suffered and must feel a *godly sorrow* over Christ's having to bear the sins of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Cor.7:10).

> **"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor.7:10).**
>
> **"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).**

3 (23:28-31) **Jerusalem, Prophecy of**: there was the prediction of Jerusalem's doom—a picture of coming judgment. The significant point to note is what was upon Jesus' mind: judgment. The people had rejected God's Messiah and salvation, choosing to go the way of the world, and the way of the world was doom and destruction. The destruction coming would be so terrible, people...

- would weep for themselves.
- would wish to be childless.
- would wish to be buried alive.

Verse 31 is a proverbial saying: if the world (Rome) treats a green tree like this (Him, a tree with its full provision of sap), how will it treat a dry tree like Israel, a tree with little if any provision of sap, a tree of no use, with no life left, ready to be cut down and destroyed?

Thought 1. Jerusalem rejected the invitation of God time and again. However, God was patient and demonstrated His patience for generations, but the rejection and killing of His Son were too great to leave unpunished. As soon as Christianity could get a solid foothold in the world, Jerusalem was to be judged and doomed. (See outline and notes—Lk.20:13-18.)

God is patient with every man. But continued rejection of His Son brings judgment and eternal doom.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).**
>
> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).**

4 (23:32) **Jesus Christ, Identified with Sinners**: there was the identification with criminals—a picture of being numbered with sinners. Why was Jesus crucified with criminals? Scripture does not say, but perhaps this was a day set aside for execution, or perhaps the Jewish leaders pressed Pilate to execute Jesus with other criminals. By this, they hoped to add weight to their position that He was no more than a mere man, an imposter who deserved to die just as other criminals. Whatever the reason, the fact that the Son of God was executed right along with other criminals adds to the shame and reproach He bore. This event had been prophesied just as many others had (Is.53:12).

Thought 1. Christ was counted as a sinner that He might bear the sin of many.

> **"He was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).**

5 (23:33) **Crucifixion, The**: the crucifixion was the summit of sin and love. The crucifixion itself was the most horrible of deaths. There was the pain of the driven spikes forced through the flesh of Jesus' hands and feet or ankles. There was the weight of His body jolting and pulling against the spikes as the cross was lifted and rocked into place. There was the scorching sun and the unquenchable thirst gnawing away at His dry mouth and throat. There was the blood oozing from His scourged back, His thorn crowned brow, His stick beaten head. In addition, just imagine the aggravation of flies, gnats, and other insects. And for Jesus, there was the piercing pain of the spear thrust into His side. On and on the sufferings could be described. There has never been a more cruel form of execution than crucifixion upon a cross.

The crucifixion took place on a hill called "*the skull*" (in Latin, calvaria). We get the name Calvary from the Latin word. (See note, pt.11—Mt.27:26-38.)

Thought 1. In the simplest of terms, Christ was crucified for our sins in order to bring us to God.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

Note that two criminals were crucified with Him. He was dying because of them and because of all other men. Why? Because all men are criminals against God, rebelling against Him and breaking His commandments.

> **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).**
>
> **"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

6 (23:34) **Forgiveness—Salvation**: there was the prayer for His enemies—a picture of love and forgiveness to the end. The picture is of Jesus the Mediator. He had come for this very purpose, to stand as the Mediator between God and sinful man. Therefore upon the cross, He prayed for those who stood below crucifying Him. Note several things.

1. It had been predicted that Christ would pray for transgressors (Is.53:12).
2. He prayed for God to forgive those who were crucifying Him. The very purpose for His coming was to make provision for forgiveness of sins. Because of His death, God would be able to forgive the sins of men, even those who were now crucifying Him.
3. The men crucifying Him did not know what they were doing. They did not know who He was.

> **"None of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor.2:8).**

Thought 1. The most wonderful truth in all the world is this: God will hold no sin against any man if that man will personally trust His Son. If God forgives the men who killed His only Son, God will forgive any man for any sin—if that man will just ask.

> **"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30-31).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:14; cp. Col.2:13).**

7 (23:34) **Mortality—Immortality**: there was the gambling for His clothes—a picture of being stripped by the selfishness, greed, and sin of men. Note two points.

1. The custom seems to have been for the executing soldiers to claim whatever they wished of the clothes of crucified criminals. The soldiers stripped Jesus, dividing His clothes among themselves. However, His coat was valuable: it was seamless, one piece of cloth, woven from top to bottom just as the High Priest's coat or cloak was. The soldiers, therefore, decided to gamble by casting lots for it (Jn.19:23-24). This event was foretold in Ps.22:18.
2. Jesus was stripped by the soldiers, stripped of His mortal clothes. There is symbolism in this act: He allowed all His mortality to be stripped so that He might abolish death and bring life and immortality to light.

"But [God's grace] is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

8 (23:35-37) **Salvation**: there was the mockery, the misunderstanding of His salvation. Note those who mocked and taunted Him.

1. The people and religionists mocked His claim to be the Savior and Messiah. They totally misunderstood God's Messiahship. Both the people and the religionists should have been above this kind of behavior. In addition, they had every opportunity to believe, for He had not hid Himself or His message of salvation. But being part of a sinful crowd and their own unbelief, they led each other to do shameful things.

"...Christ [Messiah] Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ [Messiah] Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).

Thought 1. Leaders, civil and religious, are still men. It is not the position or profession that makes a man, but the heart. A heart of unbelief and enmity, a heart willing to become a participant with the sinful crowd, will stoop to do shameful things, no matter the position or profession.

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Mt.23:38).

2. The soldiers mocked and taunted Him. In particular they mocked His claim to be King, but they did not understand His claim (Jn.18:36. Cp. Jn.18:33-37; Mt.27:11.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(23:36) **Vinegar**: Jesus was offered drugged wine at the beginning of the crucifixion, but He refused it (Mt.27:34; Mk.15:23). He was also offered vinegar just before His death (Jn.19:29), and here the soldiers use vinegar in some form of mockery with Him.

9 (23:38) **Jesus Christ, King**: there was the inscription on the cross—a misunderstood charge. The sign placed above His head, "The King of the Jews," was intended to mock the Jewish authorities and to reproach His claim. However, God overruled and used the sign to proclaim the truth to the whole world (Lk.23:38). The very charges against Jesus proclaimed His deity and honor.

"He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).

"Our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim.6:14-16).

10 (23:39) **Unbelief**: there was the unrepentant thief—a picture of hardness even in death. The thieves heard the crowd mock Jesus about being the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Hanging there as criminals, guilty before God and men, they should have been searching to see if there were any chance that Jesus could have been who He claimed. They needed to be saved and forgiven. One criminal showed enormous hardness of heart. He mocked the very thought that Jesus was the Christ.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).

11 (23:40-43) **Salvation—Repentance**: there was the repentant thief—a picture of true repentance. The second thief demonstrated the steps to salvation and true repentance.

⇒ He feared God (v.40).
⇒ He declared that Jesus was righteous (v.41).
⇒ He asked for Jesus to remember him (v.42).

Note that Jesus promised him eternal life; the repentant man was to be with Christ in paradise *that very day*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Paradise*—Lk.16:23.)

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24).

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

12 (23:44) **Judgment—Man, State of**: there was the awesome darkness—a symbol of separation and loneliness. The darkness told man something (see note—Mt.27:45 for detailed discussion).

1. Man was separated from the light.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jn.3:19-20).

2. Man stood all alone. He could not see in the dark, not well. He was, so to speak, standing in the world all alone, responsible for his own behavior; and he must face God someday all alone to give an account for his behavior.

"And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

13 (23:45) **Access—Jesus Christ, Blood**: there was the torn veil of the temple—a symbol of open access into the very presence of God. Note four facts.

1. The veil (curtain) which was torn was the inner veil (katapetasma), the curtain which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. There was another veil, an outer curtain (kalumma), which separated the Holy Place from the outer court of the temple.

The Holy of Holies was the most sacred part of the temple. It was the place where the very presence of God was symbolized as dwelling in a very, very special way. It was closed *forever* to everyone except the High Priest. Even he could enter the Holy of Holies only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Ex.26:33).

2. At the very hour that Jesus died, the High Priest would be rolling back the outer curtain in order to expose the Holy Place to the people who had gathered to worship in the surrounding court. As he rolled back the outer curtain exposing the Holy Place for worship, both he and the worshippers would stand in amazement. Why? Because they would see the inner veil rent from the top to the bottom. There they would stand, experiencing and witnessing the Holy of Holies, the very special place where the presence of God Himself was supposed to dwell—-a sight that the people had never seen before.

3. The veil was torn from top to bottom. This symbolized that it was torn by an act of God Himself. It symbolized God's giving direct access into His presence (Heb.6:19; 9:3-12, 24; 10:19-23). Now, through the body of Christ, any man can enter the presence of God anytime, anyplace.

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:10).

4. The torn veil symbolized that all men could now draw near God by the blood of Christ.

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).

14 (23:46) **Jesus Christ, Work—Purpose**: there was the great cry of trust—a picture of glorious triumph. What Jesus cried out was one word in the Greek, *Tetelestai*, "It is finished" (Jn.19:30). It was a cry of purpose, a shout of triumph. He was dying for a specific purpose and that purpose was now fulfilled (see note—Mt.27:50 for detailed discussion).

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture....I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep....Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:9, 11, 15, 17-18).

15 (23:47) **Confession**: there was the centurion's declaration—Jesus' righteousness, a picture of the confession to be made by many.

1. The centurion was bound to be a thoughtful and honest man. He was in charge of the crucifixion, which means he was responsible for overseeing all that took place. As the events unfolded upon the cross, he was stricken more and more with the claim of Jesus and the way in which the events were happening. When Jesus shouted out that His purpose was finished, that His death was the climax of His purpose upon earth, the centurion was convinced. The very fact that Jesus'

death was purposeful was the clincher. God quickened to the soldier's heart the glorious truth: "Certainly this was a righteous man."

2. The centurion was a Gentile. He symbolized all who were to confess Christ in coming generations.

> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**

16 (23:48) **Preparation—Conscience**: there was the people's grief—a picture of stricken consciences. The people had come for entertainment, but they went away with saddened, grieving hearts. God, being the Sovereign Lord of the universe, saw to it that they were stricken in conscience. They were being prepared for the preaching to come after Pentecost.

> **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:14).**

17 (23:49) **Self-Denial**: there were the followers of Jesus—a proof that Jesus lived and served well. Note that the women were at the cross despite the danger. They were off, some distance away, but they were there nevertheless. They still loved and cared, no matter what. They symbolized that Jesus' life was not in vain.

> **"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it" (Mk.8:35).**

	H. Jesus' Burial: A Secret Disciple Stirred to Step Forth, 23:50-56 (Mt.27:57-61; Mk.15: 42-47; Jn.19:38-42)	Jesus. 53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. 54 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. 55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.	f. A man who cared deeply for Jesus 1) He took care of Jesus' body 2) He acted quickly **2 The women stirred to loyalty & affection** a. Showed a fearless loyalty b. Showed deep affection c. Showed an ignorance of the resurrection
1 The secret believer stirred to step forward for Jesus a. A counsellor b. A good & just man c. A man who had feared to stand up for Jesus sometime before d. A man who looked for the Messiah—for God's K. e. A man who was changed by the death of Jesus	50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: 51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of		

DIVISION XI

THE SON OF MAN'S SUFFERINGS: HIS AGONY, TRIALS, AND CRUCIFIXION, 22:39-23:56

H. Jesus' Burial: A Secret Disciple Stirred to Step Forth, 23:50-56

(23:50-56) **Introduction**: a secret believer is a tragedy. In a sense he is the tragedy of tragedies, for he fails to confess Jesus publicly. He ignores the fact of what Jesus said: all persons are lost (Mt.10:32-33). Joseph of Arimathaea was such a man: a secret believer until the death of Jesus. But the death of Jesus changed him.

1. The secret believer stirred to step forward for Jesus (v.50-54).
2. The women stirred to loyalty and affection (v.55-56).

1 (23:50-54) **Discipleship, Secret—Profession—Believer—Jesus Christ, Death**: the secret believer, Joseph of Arimathaea, was stirred to step forward for Jesus. A revealing description is given about Joseph.

1. He was a counselor, a senator, a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel. Apparently he was …
   - highly educated
   - highly esteemed
   - well liked
   - very responsible
   - capable of leadership
2. He was a "good and just" man. He was a man…
   - of good quality
   - of high morals
   - of feelings
   - of compassion
   - of justice
   - of decision
   - of truth
   - of law
3. He was a man looking for the Messiah and the Kingdom of God (see notes—Lk.2:25-27; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).
4. He was, however, a man who feared to stand up for Jesus. John says he was "a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews" (Jn.19:38). Joseph probably had met Jesus and arranged private meetings with Him when the Lord had visited Jerusalem, but he feared making a public profession. His position and prestige were at stake. His peers, the other rulers, opposed Jesus. He believed in Jesus, but out of fear he kept his discipleship a secret. Note: when the vote was taken to put Jesus to death, Joseph did abstain from voting, but he did not stand up for Jesus. He did not participate; he simply remained silent.

Thought 1. How many persons are like Joseph? They are believers and good and just people; however they fear what their friends and fellow workers will say. They fear the loss of position, prestige, promotion, acceptance, popularity, friends, job, income, livelihood.

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Lk.9:26).

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear not" (Lk.12:4-5).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Pr.29:25).

"I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of which shall be made as grass" (Is.51:12).

5. He was a man changed by the death of Jesus. This is seen in two facts.
   a. Joseph actually went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus. This was a tremendous act of courage. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. The latter served as an example of criminal punishment to the public. Joseph also braved the threat of Pilate's reaction. Pilate was fed up with the *Jesus matter*. Jesus had proven to be very bothersome to him. He could have reacted severely against Joseph.
   b. Joseph risked the disfavor and discipline of the Sanhedrin. They were the ruling body who had instigated and condemned Jesus, and Joseph was a member of the council. There was no question—he would face some harsh reaction from some of his fellow Sanhedrin members and from some of his closest friends.

The thing that turned Joseph from being a secret disciple to a bold disciple seems to be the cross, the phenomenal events surrounding the cross (the behavior and words of Jesus, the darkness, the earthquake, the torn veil, and other events). When Joseph witnessed all this, his mind connected the claims of Jesus with the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. Joseph saw the prophecies fulfilled in Jesus. He stepped forward braving all risks and took his stand for Jesus. A remarkable courage! A courage stirred by the death of Jesus.

Thought 1. Every secret believer needs to study the cross of Christ. Really seeing the cross will turn any secret believer into a bold witness for Christ.

Thought 2. Joseph courageously asked to take care of the physical body of Christ. Today, the body of Christ is the church. We are to boldly step forward and take care of the church. There are special times of need within the church when special courage is needed to step forward and show care. In those times a fresh look at the cross will be helpful and can be used by God to stir us.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (2 Cor.2:1).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Cor.4:14-15).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

6. He was a man who cared deeply for Jesus. The words and acts of these two verses express care and tenderness, love and affection, as well as courage and boldness. Joseph...
   - took the Lord's body down from the cross.
   - wrapped the body in linen.
   - laid the body in a tomb, a tomb wherein no man had ever been laid.
   - acted quickly, before the Sabbath began. Jesus died at 3 p.m. Friday afternoon which was the day of preparation for the Sabbath (cp. Mk.15:33-34, 37). Work was forbidden on the Sabbath, so if anything was to be done with Jesus' body, it had to be done immediately. Only three hours remained for work. (See note—Mk.15:42 for more discussion.)

This act alone would leave no doubt about the effect of the cross upon Joseph. The cross changed his life. He was no longer a secret believer; he now demonstrated a public stand for Jesus.

Thought 1. Position, power, wealth, fame—none of these can make us bold for Christ. Only true affection for Christ will make us bold, and only as we see the cross of Christ will affection for Christ be aroused.

Thought 2. Christ identified with men perfectly.
⇒ He lived as a man—but perfectly.
⇒ He died as a man—but perfectly (as the Ideal Man).
⇒ He was buried as a man—but perfectly.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (Is.53:9).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:17).

Thought 3. God's own Son possessed nothing when He was on earth; therefore when He died, He had to be buried in a borrowed tomb. Note two things.
⇒ Christ is the Savior of the poorest. He was born in a stable. He had no place of His own to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58). His tomb was a borrowed tomb.
⇒ Yet the rich can serve Him just as Joseph of Arimathaea did.

"And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Lk.9:58).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Hereby preceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

2 (23:55-56) **Jesus Christ, Love for—Eternal Life**: the women believers were stirred to loyalty and affection. Note three facts.

1. The women demonstrated a fearless loyalty despite all danger. At the cross the men forsook Jesus, but not the women (Mt.26:56, 69-75; cp. Mt.27:55-56, 61; Mk.15:41).
2. The women demonstrated a deep affection for Jesus. They took their own money to buy spices and ointments to embalm Jesus. This they did because they loved Him (Lk.23:56; cp. Mt.27:61; Mk.16:1).
3. The women did not yet understand the resurrection of Jesus. They were preparing His body to lie and eventually to decay in the tomb. The true meaning of *living forever—the human body being remade, recreated, and becoming incorruptible*—had not yet been grasped by them (Jn.5:24-29; cp. 1 Cor.15:42f. Cp. 1 Cor.15:1-58.)

Thought 1. The testimony of these women should stir men to stand up for Christ. Too often it is the women who take the lead in standing forth for Christ. This should not be the case. Men...

- should be loyal to Christ, no matter how grave the danger.
- should love Christ to such an extent that they give all they *are and have* to Christ.
- should seek to understand and grasp the resurrection of Christ in all its fullness.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim.1:8).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).

	CHAPTER 24	them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?	
	XII. THE SON OF MAN'S GLORY: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24:1-53	6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,	c. Their proclamation d. Their reminder of Jesus' prophecy
	A. Jesus' Empty Tomb: Its Discovery, 24:1-12 (cp. Mt.28:1-15; Mk.16: 1-11; Jn.20:1-18)	7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.	
		8 And they remembered his words,	
1 **The first day of the week** 2 **The first witness of the resurrection**	Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.	9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.	6 **The immediate unbelief of the apostles**
		10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.	a. The message of the resurrection is carried by women—initially
3 **The great stone rolled away**	2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.		
4 **The body's missing from the tomb**	3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.	11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.	b. The message of the resurrection is accepted as nonsense
5 **The two angels & their unbelievable message** a. Their dazzling garments	4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:	12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.	7 **The continued unbelief of Peter** a. He ran to see—hopefully b. He saw evidence: Linen clothes folded & off to the side c. He wondered
b. Their question	5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto		

DIVISION XII

THE SON OF MAN'S GLORY: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24:1-53

A. Jesus' Empty Tomb: Its Discovery, 24:1-12

(24:1-12) **Introduction**: the tomb was empty. Discovering the empty tomb was the greatest discovery in human history. However, the great tragedy is that most people either are not aware that Jesus arose or do not believe that He arose. Every man has to discover the fact for himself. The empty tomb and the risen Lord have to become a personal discovery for every man.

1. The first day of the week (v.1).
2. The first witnesses of the resurrection (v.1).
3. The great stone rolled away (v.2).
4. The body's missing from the tomb (v.3).
5. The two angels and their unbelievable message (v.4-8).
6. The immediate unbelief of the apostles (v.9-11).
7. The continued unbelief of Peter (v.12).

1 (24:1) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the first day of the week, Sunday, was the day upon which Jesus arose, the day after the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday). Note three facts.

1. Luke clearly spells out when Jesus arose: "Upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning." Jesus arose before dawn, before the sun arose on Sunday morning. This was significant to the early Christian believers, so significant that they broke away from the common day for worship during the week, the Sabbath or Saturday. They began to worship on Sunday, the day of the resurrection of their Lord (cp. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor.16:2).

2. Jesus arose on the first day of the week, on Sunday morning. This means that He had been in the grave for three days just as He had said (Mt.12:40; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mk.9:31; 10:34; Lk.9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 46). His resurrection from the dead was a triumph, a conquest over death. Death reigns no more—its rule has been broken (1 Cor.15:55-56; 2 Cor.1:9-10; 2 Tim.1:10; Heb.2:9, 14-15).

3. Again, Jesus arose on the first day of the week, Sunday morning. He was in the grave on the Sabbath, unable to observe the laws governing the great season of the Passover and the Sabbath. He was dead; therefore, the law and its observances had no authority over Him. This is symbolic of the *identification* believers gain in Christ. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, God identifies the man with Christ, in particular with the death of Christ. God counts the man as having

died with Christ. Very simply, *in Christ's death* believers become dead to the law (see notes—Ro.7:4; Mt.5:17-18 for more discussion).

2 (24:1) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the first witnesses of the resurrection provide strong evidence of the resurrection.

1. They were actual witnesses of Jesus' *death and burial*. They knew He was dead, and they knew where He had been laid. They had followed along behind the procession to the tomb (Mt.15:40-41, 47; cp. Mt.27:55-56, 61; Lk.23:55-56). There was no question whatsoever in their mind about His being dead and buried.
2. They had purchased spices and had *come to anoint* Jesus' body. Apparently they had bought the spices Saturday evening after 6 p.m. when the Sabbath ended. Note: they arose "very early in the morning, the first day of the week [Sunday]" to go and embalm Him. Again, they knew He was dead, and they cared; so they wanted to take care of His body just as loved ones care for the bodies of their deceased.
3. They were religionists who *strictly obeyed the law*. They were strict in the observance of the Sabbath. Imagine—their loved one was dead, yet they would not break the Sabbath law even to take care of Him (cp. Lk.23:56). The women were obedient to the commandments of God. They were *moral and truthful* and would never think, much less consider, lying about the death and resurrection of Jesus.

3 (24:2) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: there was the great stone rolled away from the entrance (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Stone*—Mt.27:65-66). The rolled away stone perplexed the women (v.4). However, the stone had not been rolled back for the benefit of Jesus, but for the witnesses to the resurrection. When Jesus arose, He was in His resurrection body, the heavenly body of the spiritual dimension; and the spiritual dimension has no physical bounds. But the witnesses needed to enter the tomb and see the truth (see outline and notes—Jn.20:1-10).

4 (24:3) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: there was the body's missing from the tomb. The account is simple, yet striking: "They entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." They "beheld," saw, contemplated that Jesus was not there (Mk.16:6). They saw the slab upon which He had been laid, and *He was not there*.

> **"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Ro.4:21).**
>
> **"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor.1:20).**
>
> **"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim.2:13).**
>
> **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).**

5 (24:4-8) **Angels—Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: there were the two angels and their message. Note four significant points about the angels.

1. The angels were radiant, dazzling figures. Their garments shone (Mt.28:3)...
   - "like lightning" (visible, quick, startling, striking, frightening, brilliant).
   - "white as snow" (pure, glistening).

Note the women feared and fell down, bowing in reverence.

2. The angels asked a pointed question: "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" There was a rebuke in the question. They were seeking to honor a dead Savior, a Savior who was as all other men are, frail and powerless to do anything about life and eternity. Their whole being—their thoughts, feelings, and behavior—were focused upon a dead Savior.

They were living just as the world lives—"strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

3. The angels proclaimed the glorious news: "He is not here, but is risen." Note two points.
   a. "He is not here": the women could see and did see the fact. The fact was clearly evident: Jesus was not in the tomb. He had been there, for the women had seen Him put there. They had witnessed His death and burial, but He was no longer in the tomb (see note—Lk.23:55-56).
   b. "He is risen." Startling, unbelievable words...
      - yet, heaven "witnessed that He liveth" (Heb.7:8).
      - yet, Scripture witnesses that He arose (Ro.1:4; Eph.1:19-20).
      - yet, He had foretold that He would arise (Lk.9:22; 13:32; 17:25; 18:31-34).

> **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).**
>
> **"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).**

4. The angels reminded the women that Jesus had foretold His death and resurrection (see outline and notes—Lk.18:31-34). Note the words, "And they remembered His words." The followers of Jesus had always been confused about the prophecy of His death and resurrection. They *would not* accept his words literally, refusing to take His predictions at face value. They symbolized His statements; therefore, they never understood His death and resurrection (see note—Lk.18:34).

But note what happened now. They knew they had been wrong. Conviction struck them, and they became the very first witnesses to the resurrection.

> **"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).**
>
> **"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).**
>
> **"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).**
>
> **"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (2 Tim.2:13).**
>
> **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Heb.10:23).**

6 (24:9-11) **Unbelief—Disciples**: the immediate unbelief of the disciples. The women rushed to the disciples to share the glorious news. But the news "seemed to them as idle tales (hos leros): nonsense, ridiculous talk, wild imagination. "They believed them not." The Greek word is *disbelieved* (epistoun) and is in the imperfect active tense which means they "*kept on disbelieving*," kept on putting no trust or confidence in what the women were claiming. They were *gripped* with a skeptical, unbelieving spirit.

> **Thought 1.** The disciples were without excuse. Christ had spent month after month drilling His death and resurrection into His disciples. (See notes—Mt.16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27 for more discussion.)
>
> > **"Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mk.16:14).**
> >
> > **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
> >
> > **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**
> >
> > **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).**

7 (24:12) **Unbelief—Peter**: the continued unbelief of Peter. Peter's heart was still drawn to the Lord despite his enormous failure. Hearing that the body of Jesus was no longer in the tomb, he rushed to the tomb with his thoughts flying, wondering what had happened to the Lord.

Note a crucial point. Peter stooped down and saw the evidence: the linen clothes were lying off to the side by themselves. However, Peter did not grasp the significance of the evidence. John said he had rushed to the tomb with Peter and did believe, based upon the evidence of the linen clothes. He also verifies that Peter did not grasp the significance at this point (see note—Jn.20:1-10 for a discussion of this significant point). Peter just "departed," wondering within himself what had really happened.

> **Thought 1.** It is dangerous not to understand the Lord's Word, not to take His Word at face value. Spiritualizing His words, unless the words are clearly symbolic, often leads to serious unbelief and problems.
>
> **Thought 2.** A person has to be open to the evidence of the resurrection. The tomb is empty; He is risen—and the honest and seeking man will be convinced by the Spirit of God. What is needed is to do as Peter did: run to the tomb to see what really did happen.
>
> > **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).**
> >
> > **"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).**
> >
> > **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
> >
> > **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**

	B. Jesus' Appearance to Two Believers on the Road to Emmaus: An Immortal Journey, 24:13-35 (Mk.16:12-13)	23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.	a) Reports of visions b) Reports of Jesus' being alive
		24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.	c) Reports confirmed
1 Scene 1: Taking a lonely but thoughtful walk[DSI] a. They had heard about the resurrection: "That same day" b. They thought about & discussed the events	13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.	25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?	d. Question 3: Did not the Prophets predict the Messiah's death & resurrection? 1) A mild rebuke 2) His death & resurrection were necessary 3) He explains the Scripture
2 Scene 2: Considering three critical questions a. Jesus drew near, but He was unrevealed	15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.	27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.	**3 Scene 3: Experiencing the burning truth—Jesus is risen; He is alive**
b. Question 1: What are you talking about? 1) A gloomy look	17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?	29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.	a. The two sought to hear more: Invited Him to abide with them 1) He accepted the invitation 2) He blessed the food
2) Answer: The things that have happened	18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?	30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.	
c. Question 2: What events? 1) Jesus' death a) He was a great prophet	19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:	31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.	b. God opened their eyes: They knew the Lord
b) He was crucified	20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.	32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?	c. They had experienced conviction: A burning within their hearts
c) He was thought to be the Messiah 2) Jesus' prophecy of three days	21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.	33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.	**4 Scene 4: Proclaiming the immortal witness** a. The two rushed to the disciples b. The exciting meeting, the immortal witness: Christ is risen 1) Had been seen by Simon 2) Had been seen by the two from Emmaus
3) Jesus' empty tomb & perplexing reports	22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;	35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.	

DIVISION XII

THE SON OF MAN'S GLORY: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24:1-53

B. Jesus' Appearance to Two Believers on the Road to Emmaus: An Immortal Journey, 24:13-35

(24:13-35) **Introduction**: this is one of the most beloved accounts of the resurrection story. It is an account of Jesus' helping two ordinary persons who had lost hope and fallen into the pit of sadness and despair. Their experience was an immortal journey.

1. Scene 1: taking a lonely but thoughtful walk (v.13-14).
2. Scene 2: considering three critical questions (v.15-27).
3. Scene 3: experiencing the burning truth—Jesus is risen; He is alive (v.28-32).
4. Scene 4: proclaiming the immortal witness (v.33-35).

1 (24:13-14) **Hopelessness—Despair—Devastation**: the first scene was that of a lonely walk by two persons—two persons who were sad, despairing, and very thoughtful.

The day is important: it was "that same day" that the women discovered the empty tomb and reported it to the disciples (the resurrection day, Easter Sunday). The news had been received with skepticism, as utter nonsense. These two, Cleopas and his companion, had either been present or else had heard the news from some other source. As they made their way to Emmaus they were sad, gripped by a spirit of despair over the Lord's crucifixion. Their hope that Jesus was the promised Messiah had been devastated, dashed against the rocks of death. But in their despair, their thoughts were rushing wildly about, entangled, wondering about the report of the women concerning the empty tomb and the angels. What did it mean?

The point to note is their emotions and thoughts, their...

- sadness and despair (over the Lord's death).
- devastated hope (He is not the Messiah).
- rushing and entangled thoughts (over the reports of an empty tomb and angels).

Thought 1. The scene is a symbol of the despair that grips so many in life. Their hopes are devastated, hopes for...

- family
- school
- meaning and purpose
- profession
- acceptance

In their sadness and despair, somewhere, they hear reports of the empty tomb and of the living Lord; but they do not know what the reports mean, not personally.

"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 10:1).

"For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed" (Ps.31:10).

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Ps.42:6).

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps.137:1).

"The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).

"Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go" (Jer.2:25).

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [dead], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Th.4:13).

"That at that time ye were without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(24:13) **Emmaus**: the city and location are unknown. It was about seven miles out of Jerusalem, which would take somewhere around two hours to travel by foot.

2 (24:15-27) **Jesus Christ, Death—Misconception—Puzzlement—Questioning—Perplexity**: the second scene was consideration of three questions. Note the exact words as Cleopas and his companion walked along: "*While* they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and *went with them*" (suneporeueto, imperfect tense). The idea is that they were so absorbed in their despair and talk that Jesus *was already* walking along with them when they noticed Him. But note: they did not know Him. His resurrected body differed enough that He was not recognized as Jesus without close observation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.21:1). In this particular instance, the Lord "held" (restrained, kept) their eyes from recognizing Him as well. Apparently He wanted them to more freely discuss the events with Him.

1. The first question: What are you talking about; what is it that is causing you to look so sad (skuthropoi)? The Greek word means gloomy, dejected, despondent, sullen, overcast. Jesus could see sadness and despair written all over their faces.

Cleopas was surprised that the stranger did not know. "How could anyone be in Jerusalem and not know why we are sad and despairing?" he asked. Terrible things had happened.

Thought 1. These two were seeking to understand the death and empty tomb of Christ. Christ was the subject of their conversation. They were seeking the truth; therefore, Christ drew near them.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8).

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).

2. The second question: "What events? What circumstances could possibly cause such sadness and despair?" (v.19-24). Cleopas answered, covering three subjects.

a. Jesus' death.
   ⇒ He was a great prophet.
   ⇒ The rulers crucified him. (Note the whole world is implicated. The Jews delivered Him, and the Gentile Romans condemned and crucified Him.)
   ⇒ We had trusted (elpizomen, hoped) that He was the Messiah, the One who was to save Israel.

b. Jesus' prophecy of three days. There is significance in the term "three days." Cleopas was sharing how their *dead Master* had told them...
   - to watch for the third day, for some unusual event.
   - that He had spoken of "rising again on the third day," whatever that meant.
   - that they thought the words meant that His triumph would take place on the third day. (See outline and notes—Lk.18:31-34 for more discussion.)

c. Jesus' empty tomb and perplexing reports from certain women, reports...
   - of an empty tomb
   - of a vision of angels
   - of Jesus' being alive
   - that had been confirmed
   - that Jesus was not seen

Thought 1. World events and the terrible things that happen in life often make a person sad and despairing—such things as...

- being misunderstood
- being opposed
- being deserted
- being betrayed
- helplessness
- death
- hopelessness
- divisiveness
- loss
- fear
- injustice

Christ is concerned. He wants to know what it is that causes so much sadness and despair. He wants us to share our problems with Him.

Thought 2. The problem with the two from Emmaus, as it is with so many today, was their *shortsightedness* and *unbelief*.

Thought 3. There is one major reason why men refuse to accept a risen Lord. A risen Lord means that a man must subject himself to the Lord and obey and serve Him.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:31-32).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:9).

Thought 4. Every man should be engrossed in the death of Christ, but he should also believe and be engrossed in the resurrection of the Lord.

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:25).

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God my him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

3. The third question: "Did not the prophets predict Messiah's death and resurrection?" (v.25-27). Note several facts.

a. Jesus rebuked the two disciples for being dull and slow to believe. He called them "fools" (anoetoi), which means that they were dull and slow to believe. More was expected of them; they should have known more than they were indicating. They were without excuse, for their minds and hearts were capable of more. Therefore, Jesus rebuked them for being...
   - *slow to believe.*
   - slow to believe *all* the prophets had spoken.

b. Jesus shared that the death and resurrection of the Messiah was a necessity. The words "ought not" (ouchi edei) are strong. They mean there was a constraint, an imperative, a necessity laid upon the Messiah to die and arise. He had no choice. His death and resurrection had been planned and willed by God through all eternity. Therefore, He had to fulfill the will of God, for God had ordained...
   - that the Messiah suffer these things.
   - that the Messiah enter into His glory. God's plan was not defeated. He conquered through the death of His Son, the Messiah.

c. Jesus explained the Scripture to the two disciples, taught them book by book, showing them the things concerning the Messiah in each book. Note the words "all the scriptures." Prophecies of Christ are found in all the Scripture; therefore, Jesus carried the two disciples through the Scripture in a systematic way, book by book, showing them how God's purpose was fulfilled in the death of the Messiah. The two disciples could now be saved eternally, not just during an earthly reign of an earthly Messiah.

Thought 1. The two disciples were feeling hopeless and perplexed, full of sadness and despair for one very simple reason: unbelief. They had *symbolized* or *spiritualized* the Scripture and the clear predictions which Jesus had given his disciples before His death. Therefore, they could not see *beyond* Jesus' death. They were willing to accept and admire a *dead Savior*, a great prophet who had been martyred, but they had great difficulty in accepting a risen Lord. They would not believe the reports of the women, the glorious news of the living Lord.

> **"And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Lk.24:11).**
> **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).**
> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).**

3 (24:28-32) **Conviction—Conversion**: the third scene was experiencing the burning truth—Jesus is risen and alive forevermore. Note three important points.

1. The two disciples *sought* to hear more. They invited Jesus to abide with them. The words "made as though" do not mean Jesus was play-acting. He never pretends. He would have gone on, for He never enters a life or a home without a personal invitation. The two were seeking the truth, so they wanted Jesus to enter their home and to share more with them. (How unlike so many today!)

Jesus did enter, and He sat down to have dinner with them. He was also asked to give thanks for the meal.

2. God opened the eyes of the two disciples. They immediately knew the Lord. But note why: they had invited Jesus into their home. If they had let Him pass on, the likelihood is that they would never have known it was the Lord.
3. The two disciples had experienced a burning conviction within their hearts.
   a. The Word of God being proclaimed is what had stirred the conviction and the burning.

> **"Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jer.5:14).**
> **"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer.23:29).**

   b. Their response to the conviction—inviting Christ into their home—led to their coming to know Him personally.

> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**
> **"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).**
> **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).**

Thought 1. The two had heard the Scripture explained, and they had heard much. But they had to respond, to invite the Lord into their home before God could open their eyes and bring them to a knowledge of Christ.

4 (24:33-35) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the fourth scene was proclaiming the immortal witness. The scene was dramatic. It was night, but the two rushed back to the apostles. When they arrived, they found the apostles and some other disciples already gathered together.

They were all bursting with excitement. To the shock of the two from Emmaus, the group had the same immortal witness to share: "The Lord is risen. He has appeared to Simon." As they listened to Simon's experience, they were bursting at the seams, hardly able to contain themselves, waiting to share their own experience.

Finally, their time came to share their experience and the very same immortal witness: "The Lord is risen indeed."

> **"And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (Jn.15:27).**
> **"Thou shall be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:15).**
> **"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly" (Acts 10:39-40).**

	C. Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples: The Great Statements of the Christian Faith, 24:36-49 (Mk.16:14; Jn.20:19-23; 20:26-21:25)	an honeycomb. 43 And he took it, and did eat before them.	
1 Statement 1: Jesus is risen	36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the	44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.	**2 Statement 2: All Scripture must be fulfilled** a. The forewarning b. The utter necessity
a. Jesus' first words: Peace	midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.		
b. Jesus' impact 1) The disciples were terrified & frightened	37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.	45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,	c. The spiritual insight needed
2) The disciples were troubled & questioning	38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?	46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:	d. The particular prophecies 1) Christ must suffer & arise
c. Jesus' proof DSI 1) He is flesh & bones	39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.	47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.	2) Repentance & forgiveness must be preached
2) He shows them his wounds	40 And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet.	48 And ye are witnesses of these things.	
3) He talks	41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of	49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.	3) The Holy Spirit and power must be sent

DIVISION XII

THE SON OF MAN'S GLORY: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24:1-53

C. Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples: The Great Statements of the Christian Faith, 24:36-49

(24:36-49) **Introduction**: this was the first appearance of Jesus to *all the disciples at once*. He shared the two great statements (explanations) of the Christian faith.

1. Statement 1: Jesus is risen (v.36-43).
2. Statement 2: all Scripture must be fulfilled (v.44-49).

(24:36-49) **Another Outline**: The Great Statements of the Christian Faith.

1. Statement 1: Jesus is risen (v.36-43).
2. Statement 2: All prophetic Scripture must be fulfilled (v.44-46).
   a. The whole Old Testament.
   b. The death and resurrection of Christ.
3. Statement 3: Repentance and forgiveness of sin are imperative (v.47-48).
   a. The place: Among all nations.
   b. The witnesses: You—disciples.
4. Statement 4: Power is to come upon you (v.49).
   a. The power is the Holy Spirit
   b. The power is given by tarrying (praying).

1 (24:36-43) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection; Impact of; World Response to**: statement one is that Jesus is risen. The scene took place at night—the night of the very day of the Lord's resurrection. It was a dramatic scene. The Lord had already made at least four appearances. The four appearances named were to...

- Mary Magdalene (Jn.20:14f).
- the women visiting the tomb (Mt.28:1f; Mk.16:1f).
- the two walking to Emmaus (Lk.24:1f).
- Simon Peter (Lk.24:34; 1 Cor.15:5).

The apostles (minus Thomas) and some other disciples had rushed to the known meeting place. The very air was electric. Excitement beat in the chest of every one, and minds were grasping for understanding. Wonder was beginning to overcome sadness and despair, and hope was beginning to stir great anticipation. Reports of appearances were being

buzzed about and argued about. Then all of a sudden out of nowhere, into the very midst of all this, "*Christ Himself stood.*" Note three things:

1. The very first words Jesus spoke to the disciples after His death: "Peace be unto you." This was the regular greeting of the Jews of that day, but it had a very special significance now. The disciples needed peace, the peace that only He could give. And He had now risen from the dead to give that peace to them. (See note, *Peace*—Jn.14:27.)

> **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).**
>
> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).**
>
> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**

2. The impact of Christ's resurrection. The disciples interpreted His sudden appearance in their midst just as they had always interpreted His words—spiritually. When He suddenly appeared, the immediate thought flashing across their minds was that a spirit was appearing to them. They were...
   - terrified, frightened, and troubled.
   - questioning.

Thought 1. Unbelievers respond to the resurrection in five ways.
1) They are terrified, frightened, and troubled by the resurrection. Why? Because it means they must obey and serve Christ. If He is the *living Lord*, then man is His subject.
2) They question the resurrection, the truth of it. The idea that a man could arise from the dead is beyond their acceptance.
3) They ignore the resurrection, pay no attention to it, and count it as being meaningless.
4) They respond to the resurrection, accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
5) They react to the resurrection—react all the way from mild opposition and cursing to the persecution of any who bear witness to the resurrection.

3. The proof of Christ's resurrection, that He had risen bodily. The outline of the Scripture above shows the four things Christ did to prove that it really was He and not a spirit who stood before the disciples (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.24:39-43 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(24:39-43) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Resurrection, Body of**: the risen Christ was not a spirit (v.39); not a vision, a phantom, an hallucination, or any other figment of man's imagination. He was the risen Lord—bodily—not someone else nor some other spirit. His body was none other than that of Jesus, the carpenter from Nazareth. He had physically risen from the dead and His body was real. It differed, yes, but it was His body. It was perfected and no longer subject to the limitations and frailties of the physical universe and its laws; it was now glorified by the power and spoken Word of God (cp. Ro.1:3-4).

How did the Lord's resurrected body differ from His earthly body? Some idea can be gleaned by looking at His resurrected body and the glorified body promised to the believer.

1. The resurrected body of the Lord was His body, but it was radically changed. It had all the appearance of a physical body, but it was not bound by the physical world and its material substance.
   a. It was the same body, not some other body. We know this because His resurrected body bore the marks of the nails in His hands and feet (Jn.20:20, 27), and the disciples could recognize Him after close observation.
   b. It was a body that could travel and appear anyplace, at will and by thought—a body unhampered by space, time, material, or substance. When He appeared it was suddenly, even behind locked doors (Lk.24:36; Jn.20:19).
   c. It was a body that differed enough that it was not clearly recognized at first, not until it was closely observed.
      ⇒ Mary Magdalene thought He was the gardener (Jn.20:15).
      ⇒ The two disciples walking toward Emmaus thought He was a traveller (Lk.24:31).
      ⇒ The disciples who were fishing did not recognize Him standing on the seashore (Jn.21:4).

   However, after close observation, the Lord was recognized in all these instances.
2. The resurrected, glorified body that is promised to the believer gives some additional insight into the kind of body Christ has. One of the most wonderful promises ever made to man is given in the words:

> **"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:21; cp. Mt.13:43; Ro.8:17; Col.3:4; Rev.22:5).**
>
> **"[We shall be] conformed to the image of His Son" (Ro.8:29; cp. 1 Cor.15:49; 2 Cor.3:18).**
>
> **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).**

The body of the believer will undergo a radical change just as the Lord's body was radically changed. Several changes are promised the believer.

a. The believer shall receive a spiritual body.

"There is a natural body [soma psuchikon] and there is a spiritual body [som a pneumatikon]" (1 Cor.15:44).

Note: the spiritual body (soma) still retains the qualities of the earthly body (soma). The same Greek word is used for both bodies. The difference lies in that it will not be a natural (soulish) body but will be a spiritual body. What does this mean? In essence, the body will be perfected; no longer subject to pain, tears, death, sorrow, or crying (Rev.14:4).

⇒ "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."
⇒ "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory."
⇒ "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."
⇒ "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

Note that the body is the same body on earth that it will be in heaven. The body just undergoes a radical change of nature. The believer will be the same person in heaven that he is on earth, differing only in that he is perfected. Also note the strong, emphatic declaration: "*There is* a natural body, and *there is* a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).

b. The believer shall receive a body that is not "flesh and blood." Flesh and blood are corruptible; they age, deteriorate, die and decay.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

c. The believer shall receive a body that shall be radically changed.

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:52-53).

d. The believer shall be given a body that will not need reproduction for continuing the (redeemed) human race.

"In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Mt.22:30).

2 (24:44-49) **Prophecy, Fulfilled—Jesus Christ, Death**: statement two is that all Scripture must be fulfilled. Note four points:

1. The forewarning Jesus had given in His predictions. His death and resurrection—the literal events happening just as He had said they would—should not have been a surprise. He had foretold the events and forewarned His followers. (See outline and notes—Lk.18:31-34.)

Thought 1. Scripture predicts much that is to happen in the future. However...

- some still will not accept and believe.
- some still spiritualize the predictions.

The greatest of all tragedies is that some still do not accept and believe the Lord's death and resurrection despite the irrefutable evidence.

2. The utter necessity that Christ die and arise. The word "must" (dei) means that His death was an imperative, a necessity, a constraint.

"Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).

"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ" (Acts 17:2-3).

Note that Christ gave the three divisions of the Old Testament: the law, the prophets, and the psalms. The whole Old Testament prophesied of His coming and His salvation.

3. The spiritual insight needed to understand the Scriptures. Christ opened the disciples' eyes so they could understand.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14; cp. 1 Cor.2:9-14).

4. The particular prophesies were threefold.
   a. Christ must suffer and arise (see outline and note—Lk.18:31-34).
   b. Repentance and forgiveness must be preached (see notes and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.26:28).
   c. The Holy Spirit and power must be sent. As the disciples went forth witnessing, they were to be given the *wonderful* promise (the Holy Spirit) and power of the Father. (See outline and notes, *Holy Spirit*—Jn.14:15-26; 16:7-15 for a discussion of the prophecies concerning the Holy Spirit which Christ had given to the disciples.) Note two points.
      1) The believer was to be equipped for witnessing.
         ⇒ He was to receive the promise of the Father (the Holy Spirit).
         ⇒ He was to receive power, being clothed (endusesthe) with power.
      2) The source of the spirit and power was God.
         ⇒ Christ was to send the promise.
         ⇒ The promise was "of the Father." God gave the promise.
         ⇒ Believers had to tarry, that is, wait upon the Lord and pray for the promise.
         ⇒ The promise was to come from "on high." God Himself was the Source of power for all evangelism.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn.16:8).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

	D. Jesus' Last Appearance: The Ascension,[DSI] 24:50-53 (Mk.16:19-20; Acts 1:9-11)
1 The purpose of the ascension a. To bless	50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.
b. To provide a witness & give great assurance	51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.
2 The disciples' response to the ascension a. Worshipped Him	52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:
b. Were filled with joy	53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.
c. Worshipped in the temple—continually	

DIVISION XII

THE SON OF MAN'S GLORY: HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, 24:1-53

D. Jesus' Last Appearance: The Ascension, 24:50-53

(24:50-53) **Introduction**: Luke closes his gospel with the ascension of Christ and begins Acts with the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:9-11). The ascension closes the Lord's earthly ministry, His mission to save the world. Therefore, the ascension can be said to be the final chapter, the close, the consummation of His journey upon earth. On the other hand, the ascension opens the Lord's heavenly ministry, His mission of intercession for the world and His mission of bearing witness through the lives of believers. Therefore, the ascension can be said to be the first chapter, the opening, the beginning of His journey into heaven as the Risen Lord. In heaven, Jesus Christ is the risen Lord who is the propitiation "for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

1. The purpose of the ascension (v.50-51).
2. The disciples' response to the ascension (v.52-53).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(24:50-53) **Jesus Christ, Ascension**: the Lord ascended to the right hand of God, that is, to the position of sovereignty and power (cp. Mk.16:19; Lk.22:69; Acts 1:9-11; 2:36; 5:31; Eph.1:20; Ph.2:9-11; Rev.5:12). The ascension assures (proves, confirms) that seven things are absolutely certain.

1. The ascension assures that God *is*, that He is alive and does exist. The fact that Christ was raised up from the dead and "carried up into heaven" (Lk.24:51) proves that God is. Only God could do such a thing (1 Cor.6:14; 2 Cor.4:14; cp. Jn.3:16. Cp. Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:14; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33-34; 17:31.)
2. The ascension assures that Christ is God's Son. The very fact that God raised up Christ and "received [Him] up into heaven" proves that Christ is God's Son (Ro.1:3-4; Ph.2:5-11).
3. The ascension assures that heaven is real (Ph.3:20-31).
4. The ascension assures that the gospel is true. When God raised up Christ and received Him into heaven, God validated the message of Christ. What Christ proclaimed and revealed was true: man faces a critical problem, the problem of sin and death and a future of condemnation and separation from God. However, man can be saved by the cross of Christ (Mk.16:16; 1 Pt.2:24).
5. The ascension assures that the Great Commission is the call and mission of believers. Two things show this. First, Christ has ascended into heaven; therefore, He is gone, no longer on earth. If the gospel is to be carried to the ends of the earth, believers have to do it. They are the ones left on earth to do it. Second, it is the risen and ascended Lord who gave the Great Commission. *As the ascended Lord*, He demands that His commission be fulfilled (Mk.16:15; cp. Mt.28:19-20).
6. The ascension assures that power is available to carry out the Great Commission (Mt.28:18; cp. Mk.16:20).
7. The ascension assures that we have a very special Helper in heaven, One who really loves and cares for us. He is One who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities, [the One who was] in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15). Therefore, He is ever ready to forgive and to look after us through all of life.

1 (24:50-51) **Jesus Christ, Ascension**: the purpose of the ascension. Two general purposes are given by Luke (see note, *Ascension*—Acts 1:9).

1. The first general purpose of the ascension was to bless the disciples. This was His final blessing, and note: it was the last thing He did on earth. His last gesture and act was to bless His disciples. This showed several things.
   a. It showed that He was the High Priest who had the power to make the sin-offering for them and to bless them with the gift of peace with God. (Cp. Aaron, Lev.9:22.)

"And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings" (Lev.9:22).

b. It showed that His blessing was the blessing coming from the ascended Lord who was *in heaven* exalted to the right hand of God.

"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph.1:19-21).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

c. It showed that His blessing was forever, without end, even to the end of the world.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you away, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:20).

d. It showed that His blessing was unlimited, from their ascended and *eternal Lord.*

"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" (Col.1:17).

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev.22:13).

e. It showed that His blessing was upon them as they went forth as His representatives, witnessing for Him.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you away, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

2. The second general purpose of the ascension was to provide a witness and give great assurance (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.24:50-53).

2 (24:52-53) **Ascension, Results**: the disciples' response to the ascension was threefold.

1. The disciples worshipped Christ. The ascension stirred worship. Why? The disciples now knew beyond question that He was the true Messiah, the Son of God Himself. He had ascended to the right hand of God; therefore, He was due all the homage, adoration, and praise due God.

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" (Jn.14:8-11).

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).

2. The disciples were filled with joy.
   a. They were filled with joy because their Lord was now exalted and privileged to take His rightful place: sitting at the right hand of God and being worshipped eternally. They were filled with joy and rejoicing *for Him.*
   b. They were filled with joy because they now knew that His presence would always be with them. When on earth physically, He could only be in one place and with only a few people at a time. But now, since ascending, He could send His Spirit to dwell with believers everywhere (Omnipresent). Nothing would ever again be able to *separate* their Lord from them.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro.8:35, 38-39).

3. The disciples were in the temple continually. The temple was the focus of God's presence and worship, and it was the center of teaching, the place where the people were instructed in the Scriptures. The disciples were bound to focus their lives in the temple or church...

- because Christ had taught that the temple was His "Father's house" and "the house of prayer."

> **"Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Lk.19:46).**
>
> **"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise" (Jn.2:16).**

- because they wished to praise God for sending the Messiah and to bear public testimony of Him.
- because the temple was the chosen place of God to manifest His presence among His people (see note—1 Cor.3:16).

> **"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).**
>
> **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).**

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

JOHN

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JOHN

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: John, the Apostle, the son of Zebedee (see note—Mk.3:17. Also see Introductory Notes—1 John; Revelation for more discussion.)

Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons in A.D. 177, summarizes the testimony of the early church: "John the disciple of the Lord who reclined on his breast and himself issued the Gospel at Ephesus." (Quoted by RVG Tasker. *The Gospel According to St. John*. "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," ed. by RVG Tasker. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1960, p.17.) Tradition says that John spent the latter years in Ephesus preaching, teaching, and writing. At some point he was exiled to the Isle of Patmos during the reign of the Roman emperor, Domitian.

1. John was one of the very first disciples of Jesus (Jn.1:35, 39).
2. John and James were either partners with their father or worked for their father in a large fishing business (Lk.5:10).
3. John and James left everything to follow Christ (Mt.4:21-22).
4. John, along with Peter and James, comprised the inner circle of disciples, a group that was with Christ on very special occasions. (Cp. the Transfiguration, Mt.17:1f; Gethsemane, Mt.26:36f. Cp. Mk.5:37-43.)
5. John is called the "beloved disciple" because he seems to have been especially close to Christ and because he stresses love so much in his writings. He was a close companion of Peter (cp. Lk.5:10; Jn.19:26; 21:20, 23; Acts 4:13).
6. John was the disciple to whom Jesus committed the care of his mother (Jn.19:26-27).
7. John is said by Paul to be one of the three "pillars" of the church (Gal.2:9).

DATE: uncertain. Probably A.D. 80-95.

John lived at least until the reign of the Roman emperor Trajan, according to Irenaeus. Trajan's reign began in A.D. 98. Clement of Alexandria, who died in A.D. 212, said: "Last of all; John, perceiving that the external facts had been made plain in the Gospels, being urged by his friends and inspired by the Spirit, composed a spiritual Gospel." Fragments of the Gospel were discovered in Egypt in 1925. These fragments were dated in the first half of the second century. This would mean John wrote the Gospel in the first century.

This much is known. John was a young man when called by Jesus, and the early church fathers say that John's Gospel was the last Gospel written. All this points to a late date somewhere in the latter years of John's life; however, John's exact age would have had a bearing as to when it was written. He probably would have been unable to write beyond a certain age because of feebleness.

A moving picture is painted of John by Jerome's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*. "When he tarried at Ephesus to extreme old age, and could only with difficulty be carried to the church in the arms of his disciples, and was unable to give utterance to many words, he used to say no more at their several meetings than this, 'Little children, love one another.' At length the disciples and fathers who were there, wearied with hearing always the same words, said, 'Master, why dost thou always say this?' 'It is the Lord's command,' was his worthy reply, 'and if this alone be done, it is enough.'" (RVG Tasker. *The Gospel According to St. John.* "Tyndale New Testament Commentaries," p.18)

TO WHOM WRITTEN: John writes to the lost (3:16), the unbelieving (20:31), the new believers (1:50-51; 15:11; 16:33), the philosopher (1:1), and the theologian (1:12-14).

PURPOSE: "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing, you may have life in His name" (Jn.20:31). This is John's clearly stated purpose for writing. However, there is a secondary purpose. The Gospel refutes almost any heresy that might arise in any generation.

1. To those who deny Christ's deity, John argues: He is the Son of God, the very Word of God Himself (1:1-5; 7:1f; etc.)
2. To those who deny Jesus' humanity, John argues: He is the Word become flesh, the very flesh which must be experienced (1:14f; 6:31f; etc.)
3. To those who continue to look for a human messiah and an earthly utopia, John argues: He is the Messiah, the Savior of the world, the very One who had been promised by God from the beginning of time (1:1-51, etc.)

SPECIAL FEATURES:

1. John is *The Gospel of Simplicity*. John used the simplest language and the most pure Greek possible. The Gospel serves as a first reader for many Greek students.
2. John is *The Gospel of Revelation*. The stress and compulsion of John is to show that Jesus Christ is the very revelation of God Himself. A quick glance at the outline clearly shows this.
3. John is *The Gospel of the Messiah*. John shows time and again that the Old Testament prophecies find their fulfillment in Jesus. However, there is a unique point in this that differs somewhat from the Synoptic Gospels. John shows that the salvation brought by Jesus is the very climax of Jewish religion. Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of the blessings promised Israel, the substance and truth, the symbolic meaning of the great Jewish festivals.

Jesus claims the Messianic right to secure disciples (1:35-51); to cleanse the temple (2:13-22); to associate and converse with Samaritans (4:1f; esp. 25-26); to work on the Sabbath, overriding the religious prohibitions (5:1-47; esp. 17f; 7:1-53); to feed the people even as Moses, and to claim that He Himself is the very Bread of Life (6:1-14, 22-71; esp., 31f); to forgive sins (8:1-11); and many, many other claims. He dramatically pictures His Messianic claim with the triumphal entry (12:12f).

4. John is *The Gospel of Redemption*. This redemption is centered in the cross and death of Jesus Christ. He is "the (sacrificial) Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29). His passion is the hour toward which His whole life is moving (2:4; 7:7, 8, 30; 12:23; 17:1). His own flesh and blood is to be *eaten*, that is, *partaken of*, if men are to have life (6:33-53). He compares His death to a grain of wheat that must fall into the ground before it bears fruit (12:24). He is to lay down His life for His sheep (10:11). He draws all men to Himself—but it is only by being lifted up on the cross (12:32-33). He is to sacrifice Himself that others might be set apart unto God (17:19).

5. John is *The Gospel of Jesus' Humanity*. John shows Jesus weary and thirsty (4:6-8, 31); spitting on the ground (9:6); weeping at the death of a dear friend, Lazarus (11:35); troubled because He is to die (12:27); disgusted with His betrayer (13:21); burning with thirst while dying (19:28); and having normal blood and water flowing through His body (19:34). John stresses this point by proclaiming that Jesus is the Son of Man (1:51; 5:27; 6:53; 12:23; 13:31).

6. John is *The Gospel of the Word*. John shows Jesus to be the very Word of God. By this he means that Jesus is everything God ever wanted to say to man. God has done more than speak what He wanted to say; God has pictured what He wanted to say in the very life of Jesus. Jesus is the expression, the thought, the idea, the picture of what God wanted to say to man. The Word of God has become flesh. (See note—Jn.1:1.)

7. John is *The Gospel of 'I Am,'* of God Himself, of Yahweh, Jehovah. The words "I Am" are extremely important to Jewish history. It is the great name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Ex.3:13-15). And John shows Jesus revealing Himself as the "I Am" at least ten times. (See note—Jn.6:20.)

8. John is *The Gospel of Signs*. John records eight miracles of Jesus, six of which are given only by him. What he does is select representative examples that point and show that Jesus is the Son of God. The miracles, he says, were not done to amaze people. They were performed as signs of His deity and godly powers (see note—Jn.2:23). These signs are: the water turned into wine (2:1-11); the healing of the nobleman's son (4:46-54); the healing of the man at the pool (5:1-9); the healing of the man born blind (9:1-7); the raising of Lazarus (11:1f); and the second draught of fish (21:1-6).

9. John is *The Gospel of the Holy Spirit*. John gives the fullest teaching of Jesus on the Holy Spirit among the Gospel writers (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7-8, 13-15).

OUTLINE OF JOHN

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For a quick example, choose one of the subjects below and turn to the Scripture, and you will find this marvelous help for faster, easier, and more accurate use.

In addition, every point of the Scripture and Subject is *fully developed in a Commentary with supporting Scripture* at the bottom of the page. Again, this arrangement makes sermon preparation much easier and faster.

Note something else: The Subjects of John's Gospel have titles that are both Biblical and *practical*. The practical titles sometimes have more appeal to people. This *benefit* is clearly seen for use on billboards, bulletins, church newsletters, etc.

A suggestion: For the quickest overview of John, first read *all the major titles* (I, II, III, etc.), then come back and read the subtitles.

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I. THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

A. Jesus the Living Word: The First Witness of John the Apostle, 1:1-5
B. Jesus the Light of the World: The Special Witness of John the Baptist, 1:6-8
C. Jesus the Light of Men: The Second Witness of John the Apostle, 1:9-13
D. Jesus the Word Made Flesh: The Third Witness of John the Apostle, 1:14-18
E. Jesus the Messiah, the Lord: The Second Witness of John the Baptist, 1:19-28
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G. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, 1:35-42
H. Jesus the One Prophesied: The Witness of Philip, 1:43-45
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J. Jesus the Son of Man, God's Mediator: The Witness of Jesus Himself, 1:50-51

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B. Revelation 2: Jesus is Supreme Over God's House, 2:12-22
(Matthew 21:12-16; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:34-46)
C. Revelation 3: Jesus Knows All Men, 2:23-25
D. Revelation 4: The New Birth, 3:1-15
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III. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE NEW MASTER, 3:22-36

IV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

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D. The Subject of Messiah, 4:25-30
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V. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43-54

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B. Jesus Walks on Water: The Deliverance from Fear, 6:16-21
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C. The Answer to Man's Great Hunger, 6:22-29
D. The Bread of Life: The Source of Spiritual Satisfaction, 6:30-36
E. The Assurance of the Believer, 6:37-40
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H. The Reason Some People are Offended by Christ, the Bread of Life, 6:59-71

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C. The Response of the People: A Charge of Insanity, Yet Still Questioning, 7:20-31
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N. The Work of the Holy Spirit, 16:7-15
O. The Resurrection and Its Effects Foretold, 16:16-33

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	CHAPTER 1	with God, and the Word was God.	b. Coexistent c. Self-existent
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DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

A. Jesus the Living Word: The First Witness of John the Apostle, 1:1-5

(1:1-5) **Introduction**: this passage is one of the summits of Scripture. In fact, it probably reaches the highest of human thought. What is the thought that reaches the height of human concepts? It is this: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is…

- the Word of God
- the Creator of Life
- the Very Being and Essence of Life.

These three truths have to be deeply thought about to understand their meaning. A quick reading of this passage leaves a person disinterested, not even close to understanding what is being said. However, the importance of the truths lie at the very foundation of life. They cannot be overstated, for they determine a man's destiny. If Jesus Christ is the Word of God, then men must hear and understand that Word or else be lost forever in ignorance of God Himself.

1. Christ is eternal (v.1-2).
2. Christ is the Creator (v.3).
3. Christ is Life (v.4-5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:1-5) **The Word—Jesus Christ, Son of God**: the *Word* (logos) is Jesus Christ. John faced a serious problem in writing to the Gentiles, that is, the non-Jewish world. Most Gentiles had never heard of the Messiah or Savior who was expected by the Jews. The idea was foreign to them. However, the Messiah was the very center of Christianity. How was John going to present Christ so that a Gentile could understand?

The answer lay in the idea of the *Word*, for the *Word* was understood by both Gentile and Jew.

1. The Jews saw a word as something more than a mere sound. A word was something active and existing. It was power—it possessed the power to express something, to do something. This is seen in the many Old Testament references where *The Word of God* was seen as the creative power of God, the power that made the world and gave light and life to every man (Gen.1:3, 6, 11; Ps.33:6; 107:20; 147:15; Is.55:11).
2. The Gentiles or Greeks saw the *Word* more philosophically.
   a. When they looked at the world of nature, they saw that things were not chaotic, but orderly. Everything had its place and moved or grew in an orderly fashion, including the stars above and the vegetation below. Therefore, the Greeks said that behind the world was a mind, a reason, a power that made and kept things in their proper place. This creative and sustaining mind, this supreme reason, this unlimited power was said to be the *Word*.
   b. The *Word* was also seen as the power that enabled men to think and reason. It was the power that brought light and understanding to man's mind, enabling him to express his confused thoughts in an orderly fashion.
   c. More importantly, the *Word* was the power by which men came into contact with God and expressed their feelings to God.
3. John utilized this common idea of the Jews and Gentiles to proclaim that Jesus Christ was the *Word*. John saw that a word is the expression of an idea, a thought, an image in the mind of a person. He saw that a word describes what is in the mind of a person. Thus, he proclaimed that in the life of Jesus Christ, God was speaking to the world, speaking and demonstrating just what He wanted to say to man. John said three things.
   a. God has given us much more than mere words in the Holy Scriptures. God has given us Jesus Christ, *The Word*. As *The Word*, Jesus Christ was the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of what God wished to say to man. The very image within God's mind of the *Ideal Man* was demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the perfect expression of all that God wishes man to be. Jesus Christ was God's utterance, God's speech, *God's Word* to man. Jesus Christ was the *Word* of God who came down to earth in

human flesh to bring man into a face-to-face relationship with God (cp. v.1-2). Jesus was the *Word of God who came to earth to live out the written Word of God.*

b. Jesus Christ is the Mind, the Reason, the Power that both made and keeps things in their proper order. He is the creative and sustaining Mind, the Supreme Reason, the unlimited Power (cp. v.3).

c. Jesus Christ is the Light, the Illumination, the Power that penetrates the darkness of the world. He, the Life and Light of the world, is what makes sense of the world and enables men to understand the world (cp. v.4-5).

1 (1:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Son of God—Eternal—Preexistent—Revelation**: Christ is eternal. Note three profound statements made about Christ, the Word.

1. Christ was preexistent. This means He was there before creation. He has always existed.
   a. "In the beginning [en archei]" does not mean *from* the beginning. Jesus Christ was already there. He did not *become*; He was not created; He never had a beginning. He "was in the beginning with God" (cp. Jn.17:5; 8:58).
   b. The word "was" (en) is the Greek imperfect tense of *eimi* which is the word so often used for deity. It means *to be* or *I am*. *To be* means continuous existence, without beginning or origin. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20.)

> **"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Ps.90:2).**
>
> **"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (Pr.8:23).**
>
> **"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jn.17:5).**
>
> **"[Christ Jesus] who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:6-8; cp. 2 Cor.8:9).**

The testimony of John was that Jesus Christ was the *Word*, the One who has always existed. He is the Son of the living God. (See outline and notes—Ph.2:5-8.)

2. Christ was coexistent. He was and is face-to-face with God forever. The word "with" (pros) has the idea of both *being with* and *acting toward*. Jesus Christ (the Word) was both with God and acting with God. He was "with God": by God's side, acting, living, and moving in the closest of relationships. Christ had the ideal and perfect relationship *with* God the Father. Their life together—their relationship, communion, fellowship, and connection—was a perfect eternal bond. This is exactly what is said: "The same was *in the beginning with God*" (v.2).

> **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)" (1 Jn.1:1-2).**

The testimony of John was that Jesus Christ was the *Word*, the One who has always coexisted with God. Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God.

3. John did not say that "the Word" was *the God* (ho Theos). He says "the Word" was *God* (Theos). He omits the definite article. John was saying that "the Word," Jesus Christ...
   - is of the very nature and character of God the Father, but He is not the identical person of God the Father.
   - is a distinct person from God the Father, but He is of the very being and essence (perfection) of God the Father.

When a man sees Christ, he sees a *distinct person*, but he sees a person who is of the *very substance and character* of God in all of His perfect being.

> **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:3).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).**
>
> **"Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Ro.9:5).**
>
> **"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15).**
>
> **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).**
>
> **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"Which in his [Jesus Christ] times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim.6:15-16).**
>
> **"And he [Jesus Christ] hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev.19:16).**

The testimony of John was that Jesus Christ was the *Word*, self-existent and eternal, the Supreme Majesty of the universe who owes His existence to no one. Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God.

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is eternal. This says several critical things about Christ.

1) Christ reveals the most important Person in all the universe: God. He reveals all that God is and wants to say to man. Therefore, Christ must be diligently studied, and all that He is and says must be heeded to the utmost (cp. Jn.5:24).
2) Christ *reveals* God perfectly. He is just like God, identical to God; therefore, when a person looks at Christ he sees God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,*3*—Jn.14:6. Cp.Jn.14:9.)
3) Christ reveals that God is the most wonderful Person who ever lived. God is far, far beyond anyone we could have ever dreamed. He is loving and caring, full of goodness and truth; and He will not tolerate injustices: murder and stealing, lying and cheating of husband, wife, child, neighbor, brother, sister or stranger. God loves and is working and moving toward a perfect universe that will be filled with people who choose to love and worship and live and work for Him (cp. Jn.5:24-29).

Thought 2. The very nature of Christ is...

- to exist eternally.
- to exist in a perfect state of being, knowing nothing but eternal perfection.
- to exist in perfect communion and fellowship eternally (cp. 1 Jn.1:3).

Note: it is the very nature of Christ that shall be imparted to believers; therefore, all three things will become our experience.

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor.3:18).

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:21).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).

2 (1:3) **Jesus Christ, Creator**: Christ is the Creator. Note several things.

1. "All things" (panta) mean every detail of creation—not creation as a whole, but every single detail. Each element and thing, each being and person—whether material or spiritual, angelic or human—has come into being by Christ.

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col.1:16).

2. The words "were made" (egeneto) mean *came into being or became*. Note what this is saying. Nothing was existing—no substance, no matter whatsoever. Matter is not eternal. God did not take something outside of Himself, something less than perfect (evil) and create the world. Christ, the Word, took nothing but His will and power; and He spoke *the Word* and created every single thing *out of nothing* (ex nihilo).
3. Christ was the One who created all things—one by one. Among the Godhead, He was the active Agent, the Person who made all things. Creation was His function and work (cp. Col.1:16 above).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

"[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb.1:2).

4. Note that two statements of fact are made.
   ⇒ The positive statement of fact: "All things were made by Him."
   ⇒ The absolute statement of fact: "*Without Him* was not anything made that was made."

   a. Christ was actively involved in the creation of every single thing: "Without Him was not anything made."
   b. The words "not anything" (oude hen) mean not even *one* thing, not a single thing, not even a detail was made apart from Him.

Thought 1. Note a critical point for man. The world is God's; He made it, every element of it, one by one. This means several things.

1) God is not off in some distant place far removed from the world, unconcerned and disinterested in what happens to the world. God cares about the world. He cares deeply, even about the most minute detail and smallest person. He cares about everything and every person in the world.
2) The problems of the world are not due to God and His attitude. The problems of the world are due to sin, to the attitude and evil of man's heart.
3) The answer to the world's problems is not men and their technical skills. The answer is Christ: for men to turn to Christ, surrendering and giving their lives to know Christ in the most personal and intimate way possible. Then, and only then, can men set their lives and world in order as God intends.

3 (1:4-5) **Jesus Christ, Life—Light**: Christ is life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4).

1. Christ is the source of light. Note the statement: "The life [Christ] was the light of men." From the very beginning man was to know *that life*, to know God personally and intimately. The knowledge of the life of Christ was to be the light of men, the beam that was to...
   - give real life to man, both abundant and eternal life.
   - infuse energy and motivation into man so that he might walk and live as he should.

There is another way to say this. From the very beginning, the life (Christ) was to be the light of man's...
- quality of being
- power of being
- energy of being
- essence of being
- force of being
- principle of being

The life (Christ) was to be the light of man's purpose, meaning and significance upon earth.

> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).**

2. Christ is the answer to darkness.
   a. Christ's life did shine in the darkness (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Darkness*—Jn.8:12). Very simply, since man had brought darkness into the world (by sin), the life of Christ was the light of man, the *beam* that showed man the way, the truth and the life (see DEEPER STUDY # 3,4—Jn.1:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:12; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—14:6).
      ⇒ Christ showed man the *way* God intended him to live.
      ⇒ Christ showed man the *truth* of life, that is, the truth about God and man and the truth about the world of man.
      ⇒ Christ showed man the *life*, that is, how to save his life and avoid the things that can cause him to stumble and lose his life.

> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).**
>
> **"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).**
>
> **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).**
>
> **"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:18-19; cp. Eph.5:14).**
>
> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pt.2:9-10).**
>
> **"Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth" (1 Jn.2:8).**
>
> **"And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons" (Acts 20:18).**

   b. Christ's life (the Light) cannot be overcome (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:4) **Life—Jesus Christ, Life**: the simple statement "in Christ was life" means at least three things.

1. Life is the quality and essence, the energy and power, the force and principle of being. Christ is life; He is…
   - the very quality of life
   - the very essence of life
   - the very energy of life
   - the very power of life
   - the very force of life
   - the very principle of life

Without Christ, there would be no life whatsoever. Life is in Him, within His very being. All things exist and have their being (life) in Him.

2. Life is purpose, meaning, and significance of being. Christ is life; He is…
   - the very purpose of life.
   - the very meaning of life.
   - the very significance of life.

3. Life is perfection. Life is all that a man must be and possess in order to live perfectly. This is what is meant by life. Life is completeness of being, absolute satisfaction, the fulness of all good, and the possession of all good things. Life is perfect love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (cp. Gal.5:22-23).

Whatever life is and all that life is, it is all in Jesus Christ. Even the legitimate cravings of man that are sometimes entangled with evil—such as power, fame and wealth—are all included in the life given by Jesus Christ. Those who partake of His life shall reign forever as kings and priests (see note, *Rewards*—Lk.16:10-12). This is the very thing that is distinctive about life—it is eternal. It lasts forever and it is rewarding. It will eventually exalt the believer to the highest life and place and position. (Cp. Rev.21:1f.)

Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the way to life, and He is the truth of life. He is the very substance of life, its very being and energy (Jn.5:26; 1 Jn.1:2). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(1:5) **Light**: light reveals, strips away (Jn.3:19-20), routs the chaos (cp. Gen.1:2-3), and guides (Jn.12:36, 46). It shows the way, the truth, and the life (Jn.14:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(1:5) **Darkness**: darkness does not understand the light, does not overcome the light, does not extinguish the light (see note—Jn.8:12).

	B. Jesus the Light of the World: The Special Witness of John the Baptist, 1:6-8
1 **A man sent from God**DSI	6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
2 **A man with a mission** a. To bear witness b. That men might believe	7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
3 **A man who was great, but was not the Light**	8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

B. Jesus the Light of the World: The Special Witness of John the Baptist, 1:6-8

(1:6-8) **Introduction**: there was one person who was a very special witness to Christ, John the Baptist. John's sole purpose on earth was to witness and to bear testimony to the Light of the world. His purpose stands as a dynamic example for every believer. The purpose of the believer is to bear the same witness as John: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world.

1. A man sent from God (v.6).
2. A man with a mission (v.7).
3. A man who was great, but was not the Light (v.8).

1 (1:6) **John the Baptist—Commission**: a man sent from God. Note three points.

1. The man "was a man" and *only* a man. A strong contrast is being made between what had been said about Christ and what is now being said about John.
   ⇒ Christ "was in the beginning"; He was "with God" and He "was God" (Jn.1:1-2).
   ⇒ John "was a man" who had come into existence at birth, just as all men have the beginning of their existence at birth. John was the son of a man, whereas Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God (Jn.3:16). John was not a divine being, not even an angel. He was a mere man.

> **"What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?" (Job 7:17).**
>
> **"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Ps.8:4).**
>
> **"Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he [God] that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in" (Is.40:21-22).**
>
> **"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven" (Jn.3:27).**

2. The man, however, was "*sent from God*"; and he was sent on a very special mission. Two facts show this.
   a. The word "sent" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sent*—Jn.1:6 for discussion).
   b. The phrase "from God" (para Theou) means from beside God. John was not only sent by God, He was sent from the very side and heart of God. He was only a man, but a man of high calling and mission, of enormous responsibility and accountability. He was a man sent by God, not by man.

Thought 1. Note three significant points. The servant and messenger of God...

- is not sent forth by men, but by God. He is sent forth as the ambassador of God.
- is sent forth from God, from the very side and heart of God.
- is a man of high calling and mission, of enormous responsibility and accountability.

> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath commit-**

ted unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:18-20).

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor.3:5-6).

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor.4:1-2).

"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power" (Eph.3:7).

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

"[The gospel] whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (2 Tim.1:11).

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:27-29).

3. The man was named John. His name means *gracious*. He was a man sent forth with a name to match his message: *God's grace* is now to enter upon the scene of world history. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, who is the embodiment of God's glorious grace.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:6) **Sent—Apostle—Commission**: the word "sent" (apestalmenos) means to send out; to commission as a representative, an ambassador, an envoy. Three things are true of the person sent from God.
1. He belongs to God, who has sent him out.
2. He is commissioned to be sent out.
3. He possesses all the authority and power of God, who has sent him out.

2 (1:7) **Mission—Witnessing**: a man with a mission. Note two points.

1. The man came to bear witness of the Light. He was sent with a very specific message, and that message was to proclaim the Light, Christ Himself. (See note, pt.2—Jn.1:4-5. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 3,4—Jn.1:5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:12; DEEPER STUDY # 5—12:35-36. All these are important notes for this point.)

Thought 1. The message is a *given* message. The servant of God is not left on his own to think up a message; he is not dependent upon his own reason, thoughts, and ideas. His message is Christ, the Light of the world.

"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor.2:17).

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor.4:1-2).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believeth" (1 Th.2:13).

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Dt.4:2).

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Dt.12:32).

"Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Pr.30:6).

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev.22:19).

2. The purpose of the man's witness is clearly stated: that all men, through Christ, might believe. His purpose was not...

- to start a movement for God.
- to organize and administer.

- to minister (note that John never healed or performed a miracle nor built a program around the synagogue or temple, Jn.10:41).

His purpose was *not even to preach*. His purpose was *to lead men to believe* in the Light. He witnessed and proclaimed the Light *so that* all men might believe. The man was sent to focus on people and to lead them to believe in Christ Jesus. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24 for discussion of this point.)

Thought 1. The servant of God has *one primary purpose*: to lead men to believe in Christ Jesus, the Light of the world. The servant's *purpose* is not to organize, to administer, to oversee, to manage, to teach, or to preach. His purpose is as stated: to lead men to believe in Christ Jesus. Everything else is method, not purpose. Men have too often confused methods with purpose. The result has been that teeming millions are still unreached and teeming thousands are being deceived by confusing the methods of religion with the purpose of God: the salvation of men through belief in His Son.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

3 (1:8) **Humility—Ministers**: a man who was great, but he was not the Light. John the Baptist was extraordinarily great. Jesus Himself said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Mt.11:11). *But*, he was not the Light. The humility of John was striking. (Read Jn.1:19-23, 27 for the impact of his humility and the example he set for every servant of God.) No matter how great the ministry of a man may be in the eyes of men, that man's ministry is eclipsed by the greatness of John. Yet John says, "[His] shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." (Jn.1:27)

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Mt.23:12).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4; cp. Ro.12:3).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder, Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

	C. Jesus the Light of Men: The Second Witness of John the Apostle, 1:9-13	11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.	b. He came to His own people, but they rejected Him
1 Christ was the Light a. The true Light[DS1] b. His mission: To light men	9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.	12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:	**3 Christ was wonderfully received by some** a. How: By believing b. Result: Became sons of God
2 Christ was tragically rejected by the world a. He was in the world, but He was rejected[DS2]	10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.	13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.	c. The Source of Sonship: A new birth 1) Was not of man 2) Was of God

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

C. Jesus the Light of Men: The Second Witness of John the Apostle, 1:9-13

(1:9-13) **Introduction:** the world is in desperate straits. It is full of darkness—the darkness of sin and despair, of sickness and death, of corruption and hell. The darkness looms over the whole world. This is the problem dealt with in the present passage. There is hope in Jesus Christ, for Christ is the *true Light*, and Light dispels darkness.

1. Christ was the Light (v.9).
2. Christ was tragically rejected (v.10-11).
3. Christ was wonderfully received by some (v.12-13).

1 (1:9) **Jesus Christ, Light; Mission:** Christ was "the true Light." Other men may claim to be *lights*; they may claim that they can lead men to the truth. Some may claim they can...

- reveal God to men.
- show the nature, meaning, and destiny of the future and other things.
- guide a man out of the darkness of sin, shame, doubt, despair, and the fear of death and hell.
- do away with and eliminate the darkness entirely.

However, such men are *false* lights. Their claims are only ideas in their minds, ficticious ideas, and counterfeit claims. Their thoughts and positions are defective, frail, and uncertain—just as imperfect as any other man-made position dealing with the truth. Note two glorious truths.

1. The true Light is Jesus Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Truth*—Jn.1:9). What does this mean? It means that Jesus Christ was what other men are not. Other men may claim to be the light of men, but their thoughts are only false imaginations. Christ alone was the true Light. Christ is to man what light is to man, and Christ did for man what light does for man.
   - ⇒ Light is clear and pure: it is clean and good. So is Christ (Eph.5:8).
   - ⇒ Light penetrates: it cuts through and eliminates darkness. So does Christ.
   - ⇒ Light enlightens: it enlarges one's vision and knowledge. So does Christ.
   - ⇒ Light reveals: it opens up the truth of an area, a whole new world and life. It clears up the way to the truth and life. So does Christ (Jn.14:6).
   - ⇒ Light guides: it keeps one from groping and grasping about in the dark trying to find one's way. It directs the way to go, leads along the right path. So does Christ (Jn.12:36, 46).
   - ⇒ Light exposes and strips away darkness. So does Christ (Jn.3:19-20).
   - ⇒ Light routs the chaos. So does Christ (cp. Gen.1:2-3).
   - ⇒ Light discriminates between the right way and the wrong way. So does Christ (see note—Eph.5:10. Cp. Eph.5:8-10.)
   - ⇒ Light warns: it warns of dangers that lie ahead in one's path. So does Christ.
   - ⇒ Light protects: it keeps one from tripping, stumbling, falling, and injuring oneself and losing one's life. So does Christ.
2. The mission of Christ is to give light to men. Note that He gives light to every man. How?
   - ⇒ Christ gives light to men through natural revelation, the creation and order of the universe.

> **"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork" (Ps.19:1).**
>
> **"The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory" (Ps.97:6).**
>
> **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Ro.1:20).**
>
> **"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Ro.2:14-15).**
>
> **"Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17).**

⇒ Christ gives light to men by giving good gifts to men. Every "good and perfect gift" which man receives is said to come from the Father of lights.

> **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas.1:17).**

But there is much more light given to men since Christ has "come into the world."

a. There is the *light of Christ Himself*: He is the Savior who now stands before the world as "the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27). Every man can now see the truth. They may reject it, but they can see it.

> **"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Dt.18:18).**
>
> **"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (Jn.8:26).**
>
> **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jn.12:49).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:9-10).**
>
> **"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).**

b. There is the *light of the gospel*: Christ has now "come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me [Christ] should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46). The truth is that every man can now be delivered from the darkness of sin, despair, death, and hell.

> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**

c. There is the *light of the Spirit*: both the guiding and the convicting power of the Spirit.

> **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (Jn.16:13).**
>
> **"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (Jn.16:8-11).**
>
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**

Note that all the light existing in the world is due to Christ, both the light from nature and from heaven, from the physical world and from the spiritual world. Christ is "the true Light [the Life], which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (v.9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:9) **Truth**: the words true, truth, and real are taken from two Greek words very much alike. But each has a different shade of meaning. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:32; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:6.)

1. "Alethes" means true, the opposite of false.
2. "Alethinos" means the true, the genuine, the real. It is the *opposite* of the unreal, the ficticious, the counterfeit, the imaginary. It is also the opposite of the imperfect, defective, frail, uncertain.

Jesus Christ is seen as the true, the real, the genuine life which has come to give light to every man (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12).

2 (1:10-11) **Jesus Christ—Rejection**: Christ was tragically rejected by the world.

1. Christ (the Word and the Light) was in the world. He had made the world, and He loved and cared deeply for the world; therefore, He was actively working to help the world and its people from the very beginning of creation.
   a. Christ gave the *light of order and purpose and beauty* to the universe as a whole. The universe is lovingly supplied to take care of man's needs, and the world shows the glorious power and deity of God (Ro.1:19-20).
   b. Christ gave the *glorious light [privilege] of living* in such a beautiful world to man. He gave man a soul, the very *light* of life by which he could learn and reason, love and care, work and serve—all for the purpose of building a better world, both for God and for himself.

c. Christ gave a spirit to man, the *light of knowing and worshipping* God and living forever in the life of God.
d. Christ gave messengers to men, *prophetic lights* to proclaim the truth and to encourage men to follow God and to be diligent in their work and service to the world.

But note what happened and still happens. "The world knew Him not" (auton ouk egno). Men rejected Christ; they closed their eyes and failed to see Him. (Cp. Ro.1:19-32 for the tragic indictment against man's rejection of God's activity in the world.)

2. Christ (the Word and the Light) came to His own people, but they too rejected Him. The words "unto His own" (eis ta idia) mean literally to *His own home, to His own people*. There are two meanings here.
a. The world is His home, and all the people are His by creation. He came to all the people of the world, but they did not receive Him. They rejected Him.
b. The nation of Israel was His peculiar home, the people whom He had chosen to be the messengers of God to the world. They, of all people, should have known better because of the special privileges, but they too rejected Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22.)

"And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts" (Mt.8:34).

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? and they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).

"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath" (Lk.4:28).

"And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong" (Lk.4:29).

"And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas" (Lk.23:18).

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (Jn.5:43).

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:10) **Revelation**: this verse gives the raw outline and supreme tragedy of revelation. (1) The supreme fact of history: "He was in the world." (2) The supreme truth about the world: "The world was made by Him." (3) The supreme tragedy of humanity: "The world knew Him not."

3 (1:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Accepted—Salvation**: Christ was wonderfully received by some persons. Not everyone rejected Christ—most did, but a few received Him. Note three points.
1. How men receive Christ. They "believe on His name." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24.)
2. The results of receiving Christ. A person is given the power to become a son of God.
⇒ The word "power" (exousian) means both power and right or authority.
⇒ The word "sons" (tekna Theou) means children of God.
⇒ The words "to become" (genesthai) mean to become something a person is not.

When a person receives Christ into his life (as Lord), Christ gives that person the power and right to become something he is not—a child of God.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:15-16).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

3. The source of sonship is a new birth.
a. The new birth is not of man.
⇒ It is not by blood. The idea is that heritage—being born of a particular family, race, nation or people—is of no value in becoming a child of God. Blood is not what causes the new birth.
⇒ It is not by the will of the flesh (ek thelematos sarkos): sexual desire. The idea is that a person is not spiritually born again by wanting and willing to become a child of God just like a person wills to have an earthly child.
⇒ It is not by the will of man (ek thelematos andros, husband). The idea is that even man (the husband, the stronger member, the one who is usually the leader) cannot bring about the spiritual birth of others. No man, no matter who he is—husband or world leader—can cause or make a person a child of God.
b. The new birth is of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *New Birth*—Jn.3:1-15 for discussion).

	D. Jesus the Word Made Flesh: The Third Witness of John the Apostle, 1:14-18	that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.	
1 Christ became flesh[DS1]	14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.	16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.	**4 Proof 3: Men have received the fulness & grace of Christ** a. Not by law b. But by Jesus Christ
2 Proof 1: Christ dwelt visibly among us a. His glory was seen b. It was full of grace[DS2] & truth		17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.	
3 Proof 2: John the Baptist bore witness of the superiority of Christ	15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He	18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.	**5 Proof 4: God's Son alone has seen God**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

D. Jesus the Word Made Flesh: The Third Witness of John the Apostle, 1:14-18

(1:14-18) **Introduction**: "The Word was made flesh"—God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was made flesh and blood; He became a man. No greater message could ever be proclaimed to man.

1. Christ became flesh (v.14).
2. Proof 1: Christ dwelt visibly among us (v.14).
3. Proof 2: John the Baptist bore witness of the superiority of Christ (v.15).
4. Proof 3: men have received the fulness and grace of Christ (v.16-17).
5. Proof 4: God's Son alone has seen God (v.18).

1 (1:14) **Jesus Christ, Incarnation**: Christ became flesh. The Incarnation did take place. The Son of God was actually made flesh. He came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. There is no doubt about John's meaning here.

The word "flesh" (sarx) is the same word that Paul used to describe man's nature with all of its weakness and tendency to sin. This is a staggering thought. Jesus Christ is God—fully God, yet Jesus Christ is man—fully man. (Cp. 1 Jn.4:2-3.) The word "beheld" (theasthai) means actually seeing with the human eye. It is used about twenty times in the New Testament. There is no room whatever for saying that God's becoming a man was merely a vision of some man's mind or imagination. John was saying that he and others actually saw the Word made flesh. Jesus Christ was beyond question God Himself who became man, who partook of the very same flesh as all other men. (Cp. 1 Jn.1:1-4.) (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Flesh*—Jn.1:14 for the meaning of "flesh" and why Jesus Christ had to become flesh. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Flesh*—1 Cor.3:1-4 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:14) **Flesh**: What does the Bible mean by "flesh"? And why did Jesus Christ have to become flesh? The best description of the flesh is probably found in 1 Cor.15:42-44. (See outline and notes—Ro.5:12-21; 8:1f; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.3:1-4.)

1. The flesh is corruptible.
   a. The flesh is tainted, debased, ruined and depraved by sin (lust, 2 Pt.1:4). There is a seed of corruption within human flesh; therefore, the flesh sins (lusts) and thereby ages, dies, deteriorates and decays. It does not live beyond a few years on this earth.

      "The corruption which is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).
      "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal.6:8).
      "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

   b. Christ (the Word) became flesh to correct and to counteract the corruption of flesh.

      "[By Christ] are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).
      "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot....Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pt.1:18-19, 23-25).
      "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

2. The flesh is dishonorable.
   a. The flesh is not what God created it to be. It does not exist in the image of God that God intended. It does not hold the glory, the honor, nor the prestige it once did when God created it. It is disgraced and shamed, and it is reproached by sin and lust. It is held in the grip of sin and fear and subject to being held in bondage—even the bondage of death.

"In me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Ro.7:18).

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Ro.1:28-32; cp. Gal.5:19-21).

"They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh....For to be carnally [fleshy] minded is death" (Ro.8:5-6).

   b. Jesus Christ became flesh to correct and counteract the dishonor of the flesh.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15; cp. 2:14-18).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:8-10).

3. The flesh is weak.
   a. The flesh is impotent. It is feeble, frail, fragile, infirmed, and decrepit because of sin (lust). It has no strength to please God nor to save itself.

"They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Ro.8:8).
"There shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Ro.3:20; Gal.2:16).
"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (Jn.6:63).

   b. Jesus Christ became flesh to correct and counteract the weakness of the flesh.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).

4. The flesh is a natural body.
   a. The flesh is of the earth and is part of the earth; it is made up of the chemicals and substances of the earth. It is physical, material, animal. It is "the earthly house," the "tabernacle," the "tent," which houses the human soul and spirit (2 Cor.5:1). It is neither spirit nor spiritual; therefore, it cannot live beyond the strength of the chemicals and substances that form its flesh. It cannot live beyond its *natural life*.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Lk.24:39).

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body....As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor.15:44, 49).

   b. Jesus Christ became flesh to counteract the natural body of the flesh. He became flesh in order to become "a quickening spirit," the Savior who could quicken and make alive all those who would trust Him (1 Cor.15:45).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ" (Eph.2:4-5).

2 (1:14) **Jesus Christ, Incarnation**: the first proof of the Incarnation is that Jesus Christ dwelt visibly among us.

1. God's glory was seen (see previous note, *Incarnation*—Jn.1:14 for meaning of word "beheld"). Two things are meant by the word "glory."
   a. Christ was the *Shekinah glory* of God. The word Shekinah means that which dwells or dwelling. It refers to the *bright cloud* that God used to guide Israel out of Egypt and that rested upon the tabernacle and above the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place (Ex.40:34-38). The cloud symbolized God's presence, and that is just what John was saying. "We beheld," actually saw the Shekinah glory, God's very presence "dwelling among us."
   b. Christ was the very embodiment of God, all that God is and does. John said "we beheld," looked at Him, and could tell He was God. All that Jesus was in His person and being, character and behavior, was so enormously different. In person and behavior, work and ministry He was...
      - the very embodiment of "*grace and truth.*"
      - the perfect embodiment of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control.
      - the absolute embodiment of all that God could be.

      The glory of all that God was stood right before them, right in their very presence. They beheld Him with their very own eyes. Jesus Christ, the Man who dwelt among them, could be no other than the glory of God among men. It was clearly seen that "in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9). The glory of His being...
      - was the very glory God Himself would possess.
      - was the very glory God would give to His only begotten Son (just as any father would give the best of his glory and all he is to a son).

      A striking fact is that James, who was the Lord's brother, even called Jesus "the Lord of glory." Just think: James was reared with Jesus beginning from the earliest years of childhood stretching right on through the years of adulthood. If anyone ever had an opportunity to see and observe Jesus, it was James. He had every chance to see some act of disobedience, some sin, something contrary to the nature of God. However, James' testimony is: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of Glory*," the One in whom the very presence of God dwelt among us (Jas.2:1).

      The references in John dealing with glory are as follows: Jn.2:11; 5:41; 7:18; 8:50, 54; 11:4; 12:41; 17:5, 22, 24.
2. Jesus Christ was full of grace and truth.
   a. He was the very embodiment of grace (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Grace*—Jn.1:14).
   b. He was the very embodiment of truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Truth*—Jn.14:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:32).

> **"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Is.7:14).**
>
> **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Is.9:6).**
>
> **"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS....Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk.1:31, 34-35).**
>
> **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).**
>
> **"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Ro.1:3).**
>
> **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).**
>
> **"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:7).**
>
> **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb.2:14).**
>
> **"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 Jn.4:2).**
>
> **"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).**

Grace IS getting what we do NOT

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:14) **Grace**: grace is probably the most meaningful word in the language of men. In the Bible the word *grace* means far more than it does when men use it. To men the word grace means three things.

1. Grace is that quality within a thing that is beautiful or joyful. It may be the fragrance of a flower, the rich green of the grass, the beauty of a lovely person.
2. Grace is anything that has loveliness. It may be a thought, an act, a word, a person.
3. Grace is a gift, a favor that someone might extend to a friend. The favor is always freely done, expecting nothing in return. The favor is always done for a friend.

However, when the early Christians looked at what God had done for men, they had to add a deeper, much richer meaning to the word grace. God had saved sinners, those who had acted against Him. Therefore, grace became the favor of God showered upon men—men who did not deserve His favor. Grace became the kindness and love that dwells within the very nature of God, the kindness and love that God freely gives to His *enemies*.

No other word so expresses the depth and richness of the heart and mind of God. This is the distinctive difference between God's grace and man's grace. Whereas man sometimes does favors for his friends and thereby can be said to be gracious, God has done a thing unheard of among men: He has given His very own Son to die for His *enemies* (Ro.5:8-10). In this act He has done something that shows He is the perfect embodiment of grace, full…

- of beauty and joy
- of loveliness and goodness
- of favors freely given
- of kindness and love freely demonstrated

Mercy IS NOT getting what we do deserve.

3 (1:15) **Jesus Christ, Incarnation**: the second proof of the Incarnation is John the Baptist. He, too, bore witness of the Incarnation. John said very simply…

- Jesus was born "after me" (6 months after).
- But He is "preferred before me" (mightier; more important in being, rank, and dignity).
- Why? Because "He was before me." GOD is God the same yesterday, today &

The words "for He was before me" (hoti protos mou en) literally mean *first to me* or *first of me*. It refers both to time and importance. Jesus Christ was first in time, existing before John. He existed "in the beginning"—throughout all eternity. John proclaimed, "He was before me": He always existed; He was the First; He was the very cause for John's existence. John also declared that Jesus was first in importance. He was first in superiority, Being, Person. His very name is the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

> **"Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and His Redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Is.44:6).**
>
> **"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev.22:13; cp. Rev.1:8; 21:6; Is.44:6).**

4 (1:16-17) **Jesus Christ, Incarnation—Jesus Christ, Deity**: the third proof of the Incarnation is the fulness and grace of Christ which was given to us. Genuine believers can testify to this.

The word "fulness" (pleroma) means that which fills, the sum total, the totality. It is the sum total of all that is in God (Col.1:19). In Jesus dwelt all the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption—all the abundance of God (1 Cor.1:30). All that Christ is, the very fulness of His being, is given to us who believe—all His "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal.5:22-23). We are complete in Him.

> **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:9-10).**

The term "grace for grace" means that He gives grace upon grace, grace enough to meet all our needs, no matter the circumstances. It is one blessing leading to another blessing; new wonders dawning upon one's consciousness every day; fresh experiences constantly springing into one's life.

Note that the fulness of God, His grace and truth, does not come by the law, but by Jesus Christ. It does not come…

- by being as good as we can.
- by working to please God as much as we can.
- by keeping the rules and commandments of the law.

It does not come by law, for no man can keep the law to any degree of perfection. The law only points out a man's failure and condemns him for breaking the law. If a man is to be acceptable to God, it is because he comes and keeps on coming to God, begging God to forgive him, and because God loves him so much that he forgives the man.

Such is the grace, the undeserved favor, of God. God's grace comes by Jesus Christ, and we would not know the grace of God unless Jesus Christ had come to reveal it to us. The glorious fact that we do experience the fulness of God and His grace is proof of the Incarnation (that God did become flesh in the person of Jesus Christ).

> **"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Tit.2:11).**
>
> **"But after the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).**

"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Ro.3:23-24).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

5 (1:18) **Incarnation—Jesus Christ, Deity**: the fourth proof of the Incarnation is Christ—God's Son. He alone has seen God. No man has seen God at any time; however, Jesus Christ claimed...

- that He was "the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16).
- that He had come from the very "bosom of the Father" (from the deepest part, the most intimate place, the most honorable fellowship) (Jn.1:18).
- that He had come to reveal and to proclaim the Father (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—Jn.14:6; see note, *Revelation* 14:7).

The fact that Jesus Christ is "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" is proof of the Incarnation (that God became flesh). Jesus Christ declared unequivocally that He had come from God. A man either believes or does not believe the grace and truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. (See note—Jn.3:31 for discussion and verses.)

	E. Jesus the Messiah, the Lord: The Second Witness of John the Baptist, 1:19-28	23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.	**3 He was only a voice—only a forerunner for the Lord**
1 John was questioned by religionists who were suspicious of him[DS1]	19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?	24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.	**4 He was a baptizer** a. The questioners were the Pharisees[DS3] b. They questioned John's right to baptize
2 He was a man who knew who he was a. He was not the Christ[DS2] b. He was not Elijah c. He was not "that prophet"	20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?	25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptiz-est thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.	**5 He was an unworthy servant** **6 He was a man who brought honor to a place**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

E. Jesus the Messiah, the Lord: The Second Witness of John the Baptist, 1:19-28

(1:19-28) **Introduction**: the witness of John the Baptist is a dynamic example for every servant of God.

1. John was questioned by religionists who were suspicious of Him (v.19).
2. He was a man who knew who he was (v.20-22).
3. He was only a voice—only a forerunner for the Lord (v.23).
4. He was a baptizer (v.24-26).
5. He was an unworthy servant (v.27).
6. He was a man who brought honor to a place (v.28).

1 (1:19) **John the Baptist**: John was questioned by the religionists who were very suspicious of him. These particular religionists were a fact-finding commission sent from Jerusalem, the headquarters of Jewish religion. The questioning of John by the religionists was to be expected, for John's father, Zechariah, was a priest (Lk.1:5); and in the eyes of the authorities, all the sons of priests were automatically priests by descent. However, John was not a priest like other priests. He was most unusual, for the way he lived and preached was radically different (cp. Mt.3:1-12). He was a nonconformist, and the authorities had to find out why.

Thought 1. Too often institutional religion is suspicious and opposed to the unusual.
⇒ If a person is different or does things differently, he is questioned.
⇒ If a person is unusually blessed or if miraculous things are happening in his life and ministry, he is questioned.

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:19) **Levites**: these men were servants of the priests. They were descendants of Levi just as the descendants of Aaron were. However, only Aaron's descendants could serve as priests; all other Levites served under them.

2 (1:20-22) **Minister—Humility**: the messenger was a man who knew who he was. Others had questions about John, but not John. He knew exactly who he was. He knew God personally; therefore, he knew God had sent him into the world for a specific ministry. He was from God, called and commissioned by God; therefore, He knew exactly who he was and what he was doing (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:6. Also see outline and notes—Jn.1:6-8 for more discussion.)

1. John was not the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Christ*—Jn.1:20).
2. John was not Elijah. Elijah was expected to return from the dead to proclaim the coming of the Messiah (Mal.4:5). He was expected to do several significant things: to warn the people, to anoint the Messiah to His kingly office, to raise the dead, and to help select those who were to have a part in the Messiah's kingdom. John denied that he was Elijah in person. It should be noted that Jesus did later identify John with Elijah (Mk.9:11f); however, what Jesus meant was that John was Elijah in spirit, not in person.
3. John was not "that prophet." This prophet was thought to be another forerunner of the Messiah (Jn.7:40). Some persons thought he would be either Jeremiah or Isaiah. This belief was based on Moses' prediction that there would be a

prophet like unto himself (Dt.18:15). However, today most Christians interpret the prophet predicted by Moses to be Christ Himself (Acts 3:22; 7:37).

Thought 1. The lessons are clear. The servant (minister or layman) of God must not…

- claim to be the Christ nor any other great prophet.
- pretend to be some great man of God.
- seek recognition.
- assume some honor that does not belong to him.
- allow God's power upon his life and ministry to turn his head toward pride, thinking more highly of himself than he should.

"And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and ashes" (Gen.18:27).

"I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands" (Gen.32:10).

"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Ex.3:11).

"And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Ex.4:10).

"Then went king David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?" (2 Sam.7:18).

"And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in" (1 Ki.3:7).

"The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Mt.8:8).

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (1 Cor.15:9).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:20) **Christ—Messiah**: the words "Christ" (christos) and "Messiah" are the same word. Messiah is the Hebrew word and Christ is the Greek word. Both words refer to the same person and mean the same thing: *the anointed one*. The Messiah is the anointed one of God. Matthew said Jesus "is called Christ" (Mt.1:16); that is, He is recognized as *the anointed one of God*, the Messiah Himself.

In the day of Jesus Christ, people feverishly panted for the coming of the long-promised Messiah. The weight of life was harsh, hard, and impoverished. Under the Romans, people felt that God could not wait much longer to fulfill His promise. Such longings for deliverance left the people gullible. Many arose who claimed to be the Messiah and led the gullible followers into rebellion against the Roman state. The insurrectionist Barabbas, who was set free in the place of Jesus at Jesus' trial, is an example (Mk.15:6f). (See note—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes 11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes 22:42; Lk.7:21-23.)

The Messiah was thought to be several things.

1. Nationally, He was to be the leader from David's line who would free the Jewish state and establish it as an independent nation, leading it to be the greatest nation the world had ever known.
2. Militarily, He was to be a great military leader who would lead Jewish armies victoriously over all the world.
3. Religiously, He was to be a supernatural figure straight from God who would bring righteousness over all the earth.
4. Personally, He was to be the One who would bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus Christ accepted the title of Messiah on three different occasions (Mt.16:17; Mk.14:61; Jn.4:26). The name *Jesus* shows Him to be man. The name *Christ* shows Him to be God's anointed, God's very own Son. *Christ* is Jesus' official title. It identifies Him officially as Prophet (Dt.18:15-19), Priest (Ps.110:4), and King (2 Sam.7:12-13). These officials were always anointed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit who was to perfectly anoint the Christ, the Messiah (Mt.3:16; Mk.1:10-11; Lk.3:21-22; Jn.1:32-33).

"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (Jn.1:41).

"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn.1:45).

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (Jn.1:49).

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (Jn.6:69).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:36-37).

3 (1:23) **Jesus Christ, Messiah—John the Baptist, Forerunner**: the messenger was only a voice, only a forerunner for the Lord. Why was it necessary for the Messiah to have a forerunner? Why did John have to run ahead of Christ crying, "Prepare. Make straight the way of the Lord"? What kind of preparation needed to be done?

1. The people needed their concept of the Messiah straightened out. Their concept had deteriorated through the years.

   a. First, few had ever seen "the seed" promised to Adam and Abraham as referring to the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Gal.3:8, 16; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25). They interpreted "the seed" as the nation Israel, as all circumcised Jews. "We be Abraham's seed" they were later to tell Christ (Jn.8:33). They saw Christ as being "the seed of Abraham" only in the sense that an ordinary Jew was. He was just an ordinary man born through Abraham's line. Few ever saw the Messiah as "the Seed" in whom all the promises made to Abraham were to be fulfilled.

   b. Second, the Jews saw the Messiah primarily as the Son of David. David had liberated and led their nation to its highest peak, so they saw the Messiah as following in David's footsteps. (See notes—Jn.1:45; Lk.3:24-31; Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). At first, the Jews saw the Messiah as a *liberator*, One who was going to deliver them from all their enemies and restore their nation to its greatest glory. (Keep in mind how awful the Jews had been treated and persecuted throughout history.) However, as centuries rolled on and they suffered brutal violence after violence, their concept of the Messiah deteriorated into *anger*.

      The Jews saw themselves as the subjects of the Messiah's salvation (deliverance) and saw all other people (Gentiles) as the subjects of the Messiah's judgment. The Jews were the ones acceptable to God; all others were unacceptable. Therefore, the Messiah was to come and free Israel, elevating the nation to rule over all the nations of the earth. This, of course, led to two tragic faults. First, the Jews became blind to their own sinful condition and personal need for salvation. Second, the Jews saw salvation as a matter of national heritage and personal rites (being circumcised) and ritual (religious observances). They believed that they were safe because they had been circumcised and their forefathers were godly people.

      The forefunner, John the Baptist, had to begin cracking through the crust of these errors. Salvation was not a national thing, not an institutional thing, not even a religious thing. It was not a matter of heritage and rites. It was a personal matter, a spiritual matter of the heart and life. A man had to personally want forgiveness of sins and then repent and be baptized if he wished to be saved. This was to be the message of the Messiah. Therefore, because of the hardness of the people in understanding the personal need for salvation, God had to send a forerunner to begin breaking through the crust of self-righteousness which had become so cemented in the mind of man. (Just how deeply rooted the false concept of the Messiah was can be seen in the enormous struggle the disciples had with it. See note—Mt.18:1-2.)

2. The people needed their religion straightened out. They had allowed their religion to become formal and institutionalized, that is, just a *form* of godliness which denied the power thereof (2 Tim.3:5). So many were going through the motions of religion, its services and rites, yet living as they wished. God and personal righteousness were of little concern. The Messiah was to bring a new message, a message of God's love—a love so strong that it would proclaim the truth:

   ⇒ that man is sinful and perishing (Jn.3:16).
   ⇒ that man must repent (Mk.2:17).
   ⇒ that man must prepare, for the Kingdom of God is at hand (Mt.4:17).

The message was to be so radical that some preparation of the people was needed before the Messiah appeared on the scene. Therefore, God sent the forerunner, John the Baptist.

3. The world needed to know about the Messiah. As the Son of God, the Messiah would be so different—so pure, so holy, so truthful—that men would not tolerate His presence too long. His proclamation of the truth and salvation would be very, very short. Men would destroy Him. Therefore, men needed to be stirred to a high pitch of excitement when the Messiah arrived. Men needed to be buzzing about with great anticipation and with the glorious news that the Messiah had finally come. People would need to sit up and take notice. They may not respond; they might even react violently, but they needed to be aware of the Messiah's *historical coming* and *claims* to be the Son of God. The forerunner was to arouse and stir the people to expect the Messiah immediately.

Thought 1. The same can be said of men today.

1) Many need their concept of the Messiah straightened out.
   a) Some have never seen that the *promised seed* is Christ.
   b) Some still think of themselves as being *special* to God. They are blind to their sin and need for personal salvation.
2) Many need their religion straightened out.
3) Many simply need to hear about the Messiah: they have never heard that He has come.

Thought 2. The messenger of God is only a voice, only a forerunner for the Lord. But he *is* a voice and a forerunner; therefore, He *must* speak up for the Lord.

1) He must be a *clear voice* proclaiming a *clear message*.

> **"For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you" (Mt.10:20).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).**
>
> **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever" (1 Pt.4:11).**

2) He must be an *earnest voice* proclaiming the desperate need to prepare and repent.

> **"And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).**
>
> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**

4 (1:24-26) **Baptism—John the Baptist, Baptism of**: the messenger was a baptizer. John was asked why he baptized.

1. His baptism shocked the Jewish nation, for Jews were never baptized. Baptism was only for non-Jewish persons who were converts to the Jewish faith. The Jews considered all Gentiles unclean, so they had to be baptized when they became converts (all males were also circumcised). However, Jews were thought to be clean and acceptable to God no matter how they lived. Why? Because Jews were "of the seed of Abraham," of his heritage. They were his seed, the people promised to Abraham.
2. The religionists wanted to know if John were the Christ. They believed that when the Christ came He might institute the practice of baptism.
3. The religionists wanted to know if John were a prophet. In theory a true prophet was said to have the right to institute new practices and to change some laws.

John's baptism was radical, most unusual, a shocking practice. It was a "baptism of repentance *for* the remission of sins" (Lk.3:3). What does this mean? Simply this: when a person wanted God to forgive his sins, the person made the decision to repent, to turn from his sins, and to change his life. Then he was immediately baptized, thereby proclaiming that he was becoming a follower of the Messiah whom John preached (see note—Lk.3:3 for detailed discussion).

The Old Testament prophets had cried for Israel to wash themselves and to be cleansed of their filthiness. John used water baptism to show that a man was turning from his sins and turning to God, seeking forgiveness of sins.

> **"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Is.1:16).**
>
> **"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech.13:1).**
>
> **"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezk.36:25-26).**

Thought 1. Baptism is critical. The believer is to be baptized, but he is to be baptized because he is truly repenting and sincerely turning to God.

Thought 2. The servant of God is to be a baptizer, a man who proclaims and practices the baptism of repentance in its full meaning.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(1:24) **Pharisees**: see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8.

5 (1:27) **Servant—Humility**: the messenger of God was an unworthy servant. Two things demonstrated this.

1. John proclaimed and confessed that Jesus was preferred before him (see note—Jn.1:15).
2. John proclaimed that he was not worthy even to unloose the shoe latchet of Jesus' sandals. He confessed the *nothingness of self*. Slaves were the ones who loosed the sandals of guests and washed their feet. John said that he was *less* than a slave, unworthy to do even what a slave did.

Thought 1. The same confession of unworthiness must be made by every servant of God.

> **"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve" (Lk.22:26).**

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic.6:8).

6 (1:28) **John the Baptist—Minister**: the messenger was a man who brought honor to a place. John was ministering in Bethabara beyond Jordan, which means it was a great distance from Jerusalem. John brought honor to the place. It would not be known apart from John, for nothing else is known about the city.

Thought 1. A servant of God who is faithful in his witness and ministry (like John) will bring honor to a place. In God's eyes a place is honored because believers are there (cp. Gen.18:16f).

	F. Jesus the Lamb of God—the Son of God: The Third Witness of John the Baptist, 1:29-34	fest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.	**3 Christ is the Messiah, the One upon whom the Spirit of God remained**
1 Christ is the Lamb of God	29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.	33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.	
2 Christ is the Preeminent One a. He was before John: Preexistent b. John did not know Him, only that He was to come	30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made mani-	34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.	**4 Christ is the Son of God**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

F. Jesus the Lamb of God, the Son of God: The Third Witness of John the Baptist, 1:29-34

(1:29-34) **Introduction**: John's witness about Jesus Christ is one of the greatest witnesses ever given by man. John was unmistakable in His proclamation of the Lord Jesus Christ (Lk.4:18-19).

1. Christ is the Lamb of God (v.29).
2. Christ is the Preeminent One (v.30-31).
3. Christ is the Messiah, the One upon whom the Spirit of God remained (v.32-33).
4. Christ is the Son of God (v.34).

1 (1:29) **Jesus Christ, Lamb of God**: Jesus Christ is the "Lamb of God." Down through the centuries "*the Lamb of God*" has been one of the most cherished symbols of Jesus Christ held by believers. There are four reasons for this.

1. The Lamb is a picture of Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us.

"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor.5:7).

Historically, the Passover refers back to the time when God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex.11:1f). God had pronounced judgment, the taking of the firstborn, upon the people of Egypt for their injustices. As He prepared to execute the final judgment, the faithful, those who believed God, were instructed to slay a pure lamb and sprinkle its blood over the door posts of their homes. The blood of the innocent lamb would then serve as a sign that the coming judgment had already been carried out. When seeing the blood, God would *pass over* that house. Those who believed God applied the blood to their homes and were saved, but those who did not believe did not apply the blood to their homes and their firstborn were destroyed.

Symbolically, the Passover pictured the coming of Jesus Christ as the Savior. The *lamb without blemish* pictured His sinless life (cp. Jn.1:29), and the *blood sprinkled on the door posts* pictured His blood shed for the believer. It was a sign that the life and blood of the innocent lamb had been substituted for the firstborn. The *eating of the lamb* pictured the need for spiritual nourishment gained by feeding on Christ, the Bread of Life. The unleavened bread (bread without yeast) pictured the need for putting evil out of one's life and household. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Feast of Unleavened Bread*—Mt.26:17.)

The major point to note is this: it was the blood of the lamb that saved the people. The lamb was sacrificed; that is, its blood was shed as a substitute for the people. The lamb symbolized Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us. If we believe and apply His blood to our hearts and homes, He saves us. If we do not believe and do not apply the blood to our hearts and homes, we are destroyed. It is the Lamb of God who was sacrificed for us; it is His blood which saves us.

2. The Lamb is a picture of the precious blood of Christ which redeems us.

"Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things....but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

Historically, two lambs were sacrificed "day by day continually....the one...in the morning; and the other...at even" (Ex.29:38-39). The sacrifice of the two lambs, the shedding of their precious blood, became a substitute for the people. The people knew their sins had separated them from God and that their sins had to be removed before they could be reconciled to God. Thus, symbolically, the sins of the people were removed from the people and placed upon the two animals. The animals, without blemish and without spot, had the sins of the people placed upon them; and symbolically, they bore the judgment of sin, which was death. They were sacrificed for sin, and by their death, they symbolically set the people free by redeeming them from their sins. (But note a critical point. It was not the deed that caused God to remove the sins but the *faith* of the person in God's Word *that He would remove the sins*.)

This, of course, is a picture of Christ. (Cp. Is.53:6-7; Jer.11:19; Acts 8:32; 1 Cor.5:7; Heb.9:28; 1 Pt.2:22-24; Rev.5:6; 6:1; 7:9; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1; 15:3; 17:14; 19:9; 21:22.) Jesus Christ is...

- the perfect Lamb of God, without sin (blemish or spot). (See note, *Jesus Christ, Sinless*—Jn.8:45-47.)
- the One upon whom the sins of the people were placed.
- the One who bore the judgment for sin, which was death.
- the One who was sacrificed for sin.
- the One whose death sets people free by redeeming them.
- the One whose blood is counted precious both by God and believers.

It should be noted that Christ *willingly* offered Himself as the sacrificial Lamb, as our substitute and sin-bearer; and God willingly accepted the offering and sacrifice of His Son for us (Jn.10:17-18). God is *satisfied* with the settlement for sin that Christ made. If any person really believes the blood of Christ to be precious—really believes that the blood of Christ covers his sins—God will take that person's belief and count it as righteousness (see DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22; notes—5:1; 1 Jn.2:1-2).

3. The "Lamb of God" is not *of men*, but *of God* (tou Theou). The idea is that the Lamb belonged to God; that is, God gave, supplied, and provided the Lamb for sacrifice. (Cp. Gen.22:8 where God provided the lamb for Abraham as a substitute for Isaac.)

This glorious truth speaks volumes on...

- the unbelievable love of God for man (Jn.3:16; Ro.5:1).
- the great sacrifice and humiliation Christ underwent for man (Ph.2:6-8; 1 Pt.2:24).
- the forgiveness of sins and salvation which came from God's grace and not from man's resources and works (Eph.2:8-9; Tit.2:4-7).
- the deity of Christ, His being *of God* (see Master Subject Index, Jesus Christ, Deity).

4. The "Lamb of God" takes away the sin of the world.

a. The phrase "takes away" (airon) means to lift away, to carry off. It means to bear in behalf of one, as one's substitute. Jesus Christ was the sacrificial Lamb of God who bore our sins. He lifted our sins off of us and bore and carried them away.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).**

b. The word "sin" (harmartian) is singular, not plural. All the sins of the world are taken and placed into one package. The whole package of sin—all the sin of every man who has ever lived—was laid upon and borne by Christ.

> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**

c. The world is looked at as a whole. Christ bore the sins of the whole world, not the sins of just some men. No matter the depth and ugliness of a man's sin, Christ bore the sins of the whole world.

> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**

2 (1:30-31) **Jesus Christ, Preeminent**: Jesus Christ is the Preeminent One, the *One before all*. Note what John said.

1. John said that Christ "was before me"; that is, He existed before me. He was the Preexistent One, the Eternal God (see note—Jn.1:15 for discussion).
2. John did not know who the Messiah would be, only that the Messiah was to come. Note that John knew Jesus personally; they were cousins (Lk.1:36). However, John did not know that his cousin, Jesus, was to be the Messiah. Note another fact: how faithful John was! He was a man of strong faith. He had never seen the Messiah, yet he went about his mission of preaching and baptizing. He acted on God's Word and on God's Word alone, believing that the Messiah would come.

Thought 1. Christ is the Preeminent One, the Eternal God. Believers must follow the example of John and...

- declare that Christ is before all.
- believe God's promise: the Messiah has come.
- act and get about their mission of proclaiming Christ.

3 (1:32-33) **Holy Spirit**: Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the One upon whom the Holy Spirit of God remained. Note several facts.

1. This is the "record," the strong witness of John.
2. The dove was a sacred bird to the Jews. It was a symbol of peace and gentleness, of purity and innocence; but even more significant, the dove was often identified with the Spirit of God. When the dove descended upon Christ, it symbolized the Spirit of God Himself descending upon Christ. The dove identified Jesus as the Messiah and endued Him with the power of God (see outline and notes—Mk.1:9-10).

3. In the Old Testament the Spirit of God came upon men only on special occasions. He never remained upon men. John went out of his way to point out that the Spirit's descent upon Christ was unique: He abode (v.32) and He remained upon Christ (v.32). The Holy Spirit entered the life of Christ once-for-all, permanently and powerfully, in His full manifestation and unlimited power.

Thought 1. When a person is baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ, the Holy Spirit enters the life of the believer, becoming a permanent experience of the believer.

> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another" (Jn.15:16-17).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).**
>
> **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Ro.8:9-10).**
>
> **"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor.12:13).**

4. John repeated, he did not know who the Messiah would be. God's sign to John was the Holy Spirit's coming upon the Messiah in the form of a dove.
5. Christ is the One who baptizes believers with the Holy Spirit.

Thought 1. It is the person who receives the Spirit of God that has the presence and care of God looking over his life (see notes—Jn.14:15-26; Jn.16:7-15; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4; note—Ro.8:1-17).

4 (1:34) **Jesus Christ, Son of God**: Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (See notes—Jn.1:1-2; 10:30-33; Ph.2:6; 2:7 for more discussion.) What did John mean by "the Son of God"? Note the definite article. Christ is *the* Son, not a son of God. He is...

- the *only* Son.
- the only *begotten* Son.
- the only begotten Son who came from the very *bosom* of God, that is from the deepest part, from the most intimate place, from the most honorable fellowship of God.

1. The gospel writers say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Matthew	*Mark*	*Luke*	*John*
1:21	1:1	1:31-32	1:18, 34, 45
2:15	3:11	1:35	3:16-18, 35-36
3:17	13:32	3:38	5:19, 21-23, 25-26
4:3	14:61	4:3, 9	6:40, 42
8:29	15:39	4:41	8:35-36
11:27		8:28	9:35 (cp. 19:7)
14:33		10:22	10:36
14:61		22:70	11:4
16:16			14:13
17:5			17:1
26:63			19:17
27:30, 40, 43, 54			20:31

The gospel writers also say that Jesus Christ constantly claimed that God was His Father, that He was the Son of the Father in a unique sense.

Matthew	*Mark*	*Luke*	*John*
7:21	8:38	2:49	3:35
10:32-33	13:32	9:26	5:17, 19-23, 26, 30, 36-37, 43, 45
11:25-27	14:36	10:21-22	6:27, 32, 37, 39, 42, 44-46, 57, 65
12:50		22:29, 42	8:16, 18-19, 27-29, 38, 49, 54
15:13		23:34, 46	10:15, 17-18, 25, 29-30, 32, 36-38
16:17, 27		24:49	11:41
18:10, 19, 35			12:26-28, 49-50
20:23			
24:36			
25:34			
26:29, 39, 42, 53			

Matthew	*Mark*	*Luke*	*John*
28:19			14:6-13, 16, 20-21, 26, 23-24, 28, 31 15:1, 8-10, 15-16, 23-24, 26 16:3, 10, 15-17, 25-28, 32 17:1, 5, 11, 24-25 18:11 20:17, 21

2. The Book of Acts says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
3:13, 26
8:37
9:20

3. Paul says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Romans 1:4, 9	Gal.1:16	Heb.1:2, 5, 8
5:10	2:20	3:6
8:3, 29, 32	4:4, 6	4:14
1 Cor.1:9	Eph.4:13	5:8
15:58	Col.1:13	6:6
2 Cor.1:19	1 Th.1:10	7:3, 28
		10:29
		11:17

Paul also says that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Romans 15:6
2 Cor.1:3; 11:31
Eph.1:3

4. Peter says that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Pt.1:3

5. John, in his Epistles and Revelation, says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Jn.1:3, 7	2 Jn.3, 9	Rev.2:18, 27; 3:5
2:22-24		
3:8, 23		
4:9-10, 14-15		
5:5, 9-13, 20		

	G. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, 1:35-42	39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.	c. Jesus extended an invitation: Come
1 Andrew's experience a. He stood in the midst of John's preaching b. He heard John proclaim that Jesus was the Lamb of God c. He followed Jesus	35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;	40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.	**3 Andrew's great decision: He came & saw Christ & remained with Christ**[DSI]
2 Andrew's critical hour a. Jesus turned: Symbol of initiative b. Jesus asked the basic question of life: What do you seek?	36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! 37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?	41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.	**4 Andrew's first concern: His brother** **5 Andrew's conviction: Jesus was the Messiah** **6 Andrew's fruit: Simon was brought to Jesus & was reaped**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

G. Jesus the Messiah, the Christ: The Witness of Andrew, 1:35-42

(1:35-42) **Introduction**: this was Andrew's discovery of Jesus. He discovered that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ. (See note, *Andrew*—Mk.3:18 for more discussion.)

1. Andrew's experience (v.35-37).
2. Andrew's critical hour (v.38-39).
3. Andrew's great decision: he came and saw Christ and remained (v.39-40).
4. Andrew's first concern: his brother (v.41).
5. Andrew's conviction: Jesus was the Messiah (v.41).
6. Andrew's fruit: Simon was brought to Jesus and was reaped (v.42).

1 (1:35-37) **Andrew**: there was Andrew's experience. His experience was simple, somewhat like the experience of many who come to Christ.

1. Andrew "stood" where preaching was. Note the word "stood" (v.35). John had been holding his campaign around the Jordan. Andrew, who had an ache for the Word of God, had become interested in what was happening and had attended the meetings, and had at some point became a follower of this preacher of righteousness. The point to see is that Andrew hungered for righteousness; therefore, he availed himself of the opportunity to hear preaching. He "stood" right in the midst of preaching. He was there to hear the Messiah proclaimed.
2. Andrew "heard him [the preacher] speak." He was listening to the message, not allowing his mind to ramble elsewhere. He was alert and awake; therefore, when the announcement of the Messiah came, he was ready. Note also the message: "Behold the Lamb of God." It was the message of the Messiah's sacrificial death (see note—Jn.1:29).
3. Andrew "followed Jesus." The word "followed" (ekolouthesan) is in the Greek aorist tense, meaning a once-for-all act. Andrew was turning to Jesus, *ready* to make a commitment to Him. He wanted to become a disciple of Jesus.

Thought 1. The same three steps must be taken by each of us.

1) A person must *stand* where the Word, Christ Himself, is preached. A person must have a hunger that drives him to preaching, a hunger that drives him to stay alert and awake to hear the Word proclaimed.
2) A person must *hear* the Word, the announcement: the Lamb of God has come to take away the sin of the world.
3) A person must follow Jesus.

> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, Saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).**
>
> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth" (Hos.6:3).**

Thought 2. Two things will cause a man to miss Christ.
1) Not *standing* where Christ is preached: standing elsewhere in the world, in self, in the flesh; standing in the midst of those who do not care for Christ nor for the preaching of the Word.
2) Not *hearing*: allowing the mind to wander, being sleepy-eyed, disinterested, distracted, inattentive.

Thought 3. Note several significant facts about John.
1) His message was Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
2) His purpose was to point people, even his own followers, to Christ. He wanted people *to be* where they could receive and grow the most. (How different from so many ministers!)
3) His spirit was filled with enormous humility. He was completely selfless. He pointed His own followers to Christ and encouraged them to follow Him.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things....but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

2 (1:38-39) **Andrew—Seeking Christ—Invitation**: there was Andrew's critical hour. This is a most graphic picture: it shows the *great eagerness* of Jesus to reach men. Jesus longs for men to come to Him, and He longs to reach out to help them in their coming. Note: Jesus was walking some distance away and Andrew and his friend were following behind Jesus. Jesus did three things that demonstrated His great eagerness.

1. "Jesus turned" to face them. This was a clear demonstration of His open arms, His willingness, and His eagerness for them to join Him. He knew their hearts had just been stirred to reach out to Him and to follow Him, so He immediately snapped around to face them and help them. (Cp. Lk.15:20.)

2. Jesus asked the basic question of life: "What seek ye?" He did not ask, *Whom seek ye*? but "What seek ye?" What are you after? Are you seeking...
- meaning, purpose, and significance in life?
- a religion of self-improvement and human development?
- rules and regulations and laws of righteousness?
- fellowship and companionship?
- deliverance from trials and trouble and suffering?
- approval and acceptance of God?
- blessings from God, His care and provision and security?

Note what Andrew and his friend asked: "Rabbi...where dwellest thou [pou meneis]?" They had never met Jesus before, yet they called Him Master or Teacher, acknowledging His position as *their* Teacher. They were not asking for a simple conversation by the side of the road. They were asking to join Him in the quiet of His home, to open and pour out their hearts to Him and for Him to become their teacher. They wanted Him to meet the crying need of their hearts and to do such in the quiet confines of His dwelling.

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

3. Jesus extended the invitation: "Come and see." The invitation was immediate: it was while Andrew and his friend were attracted to Jesus. They were invited to Jesus while they sensed their need. Jesus did not postpone their request nor leave them hanging.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

3 (1:39-40) **Decision**: there was Andrew's great decision. He "came and saw" and "remained" with Jesus. There are three significant facts here.

1. Andrew "came" to Jesus. He accepted the invitation. He walked up to Jesus and walked along with Him *in order to* see just where Jesus did dwell.

Thought 1. Note two critical points.
1) Andrew had to accept the invitation.
2) Andrew had to be willing to "see" where Jesus dwelt and to let Jesus lead him to His dwelling place.

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

"But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation" (Ps.69:13).

2. The word "see" (opsesthe) was a promise: "ye shall see." Jesus was talking about much more than just seeing where He lived. He was talking about *seeing* the truth and learning of Him. Andrew was being assured, if he would come, that he would most definitely see and learn the truth of life. The Lord guaranteed it. (See note, *See*—Jn.20:20.)

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:18-19).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pt.2:9-10).

3. Andrew and his friend "abode with him," that is, by Jesus' side, in His presence. They received of Him and He met their needs. Note a significant fact: this confrontation with Jesus changed their lives forever. This is seen in that the very hour is still remembered fifty or more years later (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:39). Andrew and his friend committed their lives to Jesus.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(1:39) **John the Apostle—Confrontation—Conversion**: Is the hour known by John the Apostle because he was the other unnamed disciple with Andrew? Apparently so. Note how significant the experience with Jesus was. John still remembered the hour some fifty years later (cp. Jn.18:15; 20:3).

4 (1:41) **Witnessing—Family**: Andrew's first concern was his brother Peter. The scene was striking. As quickly as he could after discovering Jesus for himself, Andrew rushed to find his own brother, Simon.

1. Andrew had met Jesus personally, and Jesus had met the crying need of his heart. Andrew could not contain the peace and joy; he just had to tell his loved ones immediately. He wanted them also to experience the love and joy and peace of Jesus.

2. Andrew was a great witness, a great personal worker for the Lord. He was always seen bringing someone to Jesus (cp. Jn.6:8; 12:22).

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt.4:19).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 22-23).

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise" (Pr.11:30).

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).

5 (1:41) **Messiah—Witnessing**: there was Andrew's conviction, "We have found the *Messiah*." (For the meaning of the word "Messiah," see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Christ*—Jn.1:20.)

6 (1:42) **Witnessing**: Andrew's fruit, Simon, was reached for Jesus and reaped. Andrew saw his brother Simon come to Jesus.

1. Note the word "beheld" (emblepsas). It means to look upon with an intense, earnest look, to concentrate, to stare and gaze upon. Jesus looked into the innermost being of Peter.

2. Note the words, "Thou shalt be called." They refer to the future. Simon's name would be changed to Cephas. This was a prediction that he would be converted and changed from a self-centered, defensive, overbearing, and carnal man into a strong, solid, immovable and unbreakable rock for God.

Thought 1. Note two significant facts.

1) Jesus "beholds" a man: studies and knows him intimately. This is both a comfort and a warning, depending upon man's response.

"[Jesus] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (Jn.2:25).

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:2).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer.23:24).

2) Jesus sees the potential within a man and longs to change that man to make him everything he can become.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17; cp. Eph.4:24).

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezk.36:26).

1 Philip's experience a. He was sought by Jesus personally b. He was called by Jesus personally[DS1]	**H. Jesus the One Prophesied: The Witness of Philip, 1:43-45** 43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.	44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.	c. The reason: Philip knew Andrew & Peter[DS2] **2 Philip's first concern: Nathanael** **3 Philip's conviction: Jesus was the One prophesied[DS3]**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

H. Jesus the One Prophesied: The Witness of Philip, 1:43-45

(1:43-45) **Introduction**: Philip's discovery and witness of Jesus Christ was unmistakable. Jesus was the One prophesied in Scripture; He was the promised Messiah.

1. Philip's experience (v.43-44).
2. Philip's first concern: Nathanael (v.45).
3. Philip's conviction: Jesus was the One prophesied (v.45).

1 (1:43-44) **Salvation—Discipleship—Jesus Christ, Seeking Man**: Philip's experience involved three significant points.

1. Jesus Himself went forth and sought Philip—Philip was not seeking Jesus. The initiative came from Jesus entirely. Jesus made the move to find and save Philip and to enlist Philip in His mission.

   a. Jesus travelled a long distance to find Philip. Galilee was a long distance away, and note: the stated purpose for Jesus' going to Galilee was to find Philip. This is a picture of how far Christ will go to reach a soul. In order to reach a man, Christ will go any distance...

   - to any sin, no matter how terrible or awful. He will prick and prick at the mind and heart of a person.
   - to any place, no matter how hidden or shameful. He will send a thought or memory or person of righteousness to remind and warn a person.
   - to any condition, no matter how hopeless or helpless. He will see that the message of hope and help crosses a person's path.
   - to any person, no matter how shameful or guilty. He will see that a person hears the word of salvation if he repents and hears the word of judgment if he does not repent.

   Christ will go any distance to reach people. He will go to any place, to any condition, to any person. He will see that every person has some chance of turning to God. The word of deliverance can come from any number of sources: another person, a thought, a stirring of conscience, a memory, a writing, or just through seeing nature (Ro.1:20). Christ seeks every person, and He will go any distance to reach him, no matter the difficulty.

   Thought 1. Every person must heed the *seeking* of Christ when His seeking is sensed. A person must respond immediately, for God's Spirit does not always strive with man. When we first feel the pull to make a decision for Christ, if we put the decision off for an hour or two, the pull fades and eventually leaves us completely. God's Spirit does not continue to strive with us.

   > **"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).**
   > **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**

   Thought 2. Every believer should be willing to go any distance to reach people, no matter how far or how deeply depraved the person may be. Too many in the world are considered and treated as *untouchable*: the alcoholic, immoral, poor, prisoner, lowly, diseased.

   > **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
   > **"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Mt.25:35-36). (Remember that the person in *prison* is guilty of the most serious offenses and sins.)**

   b. Jesus is seen fulfilling His mission in seeking and saving Philip. He came into the world for the very purpose of seeking and saving the lost.

   > **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).**

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

2. Jesus Himself called Philip. He called Philip to "follow Him" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:43; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

3. The reason Philip was called by Jesus is apparently the reason verse 44 is mentioned. He was from the same town as Andrew and Peter. Philip longed for deliverance; he ached for the Messiah (cp. "We have found Him, v.45). Therefore, he had sought the company of those who were like-minded. He wanted the fellowship of those who sought for godly deliverance. In search for such people, he had met Andrew and Peter and had apparently become friends of theirs for some time. Therefore, it was only natural for Andrew and Peter to suggest that Jesus seek out Philip to become a disciple. The point is this: Philip was called by Jesus because...

- he had done something about the longing and aching for deliverance within his soul.
- he had sought the fellowship of those who were seeking for God's salvation.
- he had placed himself where the message would reach him when it came.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh" (Lk.6:21).

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:43) **Follow** (akolouthei): to become a close companion, a close follower, a disciple. Two significant ideas are in the word: union and likeness, or cleaving and conformity. To follow Christ means...

- to cleave, to be united to Him, to be in close union with Him.
- to become like Him, to be conformed to Him.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(1:44) **Bethsaida**: Jesus carried on a large ministry in Bethsaida, but the gospels tell us nothing about the city itself. The city was denounced by Jesus because of its rejection of Him (Mt.11:21; Lk.10:13). (Cp. Mk.6:45; 8:22; Lk.9:10; Jn.12:21 for other references to the city.)

2 (1:45) **Witnessing**: Philip's first concern was to reach his friend Nathanael. Philip "findeth" Nathanael. Jesus had challenged Philip to "follow" Him, to become just like Him, and Philip did. He went out and did exactly what Jesus had done to him. Jesus had sought and found Him. Now, following the example of his Lord, He went out and found his friend Nathanael. Philip became a personal soul-winner just like his Lord.

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:15).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor.4:13).

3 (1:45) **Conviction—Decision**: Philip's conviction—the One prophesied was Jesus Christ. "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Note four points.

1. Philip was extremely joyful. "We have found Him." There was jubilation, excitement, and rejoicing beating in the chest of Philip. Jesus had met the needs and craving of his heart.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

2. God's eternal plan for man and his world is recorded in Scripture. It is there for man's direction.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).

3. Philip and Nathanael knew the Scripture. They were familiar with the prophesies of the promised Messiah.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

4. Jesus of Nazareth was definitely identified as the Messiah. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45.)

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(1:45) **Scripture, Fulfilled—Prophecy, Fulfilled:**

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES OF JESUS AND THEIR FULFILLMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Prophecies		**Fulfillment**
Gen.3:15	The Promised Seed of a Woman	Gal.4:4; Lk.2:7; Rev.12:5
Gen.12:3; 18:18; 22:18	The Promised Seed of Abraham	Acts 3:25; Gal.3:8 (Mt.1:1; Lk.3:34)
Gen.17:19; 22:16-17	The Promised Seed of Isaac	Mt.1:2; Lk.1:55, 72-74
Gen.28:14 (Num.24:17)	The Promised Seed of Jacob	Lk.3:34 (Mt.1:2)
Gen.49:10[a]	Will Spring From The Royal Tribe of Judah	Lk.3:33; Heb.7:14
Dt.18:15, 18	Will Be a Prophet	John 6:14; Acts 3:22-23
2 Sam.7:13[b] (2 Sam.7:13; Is.9:1, 7; 11:1-5)	Will be the Eternal Heir to David's Throne	Mt.1:1 (Mt.1:6; Lk.1:32-33)
2 Sam.7:14[a]	Will be God's Son	Mk.1:1
Is.35:6; 61:1-2 (cp.Ps.72:2; 146:8; Zech.11:11)	Will Meet the Desperate Needs of Men	Mt.11:4-6
Job 17:3	Will Ransom Men	Eph.1:7 (1 Jn.2:1-2)
Ps.2:1-2	Will Be Rejected By the Nations	Lk.23:36[a], 38
Ps.2:7	The Son of God	Acts 13:33; Heb.1:5; 5:5
Ps.8:2	Is to Be Praised	Mt.21:16
Ps.16:8-11	Will Be Resurrected	Acts 13:34-35; 2:25-28, 31 (Mt.28:1-2; Mk.16:6, 12, 14; Lk.24:1-53)
Ps.22:1	Will be Forsaken by God	Mt.27:46; Mk.15:34
Ps.22:7	People Will Wag Their Heads at the Cross	Mt.27:39
Ps.22:18	Clothes Gambled For	Mt.27:35; Mk.15:24; Lk.23:34; Jn.19:24
Ps.22:22	To Secure Many Brothers	Heb.2:12
Ps.31:5	Commends His Spirit to God	Lk.23:46
Ps.40:6-8	Fulfills God's Will	Heb.10:5-7
Ps.41:9	Is Betrayed by Judas	Jn.13:18; Acts 1:16
Ps.45:6, 7	Is Eternal & Preeminent	Heb.1:8, 9
Ps.68:18	Will Lead Captivity Captive	Eph.4:8-10
Ps.69:21	Offered Drugs on the Cross	Mt.27:48; Mk.15:36; Lk.23:36; Jn.19:28, 29
Ps.69:25; 109:8	Judas' Fate	Acts 1:20
Ps.89:26-27	Exaltation	Ph.2:9 (cp. Rev.11:15)
Ps.95:7-11	Hearts Hardened Against	Heb.3:7-11; 4:3, 5-7

Prophecies *(continued)*		**Fulfillment** *(continued)*
Ps.102:25-27	Is Creator & Is Eternal	Heb.1:10-12
Ps.110:1	To Be Exalted	Mt.22:44; Mk.12:36; Lk.20:42; Acts 2:34, 35; Heb.1:13
Ps.110:4	The High Priest	Heb.5:6
Ps.118:22, 23	The Stone	Mt.21:42; Mk.12:10; Lk.20:17; Acts 4:11
Ps.118:25, 26	The Triumphal Entry	Mt.21:9; Mk.11:9; Jn.12:13
Ps.132:11, 17	The Son of David	Lk.1:69; Acts 2:30
Is.7:14	The Virgin Birth	Mt.1:23
Is.9:1, 2	A Light to Those in Darkness	Mt.4:15, 16
Is.11:2	The Spirit Rests Upon in a Special Way	Lk.4:18-21 (cp. Mt.12:18; Jn.3:34)
Is.11:10	To Save the Gentiles	Ro.15:12
Is.25:8	To Conquer Death	1 Cor.15:54
Is.28:16	The Stone	Ro.9:33; 1 Pt.2:6
Is.40:3-5	To Have a Forerunner	Mt.3:3; Mk.1:3; Lk.3:4-6
Is.42:1-4	To Minister to the Gentiles	Mt.12:17-21
Is.49:6	A Light to the Gentiles	Lk.2:32; Acts 13:47, 48; 26:23
Is.53:1	Would Not be Believed	Jn.12:38; Ro.10:16
Is.53:3-6	To Die and Arise	Acts 26:22, 23
Is.53:4-6, 11	To Die for Man's Sins	1 Pt.2:24, 25
Is.53:4	To Heal & Bear Man's Sickness	Mt.8:17
Is.53:9	To Be Sinless	1 Pt.2:22
Is.53:12	To Be Counted a Sinner	Mk.15:28; Lk.22:37
Is.54:13	To Teach as God	Jn.6:45
Is.55:3	To Be Raised	Acts 13:34
Is.59:20, 21	To Save Israel	Ro.11:26, 27
Jer.31:31-34	To Make a New Covenant with Man	Heb.8:8-12; 10:16, 17
Hos.1:10-11	To Bring About the Restoration of Israel	Ro.11:1-36
Hos.1:10	The Conversion of the Gentiles	Ro.9:26
Hos.2:23	The Conversion of the Gentiles	Ro.9:25; 1 Pt.2:10
Joel 2:28-32	The Promise of the Spirit	Acts 2:16-21
Amos 9:11, 12	The Lord's Return & David's Kingdom Reestablished	Acts 15:16, 17
Mic.5:2	The Birthplace of Messiah	Mt.2:5, 6; Jn.7:42
Hab.1:5	The Jews' Unbelief	Acts 13:40, 41
Hag.2:6	The Return of Christ	Heb.12:26
Zech.9:9	The Triumphal Entry	Mt.21:4, 5; Jn.12:14, 15
Zech.11:13	Judas' Betrayal	Mt.27:9, 10
Zech.12:10	The Spear Pierced in Side	Jn.19:37
Zech.13:7	The Scattering of the Disciples at the Cross	Mt.26:31, 56; Mk.14:27, 50
Mal.3:1	The Forerunner, John the Baptist	Mt.11:10; Mk.1:2; Lk.7:27
Mal.4:5, 6	The Forerunner, John the Baptist	Mt.11:13, 14; 17:10-13; Mk.9:11-13; Lk.1:16, 17

	I. Jesus the Son of God, The King of Israel: The Witness of Nathanael,[DS1] 1:46-49	Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!	a. Jesus knew him: His beliefs & character b. Jesus knew his innermost being—all things about him[DS3]
1 Nathanael's experience[DS2] a. A man of despair & prejudice b. Invited to follow Jesus despite prejudice	46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.	48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.	
2 Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus	47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him,	49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.	**3 Nathanael's conviction: Jesus was the Son of God[DS4]**

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

I. Jesus the Son of God, the King of Israel: The Witness of Nathanael, 1:46-49

(1:46-49) **Introduction**: Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus was dramatic. Nathanael was a man of prejudice and strong feelings, yet he knew despair and hopelessness; therefore, he was difficult to lead to Christ. However, despite all, his friend Philip persisted and refused to give up in witnessing to him. As a result, Nathanael was won to Christ.

1. Nathanael's experience (v.46).
2. Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus (v.47-48).
3. Nathanael's conviction: Jesus was the Son of God (v.49).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(1:46-49) **Nathanael**: John alone mentions Nathanael. However, the other three gospels mention a disciple that John does not, Bartholomew. These two names probably refer to the same person. It is thought that Nathanael was a man's first name and Bartholomew was a man's second name.

1 (1:46) **Nathanael—Prejudice—Witnessing**: Nathanael's experience. Note three facts.

1. It was Nathanael's close friend Philip who shared the good news with him (cp. Jn.1:45). He had the privilege of hearing the gospel from someone who cared for him very deeply. He was so loved by Philip that he was the first one with whom Philip shared the most important experience of his life.
2. Nathanael was a man gripped by despair and prejudice.
   a. The despair is seen in his response to Philip. He rejected Philip's testimony and did it in a negative, skeptical, reactionary spirit: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" He struck out at what Philip had said. He questioned it; he would not accept it nor believe it. There was a sense of hopelessness, of despair and skepticism in his question. Apparently he was a man who had tried and followed so many voices in the world that he had just lost hope. Many in the world had promised so much, only to leave him still empty and searching. Why should he believe and follow another voice?

Thought 1. So many voices in the world promise the path to life and fulfillment and joy and satisfaction. However, their claims are soon discovered to be false, and they still leave the human heart empty and wondering. A person caught up in despair wonders about the real purpose, meaning, and significance of life.

> **"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 10:1).**
>
> **"For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed" (Ps.31:10).**
>
> **"O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Ps.42:6).**
>
> **"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).**
>
> **"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).**
>
> **"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).**
>
> **"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps.137:1).**
>
> **"The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).**
>
> **"Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go" (Jer.2:25).**
>
> **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [dead], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Th.4:13).**
>
> **"That at that time ye were without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).**

b. The prejudice of Nathanael is seen in his slur against Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Nazareth*—Jn.1:46). Nathanael was apparently a crowd-follower. He had allowed himself to be influenced by the world's foolish prejudices.

Thought 1. Prejudice has a great failing; it disregards the wrong within oneself and with one's own place (city, home, business, church); it overlooks personal wrong, shortcomings, weaknesses, and error.

> **"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).**
>
> **"For there is no respect of persons with God" (Ro.2:11).**
>
> **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).**

3. Nathanael was still invited to follow Jesus. His sin, despair, and prejudice did not discourage nor keep Philip from inviting his friend and neighbor to "come and see" Jesus. Note also that Philip did not argue with Nathanael. He simply confronted him with Jesus.

Thought 1. Note three things.

1) No matter what the sin is, we must still go and invite men to "come and see" Jesus. Because Philip went to his dear friend, Nathanael did come to Jesus, despite his despair and prejudice.
2) Think what Nathanael would have missed if he had...
   - let his prejudice against the people of Nazareth keep him from the One who was called Jesus the Nazarene.
   - let his wallowing around in despair keep him from coming to Jesus.
3) The way to lead a man to Christ is not by argument, but by confronting him with Christ.

> **"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).**
>
> **"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit.2:15).**
>
> **"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Ps.66:16).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(1:46) **Nazareth**: the town was an obscure village in Galilee. Galilee bordered Gentile or heathen nations; therefore, it was sometimes called *Galilee of the Gentiles*. The Jews were so deeply prejudiced against the Gentiles that they considered anyone or anything touched by a Gentile to be unclean in the sight of God. Nazareth was despised by the Jews because it was on the border of Gentile country and was so commercially touched by Gentiles. It was despised by the Romans because its citizens were a conquered people. (See note, pt.2—Mt.13:53-58 for more discussion.)

2 (1:47-48) **Guilelessness—Jesus Christ, Knowledge—Sin, Exposed**: Nathanael's confrontation. Two very significant things happened in Nathanael's confrontation with Jesus.

1. Jesus knew Nathanael, his beliefs and character.
   a. Jesus knew his beliefs. This is seen in Jesus' calling Nathanael an "Israelite indeed." He was the epitomy of an Israelite, everything an Israelite should be. He *believed* the promises of God. He tried to live up to the covenant name, the standard God had set for Israel, and he was looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Messiah. Jesus Christ knew Nathanael's beliefs.

Thought 1. Christ knows the beliefs of each man, that upon which the man has set his heart. He knows both the good and bad beliefs, both the godly and evil thoughts of the human heart.

> **"[Christ] needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (Jn.2:25).**
>
> **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor.1:30).**
>
> **"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (1 Jn.3:20).**
>
> **"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam.2:3).**
>
> **"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee" (Ps.69:5).**
>
> **"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).**

   b. Jesus knew his character. Nathanael was a man without guile (dolos). This means he did not deceive, bait, or mislead people. He did not hide what he thought; he said what he thought and acted what he felt. He was straightforward, open and honest, not deceptive or hypocritical. This trait had just been demonstrated in his response to Philip. He would not hide his true thoughts (v.46).

Thought 1. One of the great tragedies in the legacy of persons is that they are full of guile. Many deceive, bait, and mislead others. Few are straightforward, open and honest, free of deception and hypocrisy.

> **"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Mt.5:8).**
>
> **"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:14).**
>
> **"And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Rev.14:5).**
>
> **"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile" (Ps.32:2).**
>
> **"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully" (Ps.24:3-4).**

2. Jesus knew Nathanael's innermost being, all things about him (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:48).

Thought 1. Jesus knows everything about every man. Nothing escapes His watchful eye, not even a single thought.

1) This offers great hope to the man who will cast himself upon Christ. Christ can help him by meeting his need and giving purpose and direction to his life.
2) This is a great warning to the man who goes his merry way, thinking his sin is hid and will not be judged.

> **"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:2).**
>
> **"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).**
>
> **"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Job 10:14).**
>
> **"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).**
>
> **"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).**
>
> **"And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face" (Hos.7:2).**
>
> **"For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" (Amos 5:12).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(1:48) **Fig Tree—Worship**: in Palestine the fig tree stood for peace, security, rest, and worship (cp. 1 Ki.4:25; Mic.4:4). Very often a man would seek solitude and worship under his fig tree. No doubt this is what Nathanael had been doing. When Jesus told Nathanael that He had seen him under his fig tree, He was telling Nathanael that He knew everything about him, even the deepest longings of his heart. Jesus knew Nathanael's despair and sense of hopelessness; He knew his longing for peace and release and freedom. That was enough to cause Nathanael to give his life to Jesus forever.

3 (1:49) **Confession—Decision**: Nathanael's conviction. He confessed that Jesus was the Rabbi (Prophet), the Son of God, the King of Israel. Note two things.

1. How readily Nathanael confessed Jesus as His Lord.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
>
> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).**
>
> **"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).**
>
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

2. How clearly Nathanael grasped who Jesus was.
   a. He was "Rabbi," the great Teacher or Prophet promised to Israel (see note—Lk.3:38 for discussion).
   b. He was the Son of God (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34 for discussion).
   c. He was the King of Israel (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn.1:49 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(1:49) **Jesus Christ, King of Israel**: Jesus was declared to be the Messianic King. God had given to David and his seed (the Messiah) the promise of eternal government (2 Sam.7:12; Ps.39:3f; 132:11).

Note how often Jesus was called the son of David. (Cp. Mt.12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9, 15; Acts 2:29-36; Ro.1:3; 2 Tim.2:8; Rev.22:16.) It was the common title and popular concept of the Messiah. Generation after generation of Jews had ached and looked for the promised deliverer of Israel. The people expected Him to be a great general who would deliver and restore the nation to its greatness. In fact, they expected Him to make the nation the center of universal rule. He would, under God, conquer the world and center the glory and majesty of God Himself in Jerusalem; and from His throne, the throne of David, He would execute *the Messianic fire of judgment* upon the nations and peoples of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; note—Lk.7:21. Referring to these notes will show what the Jewish concept of the Messiah was.) (See note, *Jesus, Davidic Heir*—Lk.3:24-31 for more discussion.)

1 Nathanael's experience (v.46-49)	J. Jesus the Son of Man, God's Mediator: The Witness of Jesus Himself, 1:50-51 50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. 51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.		2 The revelation of God, the One who reveals greater things 3 The Mediator 4 The Son of Man

DIVISION I

THE WITNESSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-51

J. Jesus the Son of Man, God's Mediator: The Witness of Jesus Himself, 1:50-51

(1:50-51) **Introduction**: Jesus bore witness to Himself. He clearly declared who He was.
1. Nathanael's experience (v.46-49).
2. The revelation of God, the One who reveals greater things (v.50).
3. The Mediator (v.51).
4. The Son of Man (v.51).

1 (1:50) **Nathanael**: Nathanael's experience with Jesus is the background for what Jesus said in this passage.

2 (1:50) **Jesus Christ, Revelation of God**: Jesus Christ is the Revelation of God, the One who reveals greater things. Note two points.

1. It was belief in Jesus that brought "greater things" into Nathanael's life. Nathanael believed Jesus; therefore, he could expect to receive greater things, to receive more and more from God.

> **"Verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:20).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mk.9:23).**
>
> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Ro.11:33).**
>
> **"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor.2:9).**
>
> **"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph.3:17-19).**

2. It is Jesus Himself who is the Revelation of God; therefore, it is Jesus who reveals the "greater things" of life. (See note—Jn.14:6 for more discussion.)

a. Jesus Christ is the Embodiment of Revelation.

> **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (Jn.1:1-2).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).**

b. Jesus Christ is the Communicator of Revelation.

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4; cp. Jn.1:1-3).**
>
> **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:9-10).**

c. Jesus Christ is the Liberator of Revelation.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

3 (1:51) **Jesus Christ, Mediator**: Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and man. This is seen in the picture Jesus painted by the words, "Ye shall see *heaven open*, and the angels of God *ascending* and descending upon the Son of man" (v.51).

This is a picture of Jacob's ladder (Gen.28:10-22). It is a picture of open access into the very presence of God: the door of heaven is open and the angels are *ascending from earth* to heaven. Jesus was saying...

- He is Jacob's ladder; the ladder is a symbol of Him. He is the One who opens heaven.
- He is the One who reaches *from earth* to heaven, the One by whom man has his communication carried up into heaven.

Thought 1. Three critical facts should be noted.

1) A man *can* approach God and enter heaven through Christ (Jn.14:6). The gulf, the loneliness, and the alienation which man knows have been bridged.
2) A man has access to God *only* through Christ (Jn.14:6).
3) A man can have *constant* communication with God. The picture is that of angels' carrying messages from earth to heaven and back to earth again.

4 (1:51) **Jesus Christ, Son of Man**: Jesus Christ is the Son of Man. This does not mean that Jesus was born of a man. It means that He is more than what an ordinary man is, more than a son of some man. Jesus is what every man ought to be, *the Son of Man Himself.*

1. Jesus Christ is the Ideal Man: the *Representative Man*, the *Perfect Man*, the *Pattern*, the *Embodiment* of everything a man ought to be (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16). Jesus Christ is the *perfect picture* of a man. Everything God wants a man to be is seen perfectly in Jesus Christ (cp. Jn.1:14; Col.2:9-10; Heb.1:3).
2. Jesus Christ is the *Ideal Servant* of man. The term *Ideal Servant* stresses Jesus' sympathy for the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, the blind, the bruised, the outcasts, the bereaved (cp. Lk.4:18). Jesus is the pattern, the model, the perfect example of concern and caring. He served other people just like every man ought to serve other people.

Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" about eighty times. It was His favorite term. The title *Son of Man* is probably based upon the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13-14. There is also a picture of Jesus as the heavenly Son of Man contrasted with Adam as the earthly Man in 1 Cor.15:45-47. Both references picture Jesus as *the Representative Man*, *the Ideal Man*, in God's plan for world history.

"And Jesus saith unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt.8:20).

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Mt.24:27).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Lk.18:8).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:26-27).

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn.6:53).

"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified" (Jn.12:23).

"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him" (Jn.13:31-32).

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?...And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:13, 16).

"And [Stephen] said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56).

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks [churches]; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle" (Rev.1:12-13).

	CHAPTER 2	of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.	pots—used for cleaning & quenching thirst
	II. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21	7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.	b. The command: Prepare
	A. Revelation 1: Creative Power, 2:1-11	8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.	c. The obedience: They drew water & experienced the creative power of Jesus
1 A marriage in Cana of Galilee[DS1,2] a. Time: The third day b. Mary attended c. Jesus & the disciples attended	And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:	9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,	**4 The results of Jesus' creative power** a. Man's need was met[DS3]
2 The concern of Jesus' creative power a. Mary's social concern	2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.	10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.	
b. Jesus' deeper concern: To meet man's spiritual need	3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.	11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.	b. Christ's glory was revealed
c. Mary's confidence in her Son	4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.		c. The disciples' faith was strengthened
3 The revelation of Jesus' creative power a. The materials: Water-	5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.		
	6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying		

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

A. Revelation 1: Creative Power, 2:1-11

(2:1-11) **Introduction**: this was the first miracle Jesus performed. It demonstrated His very purpose for coming to earth: to reveal the *creative power* of God. He had the power to *create* and *produce* what was needed to meet man's need.

1. A marriage in Cana of Galilee (v.1-2).
2. The concern of Jesus' creative power (v.3-5).
3. The revelation of Jesus' creative power (v.6-8).
4. The results of Jesus' creative power (v.9-11).

1 (2:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Family—Marriage**: there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee.

1. The marriage took place on the third day after Jesus came into Galilee, or two days after Nathanael's encounter with Jesus.

2. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there. Note that Joseph was not mentioned. It is thought by most commentators that he was already dead. In fact, most commentators think he had been dead for years, and that Jesus, being the older child, had stayed home to take care of the family until the other children were old enough to go out on their own.

Thought 1. Note the extreme sufferings of Christ. He had come to bear all the trials of the world for man. He suffered...

- the death of a parent (see note, pt.3—Mt.13:53-58).
- being the child of a one-parent family.
- having to go to work at an early age to provide for His mother and half-brothers and sisters.

3. Jesus and His disciples attended the wedding. Marriage was a joyful, happy time—a festive occasion; and it was one of the largest social events in a community. This tells us two things about Jesus.

a. Jesus was a sociable person: He liked people and people liked Him. He enjoyed the company of people; He was not anti-social; He was people centered. His ministry was focused upon people, being with and helping them all He could. (Cp. Mt.11:19; Lk.7:34. See note—Mt.11:16-19.)

Thought 1. Man is a social being. Jesus was teaching us to be sociable and not to become too busy to be sociable. However, He expects us to balance our lives, and the truth about our day and time is this: most persons are not alone enough. Most persons are not working, producing, and making their God-called contribution to the world, not as diligently as they should. Most have the problem of socializing too much, whether in recreation, partying, or on the job.

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).

"If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake" (1 Cor.10:27).

"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" (Tit.1:8).

"Use hospitality one to another without grudging" (1 Pt.4:9).

"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Ps.119:63).

"Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Lk.14:12-14).

b. Jesus honored marriage. He demonstrated His approval and honor in two ways: by attending the marriage feast and by meeting the urgent need of the bridegroom.

Thought 1. Jesus graced and blessed the marriage because He was "called...to the marriage." He has to be genuinely invited into a marriage before He can bless it.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:1) **Wedding—Marriage, Jewish Ceremony**: a Jewish wedding ceremony included three major events. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.25:1-13 for more discussion.)

1. There was a marriage feast and ceremony, which were held on the same evening.
2. There was the escort of the couple through the streets to their home. The procession usually took place at night. Flaming torches were used and the longest route to the home was taken to attract more attention and to allow the community to share in the joyful event.
3. There was the open house which lasted for a week. A Jewish wedding ceremony involved a large and long celebration. There was a happy, festive spirit that swept through the community and surrounded the couple. All week long the couple wore their wedding garments (gown and robe) and entertained guests. The whole community was expected to participate and celebrate with the couple in their new found happiness.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(2:1) **Cana**: a small, remote, obscure country village. It is thought to have been in the highlands of Galilee, for a person travelled from Cana *down* to Capernaum. It was close to Nazareth, and according to the early church father Jerome, the city could be seen from Nazareth. Little else is known about the village. Two miracles took place in Cana: this event of creative power where the water was turned into wine (Jn.2:1-11), and the healing of the nobleman's son (Jn.4:46-54). Cana is mentioned only one other time in Scripture (Jn.21:2), three times altogether, and only by John in his gospel.

2 (2:3-5) **Jesus Christ, Hour of—Social Concerns—Needs**: the concern of Jesus' creative power. Note that everything points toward Mary as having a key part in the marriage. There was a steward overseeing the household affairs (v.9), but Mary was apparently helping in some manner. Note three things.

1. Mary's social concern. The need that arose was extremely serious, for the wine was already gone and the celebration had just begun. There was a *whole* week of celebration yet to go. The couple was to have *open house* and to provide the wine and refreshments for the week. What were they to do? The importance of wine in the Middle East must always be remembered. Good, germ free water was scarce, and it was used only when necessary. Wine was used as a drinking substitute. There was a critical need, a predicament that was going to affect everyone involved.
   - ⇒ The joyful spirit of the guests was to be dampened.
   - ⇒ The couple was to be shamed and humiliated, becoming the object of jokes among some.
   - ⇒ Mary, the mother of Jesus, probably one of the hostesses, was to be embarrassed.

Mary, naturally, was concerned about the matter, but note the point. Mary's concern was a *social concern*, a concern for seeing that the needs of a social group were met. She did what any mother would do. She brought the problem to her Son: "They have no wine."

2. Jesus' deeper concern: to meet man's spiritual need for regeneration. In Mary's concern, Jesus saw a unique opportunity to begin familiarizing His mother with the truth of who He was: the Son of God who had entered the world for a particular *hour (the cross)*. Mary nor anyone else understood Jesus' Person, true mission, or Messiahship—not yet (see note—Mk.3:31-32). Therefore, at the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus began to teach everyone, and in particular the person who was so dear to His heart, His mother. He wanted to do all He could to prepare her and the others for the terrible pain that was to come during *His hour*. He was truly the Son of God; He had been born of God. He—His Person and

mission—had *to do with God and the things of the Spirit,* not with Mary and her social and fleshly needs. He had nothing in common with her and the flesh. *He was of God and of the Spirit.* She must begin to understand and see this. The more she could hear the truth, the more she would see and understand, especially after *His hour* had come. Therefore, Jesus used every opportunity possible to familiarize all His loved ones with the phrase "My hour." *His hour* was to become a constant symbol of His death (cp. Jn.7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23-24, 27, 33; 13:1; 17:1; Mt.26:18, 45; Mk.14:41).

The point Jesus made was that *His hour* had not yet come...

- the hour when He could really meet man's needs.
- the hour when He must die for man's regeneration.

Thought 1. Jesus was always focused upon His purpose for coming to earth: to face *His hour*, to die for man's salvation.

> **"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit....Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour....And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (Jn.12:23-24, 27, 32-33).**
>
> **"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (Jn.13:1).**

Thought 2. Mary's concern pictures the social concern of man. Man has many social needs. Society—whether social workers or communities of individuals—is concerned with ...

- social health
- social plenty
- social peace
- social comfort
- social housing
- social justice

Note two things.

1) Christ met the social concern, the need, the predicament. He solved the problem.
2) However, Christ does not stop there. Meeting the physical and material needs of society is not enough. Christ met the deeper concern of man:

⇒ life ⇒ happiness ⇒ love ⇒ satisfaction
⇒ assurance ⇒ fulfillment ⇒ security ⇒ completeness

> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).**

3. Mary's confidence in her Son. It was night and wine could not be bought. It was unthinkable that Mary was asking Jesus to perform a miracle. So far as we know, He had performed no miracles yet. What she was doing was seeking His help, asking Him to take care of the matter. Of course, He could attempt to get a merchant to reopen his shop and meet the need, or He could try to secure wine from some neighbors. Mary had utter confidence in Him. But, again, that is not the point. Jesus saw the *opportunity* to demonstrate His creative power, the kind of power needed to meet man's need for regeneration.

> **"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).**
>
> **"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none" (1 Cor.7:29).**
>
> **"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).**
>
> **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).**

3 (2:6-8) **Cleansing—Conversion**: the revelation of Jesus' creative power. Note three things.

1. The six waterpots were used both for drinking water and for the purifying and cleansing of the Jews, that is, the *ceremonial and religious cleansing* of the hands and utensils. When a Jew saw the waterpots, he knew they were there both for satisfying his thirst and for his religious cleansing. Jesus used the waterpots to show that He had the power...

- to *purify, cleanse, and satisfy* men.
- to *create and produce* whatever was necessary to cleanse and satisfy men.

> **"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).**

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:9-11).

2. Jesus had a deeper concern than just meeting the social need of the host. He had come to meet man's need for spiritual purification and inner cleansing, and He was to do it through *His hour* (the cross). Therefore, He seized the opportunity to reveal His creative power, His power to create man anew. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *New Birth*—Jn.3:1-15.)

Thought 1. We either believe Christ is the Messiah or not. We either believe He has the power to create anew or not, that He demonstrated such power in this miracle or not.

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

3. Note another significant point: Jesus simply instructed that preparations be made, and when He was obeyed, everyone experienced His creative power and was fully satisfied.

Thought 1. We have to obey Christ's instructions if we wish to be cleansed and created spiritually.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pt.1:21).

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:17).

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Mt.7:24-25).

4 (2:9-11) **Jesus Christ, Power; Results**: the results were threefold.

1. The bridegroom's need was met. What he needed was provided.
2. Christ's glory was revealed. His power to create anew was demonstrated.
3. The faith of the disciples was strengthened. They "believed on Him" even more. He had given evidence that He was the Messiah.

"The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (Jn.3:2).

"And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" (Jn.7:31).

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:36-38).

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:30-31).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(2:9-10) **Jesus Christ, Power; Results**: the governor evidently nudged the host and jokingly teased him about holding out on the guests; that is, he had kept the best wine until last.

	B. Revelation 2: Jesus is Supreme Over God's House, 2:12-22 (Mt.21:12-16; Mk.11:15-19; Lk.19:45-46)	hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.	
		17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.	c. His consuming zeal for God's House
1 Jesus left Cana	12 After this he went down	18 Then answered the Jews	**4 His power to erect a new temple**
a. He went to Capernaum for a short time	to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.	and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?	a. His authority questioned
b. He then went to Jerusalem to attend the Passover	13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,	19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.	b. His sign: A new meeting place for God & man
2 His discovery of evil in the temple[DS1]	14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen	20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this	c. His symbolic meaning: His body—His death & resurrection[DS2]
a. He entered the temple	and sheep and doves, and	temple in building, and wilt	
b. He found the temple desecrated	the changers of money sitting:	thou rear it up in three days?	
3 His right to cleanse the temple	15 And when he had made	21 But he spake of the temple of his body.	
a. The scourge: A symbol	a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;	22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture,	**5 His objective achieved: The disciples believed the Scripture and the Word of the Lord**
b. His unique relationship to God: "My Father"	16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things	and the word which Jesus had said.	

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

B. Revelation 2: Jesus is Supreme Over God's House, 2:12-22

(2:12-22) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ has supremacy over God's house, that is, over the temple or church. He alone has the right to rule and reign over God's house.

1. Jesus left Cana (v.12-13).
2. His discovery of evil in the temple (v.14).
3. His right to cleanse the temple (v.15-17).
4. His power to erect a new temple (v.18-21).
5. His objective achieved: the disciples believed (v.22).

1 (2:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Worship—Faithfulness**: Jesus left Cana. He went down to Capernaum and stayed there for just a brief time. Capernaum was His headquarters (see note—Mt.4:12). He then left for Jerusalem to attend the Passover Feast (see note, *Passover*—Mt.26:17-30).

2 (2:14) **Temple—Church, Abused**: Jesus' discovery of evil in the temple. Note two facts.

1. He entered the temple (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Temple*—Jn.2:14).
2. He found the temple being desecrated. It was the Court of the Gentiles where so much commercialism took place. There was a regular commercial market within its walls. How did a commercial market ever get into the temple of God? Very simply, greed. Worshippers needed animals (oxen, sheep, doves), incense, meal, wine, oil, salt, and other items for their sacrifices and offerings. Pilgrims from foreign nations needed money exchanged. At some point in the history of the temple, the priests had decided to take advantage of the market themselves instead of letting retailers on the outside reap all the profits. Therefore, the priests began to set up booths within the Court of the Gentiles and to lease space to *outside retailers*. These often turned out to be family members. The owner of the booths or space was apparently the High Priest whose name was Annas. The outer courtyard of the temple, the very worship center for the Gentiles, was filled with booth-like spaces where worshippers could find any kind of service they needed. The atmosphere was one of commercial traffic and commotion, not of worship and prayer.

Remembering the teeming thousands who attended the great feasts, we can imagine the loudest commercial commotion, and our picture would still come short of the actual scene. Who can picture thousands of animals with their peculiar noises, wastes, and smells within the temple of God? And for what? What would cause men to so abuse the worship center of God? As said above, money—the greed of men. It is no wonder Jesus did what He did. He could not do otherwise, for He was the Son of God, the Messiah sent into the world to bring about a true worship of God; and there was no hope of worship within the Court of the Gentiles. Prayer and worship were impossible.

"Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of theives" (Lk.19:46).

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:14) **Temple**: a person must understand the layout of the temple in order to see what was happening in this event. The temple sat on the top of Mt. Zion, and it is thought to have covered about thirty acres of land. The temple consisted of two parts, the temple building itself and the temple precincts or courtyards. The Greek language has two different words to distinguish which is meant.

1. *The temple building* (naos) was a small ornate structure which sat in the center of the temple property. It was called the Holy Place or Holy of Holies. Only the High Priest could enter its walls, and he could enter only once during the year, on the Day of Atonement.
2. *The temple precincts* (hieron) were four courtyards that surrounded the temple building, each decreasing in their importance to the Jewish mind. It is important to know that great walls separated the courts from each other.
   a. First, there was the Court of the Priests. Only the priests were allowed to enter this court. Within this courtyard stood the great furnishings of worship: the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Brazen Laver, the Seven Branched lampstand, the Altar of Incense, and the Table of Showbread.
   b. Second, there was the Court of the Israelites. This was a huge courtyard where Jewish worshippers met together for joint services on the great feast days. It was also where worshippers handed over their sacrifices to the priests.
   c. Third, there was the Court of the Women. Women were usually limited to this area except for joint worship with men. They could, however, enter the Court of the Israelites when they came to make a sacrifice or worship in a joint assembly on a great feast day.
   d. Last, there was the Court of the Gentiles. It covered a vast space, surrounding all the other courtyards, and was the place of worship for all Gentile converts to Judaism.

Two facts need to be noted about the Court of the Gentiles.

1. It was the courtyard farthest removed from the center of worship, the Holy of Holies, which represented God's very presence (see note, pt.2—Eph.2:14-15).
2. A high wall separated the Court of the Gentiles from the other courts, disallowing any Gentile a closer approach into God's presence. In fact, there were tablets hanging all around the wall threatening death to any Gentile who went beyond their own courtyard or center of worship.

3 (2:15-17) **Jesus Christ, Duty—Temple—Church**: Jesus' right to cleanse the temple. Three points show His right.

1. The scourge of cords. This was a symbol of His righteous anger, of His right to be obeyed, of His right to enforce obedience within the temple. The scourge was a symbol of the power and cleansing judgment of God—the kind of power and cleansing judgment that causes men to tremble before God (Ph.2:9-11).

He ran through the temple doing three things: (a) He chased out *all* who were buying and selling; (b) He threw over the tables of the moneychangers; and (c) He threw over the chairs of the dove dealers.

Thought 1. The temple (church) can be abused by...

- forgetting what worship is all about.
- misusing the facilities and buildings of God's house.
- ignoring God's holiness and forgetting one's duty to reverence God.
- allowing questionable, non-worshipful activities.

2. Jesus' unique relationship to God. He called God "My Father" and called the temple "My Father's house."
   a. "My Father." Jesus was continually calling God "My Father" (see notes—Jn.1:34; 10:30-33 for discussion).
   b. "My Father's house." Jesus was saying the temple was God's; therefore, it was to be a house of worship *for all people*. This included the Gentiles as well as the Jews. All people should be able to worship in quietness and peace within God's temple. No one should be barred, separated, or discouraged from worshipping God in His temple. All should be welcomed.

      Note another fact. The temple (church) was called a house of worship, not a house of sacrifice, offerings, teaching, prophecy, or preaching. Everything done within the House of God is to lead to the *worship* of the Father and *communion* with the Father.

Thought 1. The temple is not to be used as a commercial center. It is not to be a place for buying and selling, marketing and retailing, stealing and cheating. It is not to be profaned. The temple is the House of God, God's House of worship. It is to be a place of sanctity, refined and purified by God Himself. It is to be a place of quietness and meditation, a place set aside for worship, not for buying and selling where man gets gain.

"And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Lk.24:52-53; cp. Jn.4:24).

"LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Ps.26:8; cp. Ps.23:6).

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple" (Ps.27:4).

"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Ps.65:4).

"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Ps.84:2).

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps.84:10).

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD" (Ps.122:1).

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

Thought 2. A man either believes Jesus is the Son of God and over the Temple of God or else he believes neither (Jn.20:31).

3. Jesus' consuming zeal. His zeal fulfilled Scripture and demonstrated that He was the Messiah. The Messiah was bound to be zealous for God's house and to react in anger at such corruption within the temple. Scripture had predicted the Lord's zeal (Ps.69:9); therefore, Jesus had the right to show *zeal and anger* against such desecration of the temple. He was the Messiah, and His act stirred the memory of the disciples.

"Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD" (Lev.19:30).

"But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab.2:20).

"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Ps.89:7).

4 (2:18-21) **Temple—Church—Jesus Christ, Death, Predicted**: Jesus' power to erect a new temple. Note four things.

1. His authority was questioned by the religionists. What right did He have to do what He was doing? He claimed that the temple was His *Father's*. They knew that He was claiming to be the Messiah; therefore, they wanted proof that His claim was true. They wanted some spectacular sign.
2. His sign was to be given in the future. He was going to build a *new meeting place* for God. Note His exact words: "[You] destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."
3. His puzzling statement was misunderstood. They could not understand how He could possibly build a temple in three days. The present temple had taken forty-six years to build.
4. His puzzling statement had a *symbolic meaning*. Jesus was speaking of His body, of His death and resurrection.
   a. The proof that He was the Son of God with authority over God's house was to be given. The sign was to be His body, His death and resurrection. The resurrection was to be the supreme proof of His Messiahship. They were to destroy (kill) Him, but He would be raised from the dead after three days (see outline and notes—Lk.11:29-36).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead" (Acts 10:39-41).

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

   b. His death and resurrection was to provide a new temple, a new meeting place for God and man. It was to be *in Him* that men would thereafter meet God. The temple of His body was to become the temple of men, the temple whereby men would worship and be reconciled to God (see note, *Mediator*—Jn.1:51 for discussion. Also see notes—1 Cor.3:16; 6:19. Cp. Jn.14:16-21.)

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(2:19-20) **Jesus—Charges Against**: this is the statement used to charge Jesus with being an insurrectionist at His trial (Mt.26:61; Mk.14:58). It was also used to taunt Jesus as He hung upon the cross (Mt.27:40). The Jews, showing their spiritual blindness and attachment to a materialistic world, understood Jesus to be saying that He would perform an architectural wonder.

5 (2:22) **Prophecy, Belief in**: Jesus' objective was achieved. The disciples believed the Scriptures which had predicted the coming and resurrection of the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45; Mt.17:23).

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Ps.16:10; cp. Acts 2:31; 13:35).

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).

	C. Revelation 3: Jesus Knows All Men, 2:23-25	the miracles which he did.	the miracles[DS1]
1 Fact 1: Many believed in Jesus a. Believed in His name b. Believed because of	23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw	24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, 25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.	**2 Fact 2: Jesus did not commit nor trust Himself to men[DS2]** a. He knew all men b. He knew what was in man[DS3]

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

C. Revelation 3: Jesus Knows All Men, 2:23-25

(2:23-25) **Introduction**: this is a brief passage packed full of powerful truths. Jesus revealed that He knew all men.

1. Fact 1: many believed in Jesus (v.23).
2. Fact 2: Jesus did not commit nor trust Himself to men (v.24-25).

1 (2:23) **Belief—Profession, False**: first, many believed in Jesus. There are two very significant facts here.

1. Many *believed in His name*. The word "believe" (episteusan) is in the Greek aorist tense, which means they believed *once-for-all*. Their belief was genuine, at least the belief of some. However, the belief of others was not genuine. The fact that Jesus knew "all men" (all of those professing belief) and did not commit Himself to them shows the inadequacy of their faith (v.24).
2. They believed because of the miracles (semeia). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Signs*—Jn.2:23 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(2:23) **Signs—Miracles—Power—Works—Sensationalism**: there are four words used in the Bible for miracles or signs. These words are used to describe the works of God, and they show why people believed in Jesus.

1. *Teras* means the spectacular, staggering, amazing, dazzling. Many believed in Jesus because of the spectacular signs He performed. However, such belief made a person only a spectator, not a participant in His life. The word *teras* also means the sensational; that is, it appeals to the sensations of men. Many believed and followed Jesus because it made them feel good and comfortable and secure. Such belief is weak and often fails. This word is never used by itself to initiate faith in the Lord Jesus. If a person is to have genuine faith in the Lord Jesus, he must have some basis other than the spectacular sign (teras).

> **"And some [seed] fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture....They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away" (Lk.8:6, 13. See note, pt.2—Lk.8:11-15 for discussion of this person.)**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Lk.9:62).**
>
> **"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).**

2. *Dunamis* means power—unusual, extraordinary power; effective, explosive power. There were those who were attracted to Jesus because of the unusual power (dunamis) they witnessed. They believed because of the power. Such is a legitimate belief and leads to salvation for everyone who believes.

> **"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Ro.1:16).**
>
> **"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor.1:24).**
>
> **"And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching" (Mk.6:5-6).**

3. *Ergon* means distinctive works, deeds, and miracles. Such works come from God (Jn.14:10) and bear witness to Christ. They point men to Christ (Jn.5:36; 10:25). Some men look at the very special works of Christ and believe because of the works (ergon).

> **"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).**
>
> **"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).**

4. *Semeion* means a sign that characterizes the person, his nature and character. A few throughout Jesus' ministry did believe because they saw *in the miracles* exactly who He was, the very Son of God.

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (Jn.2:11).

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:30-31).

However, the word *semeion* is also used of those who believed the signs but *did not have* the highest or right kind of faith. Their faith was *not a faith that committed itself* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

a. It was a faith that arose only from...
   - a mental conviction, a head knowledge, an intellectual belief.
   - a surface acceptance of the fact that Jesus was the Savior.

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men" (Jn.2:23-24; believe and commit are the same words).

b. It was also a faith...
   - that only sought Jesus for what a person could get out of Him.
   - that never gave any thought to what a person might do for Christ.
   - that was unaware of the cost of discipleship, unaware that a person had to sacrifice himself and give all he was and had to Christ in order to become a follower of His (see note—Lk.9:23).

"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled" (Jn.6:26).

2 (2:24-25) **Belief—Jesus Christ, Knowledge of—Sin, Secret**: second, Jesus did not commit Himself to men. The word "commit" is the very same word as "believe" in v.23. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24.) Jesus did not trust nor believe in the people; He did not commit Himself into their lives or hands. The verb is continuous action: Jesus kept on refusing to trust men, kept on refusing to commit Himself into their lives. Two reasons are given for this continuing attitude of Jesus.

1. Jesus knew all men. The idea is that He knew every single man personally. Not a person escaped His knowledge.
2. Jesus knew what was in man. No one needed to tell Him about man. He knew man's nature: his depravity, evil, deception, and fickleness. He knew the men He could trust and could not trust. He knew every man who professed to believe, yet would...
   - betray Him.
   - deny his faith under pressure.
   - forsake Him, turning back to the world.
   - slip and fall back into sin.
   - be weak and easily influenced, tossed to and fro.
   - prove untrustworthy.
   - lack zeal and genuine commitment.
   - lack courage to stand.

Jesus knew all this about every man. Nothing was hid from Him. Therefore, He was not able to commit Himself and His blessings to some men despite the fact that they professed to believe.

Thought 1. Some so-called believers (those who make false professions) never receive the *indwelling presence of Christ*. Christ cannot commit Himself to them. Tragically, this means that He...
- cannot give the assurance of salvation: the confidence that a person is really saved.
- cannot give the Holy Spirit to live within the heart of a person: the presence and knowledge of Him.
- cannot give the fulness of life: the sense of completeness and the security of God's care and of being looked after.
- cannot give the hope and certainty of eternal life.
- cannot commit and entrust His mission into their hands.

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

Thought 2. Christ knows everything about everyone. As this Scripture says: He knows "*all men*" and He knows what is "*in man*": all his thoughts and deeds—good or bad, done in the light or in the dark, in the open or behind closed doors, publicly or secretly.

"For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known" (Lk.12:2).

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Cor.3:20).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" (Eph.5:12).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer.23:24).

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam.2:3).

"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Job 10:14).

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

"For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Ps.1:6).

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee" (Ps.69:5).

"Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance" (Ps.90:8).

"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways" (Ps.139:2-3).

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings" (Pr.5:21).

"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl.12:14).

"Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Is.29:15).

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding" (Is.40:28).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17; cp. Jer.32:19).

"Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth" (Ezk.8:12; cp. Ezk.11:5).

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" (Dan.2:22).

"And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face" (Hos.7:2).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(2:24) **Believe (episteusan)—Commit (episteuen)**: the word "commit" is the very same word "believe" (cp. Jn.2:23). This gives an excellent picture of *saving faith*, of what *genuine faith* is—of the kind of faith that really saves a person.

1. Saving faith is not head knowledge, not just a mental conviction and intellectual assent. It is not just *believing the fact* that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. It is not just believing history, that Jesus Christ lived upon earth as the Savior just as George Washington lived upon earth as the President of America. It is not just believing the words and claims of Jesus in the same way that a person would believe the words of George Washington.
2. Saving faith is believing in Jesus, *who* and *what* He is, that He is the *Savior* and *Lord* of life. It is a man giving and turning his life over to Jesus. It is a man's casting himself upon Jesus as Savior and Lord.
3. Saving faith is commitment—the commitment of a man's total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man's commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus. It gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves all of a man's affairs. The man trusts Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny). He entrusts his whole life, being, and possessions into Jesus' hands. He lays himself upon Jesus' keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply commitment of a man's whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus. (See notes—Jn.4:50; pt.4, Heb.5:5-10.)

There are three steps involved in faith, steps that are clearly seen in this passage. (See note—Ro.10:16-17 for more discussion.)

1. There is the step of *seeing* (Jn.2:23) or *hearing* (Ro.10:16). A man must be willing to listen to the message of Christ, the revelation of truth.

2. There is the step of *mental assent*. A man must agree that the message is true, that the facts of the case are thus and so. But this is not enough. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Many a person knows that something is true, but he does not change his behavior to match his knowledge. For example, a man knows that eating too much harms his body, but he may continue to eat too much. He agrees to the truth and knows the truth, but he does nothing about it. A person may believe and know that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world and yet do nothing about it, never make a decision to follow Christ. This man still does not have faith, not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.

3. There is the step of *commitment*. When the New Testament speaks of faith, it speaks of *commitment*, a *personal commitment to the truth*. A man hears the truth and agrees that it is true and does something about it. He commits and yields his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of his very being, a part of his behavior and life.

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(2:25) **Man**: the human race. Jesus knew man's nature, depravity, evil, deception, fickleness.

	CHAPTER 3	unto thee, Ye must be born again.	Reemphasized
	D. Revelation 4: The New Birth,[DS1] 3:1-15	8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.	e. Its illustration: The wind
1 Nicodemus approached Jesus a. He came in behalf of the religionists: "We" b. He acknowledged Jesus only as a teacher from God c. He asked,"Who are you?"	There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:	9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?	**4 The new birth: A true experience** a. Nicodemus' heart touched
2 The new birth: A necessity, an imperative a. A strong assertion b. An important fact: One can never see God's kingdom unless born again	2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.	10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?	
3 The new birth: A spiritual birth	3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.	11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.	b. Jesus' strong assertion: Do know; have seen
a. Its source: Being born of the Spirit[DS2]	4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?	12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?	**5 The new birth: Rejected** a. Some did not receive the witness b. The reason: Man's nature of unbelief
b. Its importance repeated: One will never enter God's kingdom unless born again	5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.	13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.	**6 The new birth: Revealed only by Jesus** a. His origin: Heaven b. His timeless experience: "In heaven"
c. Its nature: Spiritual, not physical & material	6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.	14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:	**7 The new birth: Secured by two acts** a. By Jesus' death
d. Its absolute necessity:	7 Marvel not that I said	15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.	b. By believing in Jesus

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

D. Revelation 4: The New Birth, 3:1-15

(3:1-15) **Introduction**: the new birth, along with God's great love (v.16-17), is the most important revelation ever made in all of human history. Jesus revealed the new birth.

1. Nicodemus approached Jesus (v.1-2).
2. The new birth: a necessity, an imperative (v.3).
3. The new birth: a spiritual birth (v.4-8).
4. The new birth: a true experience (v.9-11).
5. The new birth: rejected (v.11-12).
6. The new birth: revealed only by Jesus (v.13).
7. The new birth: secured by two acts (v.14-15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:1-15) **New Birth—Born Again—New Creation—Regeneration**: a spiritual birth, a rebirth of one's spirit, a new life, a renewed soul, a regenerated spirit. It is the regeneration and renewal of one's spirit and behavior (2 Cor.5:17). It is the enduement of a new life, of a godly nature (2 Pt.1:4). The new birth is so radical a change in a person's life that it can be described only as being *born again*. Something so wonderful happens to the soul that it is just like a *new birth*. It is a spiritual birth, a birth beyond the grasp of man's hands and efforts. It is so radical, so life-changing, and so wonderful that it can be wrought only by the love and power of God Himself.

The New Testament teaching on the new birth is rich and full.

1. The new birth is a necessity. A person will never see (Jn.3:3) nor ever enter (Jn.3:5) the Kingdom of God unless he is born again (Jn.3:7).
2. The new birth is a spiritual birth, the birth of a new power and spirit in life. It is not reformation of the old nature (Ro.6:6). It is the actual creation of a new birth within—spiritually (Jn.3:5-6; cp. Jn.1:12-13; 2 Cor.5:17; Eph.2:10; 4:24). (See notes—Eph.1:3; 4:17-19; DEEPER STUDY # 3—4:24.) A person is spiritually born again:
   a. By water, even the Spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.3:5).
   b. By the will of God (Jas.1:18).

c. By incorruptible seed, even by the Word of God (1 Pt.1:23).
d. By God from above (1 Pt.1:3). The word *again* (ana) in the phrase "born again" also means *above*. (Cp. Jn.1:12-13.)
e. By Christ, who gives both the *power and right* to be born again (Jn.1:12-13).

3. The new birth is a definite experience, a real experience. A person experiences the new birth:
a. By believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (1 Jn.5:1; cp. Jn.3:14-15).
b. By the gospel as it is shared by believers (1 Cor.4:15; Phile.10).
c. By the Word of God (1 Pt.1:23) or by the Word of Truth (Jas.1:18).

4. The new birth is a changed life, a totally new life. A person proves that he is born again:
a. By doing righteous acts (1 Jn.2:29; cp. Eph.2:10; 4:24).
b. By not practicing sin (1 Jn.3:9; 5:18).
c. By loving other believers (1 Jn.4:7).
d. By overcoming the world (1 Jn.5:4).
e. By keeping himself (1 Jn.5:18).
f. By possessing the divine seed or nature (1 Jn.3:9; 1 Pt.1:23; 2 Pt.1:4; cp. Col.1:27).

1 (3:1-2) **Nicodemus**: Nicodemus approached Jesus. Note these facts about Nicodemus.

1. He was a ruler (archon) of the Jews. This means he was a senator or a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of the Jews (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:59).
a. He was a Pharisee (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 23:8).
b. He was the *master of Israel* (v.10, *ho* didaskalos); that is, he held some official position of the highest rank. He was either the *leading official* or the *leading teacher* of Israel who was either authorized or accepted as such by the public.
c. He apparently was wealthy. He spent a great deal of money on the burial of Jesus (Jn.19:39).
d. He was silent at the trial of Jesus, saying nothing to defend Jesus, but he boldly stepped forth after the Lord's death to publicly help in the burial of Jesus (Jn.19:39-42).

2. He came in behalf of the religionists. He said, "*We* know." Some of the religionists wondered if Jesus were the true Messiah, thinking that perhaps He was. Some eventually become believers (cp. Lk.13:31; Acts 6:7; 15:5; 18:8, 17). Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah and performing the spectacular works that were prophesied of the Messiah; therefore, He was the talk of everyone throughout the nation. The rulers were questioning and wondering: Is He really the Messiah? (See notes—Mt.21:8-9; 21:23.) This was the question, the thing that Nicodemus felt compelled to find out. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18.) Note that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. He apparently did this because he *feared* the other leaders who opposed Jesus. John seemed to be saying this at the burial of Jesus (cp. Jn.19:39).

3. He acknowledged Jesus only as a teacher from God. He and others saw the miracles Jesus did, and they knew something: only a man from God could do such miracles.

4. In essence, Nicodemus was asking, "Who are you? The miracles show that God is *with you*, but you are claiming to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Are you—truthfully—in all honesty?"

Note that Jesus did not answer Nicodemus directly. He saw into the empty, searching heart of Nicodemus and saw the honesty of his question. So Jesus went right to the heart of the matter. Miracles and signs were not what was important. What was important was for Nicodemus to be changed: changed spiritually, changed within, and changed completely—to undergo such a spiritual change that it could only be described as being born again.

2 (3:3) **New Birth**: the new birth is a necessity, an imperative. Two facts show this:

1. The strong assertion, "Except a man be born *again*." The word "again" (anothen) has three different meanings in Greek. It means...
- *From the first*: from the beginning or completely and fully (cp. Lk.1:3).
- *Again*: a second time, a repeated act (v.4) (cp. Gal.4:9).
- *From above*: from the top, which means from God (cp. Jn.19:11).

The point is this. A man must be "born *again*." He must be...
- born completely and fully, a complete and full change.
- born all over *again*, in the sense of a second time.
- born *from above*, from God.

2. The importance of the words, "cannot see the kingdom of God." One must be "born again" or else he will never "see" (v.3) nor "enter" (v.5) the Kingdom of God. It is an absolute imperative that a person be born again (3:7). (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24.)

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

3 (3:4-8) **New Birth**: the new birth is a spiritual birth. (See note, pt.2—Jn.3:1-15.) Nicodemus was puzzled by the words "born again." He did not know what Jesus meant. He understood Jesus to be saying that a man must be born a "second time." Jesus answered Nicodemus by doing five things.

1. Jesus gave the *source of the new birth*. It was being born of water, even of the Spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.2—Jn.3:1-15. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Water*—Jn.3:5 for discussion.)
2. Jesus *repeated the importance* of being born again. Note what v.3 says: a man "can never see" (grasp, understand, know, experience) the Kingdom of God; v.5 says a man "can never enter" (gain entrance to) the Kingdom of God.
3. Jesus gave the *nature* of the new birth. It is spiritual, not physical and material (see notes—Eph.1:3; 4:17-19; DEEPER STUDY # 3—4:24). The flesh cannot bridge the gap between flesh and spirit. Flesh is only flesh; it has no power to be born again, to become spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Flesh*—Jn.1:14).
4. Jesus reemphasized the absolute necessity of the new birth. "Ye *must* be born again." The word "must" (dei) means absolute necessity, an imperative.
5. Jesus illustrated the point by picturing the wind. The Spirit of God works just like the wind. We may not know how the wind works, but we can see the effects. It is the same with the Spirit of God: we may not know *how* He works, but we can see the effects of His working.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn.1:12-13).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:5).

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas.1:18).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again [caused us to be born again] unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pt.1:3).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him" (1 Jn.2:29).

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 Jn.3:9).

"Beloved, let us love one other: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (1 Jn.4:7).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(3:5) **Water—Spirit**: the word "*and*" (kai) can also be translated "even." The way it is translated here is left up to the translator. In light of the rest of Scripture, it probably should be translated "even." This would mean that water with all of its cleansing power is a symbol of the Holy Spirit: "Except a man be born of water, even the Spirit, He cannot enter into the kingdom of God." A strong argument for this is in the very next verse. The new birth is spiritual, apart from any natural phenomenon. It has nothing to do with any physical substance, including water. It is not of the flesh, not of any material thing. It is of the Spirit (cp. Ro.8:11; Eph.2:1).

Is it possible that *water* means "baptism" here? When John was writing the gospel, he and the readers of his gospel would have known what was meant by *Christian baptism*. However, when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, there was no such thing as Christian baptism. It is unlikely that Jesus would say something that Nicodemus could not grasp and understand. Jesus was not out to confuse him, but to lead him to be born again. There was no way Nicodemus could be baptized in order to be born again—not then—for Christian baptism had not yet been instituted. (Regardless of our position on baptism, honesty demands that we note this.)

4 (3:9-11) **New Birth**: the new birth is a true experience, a definite experience (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, pt.3—Jn.3:1-15). Nicodemus' heart was touched by what Jesus was saying, and he wished to know what was meant by being "born again." Note: he did not know, but he wished to know. (Think how many do not even care to know.)

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).

Note the great tragedy of Nicodemus. He was *the* master of Israel, yet he did not know about spiritual things (see note, pt.1—Jn.3:1-2). Note the strong assertion of Jesus: "We do know...we have seen" (v.11. See note—Jn.3:13 for how Jesus knows about the new birth.)

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:16).

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:6).

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (1 Th.1:5).

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him" (1 Jn.3:18-19).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 Jn.4:13).

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth" (1 Jn.5:6).

5 (3:11-12) **New Birth**: the new birth is rejected. There are two tragic facts here.

1. There are the statements: "ye receive not our witness" and "ye believe not." Apparently, Nicodemus did not believe and receive Jesus at this point in his life. He did what so many do: he rejected Jesus.
2. It is man's nature not to believe (cp. 1 Cor.2:14. See note—Jn.2:24.)

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son" (1 Jn.5:10).

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

6 (3:13) **New Birth—Jesus Christ, Son of Man—Mediator**: the new birth is revealed only by Jesus. Jesus said two things.

1. He came *down from* (ek, out of) heaven. No man can ascend up into heaven; no man can penetrate the spiritual world. Flesh is flesh, that is, born of the earth; therefore, it is earthly (1 Cor.15:47). However, Jesus Christ was different from all other men. His origin was *out of* heaven, out of the spiritual world and dimension of being. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31; note—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—14:6 for discussion.)
2. He is timeless. "The Son of Man which is in heaven" means His existence and experience are timeless. He is eternal (see note, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51).

"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world....For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:33, 38).

"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (Jn.13:3).

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jn.17:5).

7 (3:14-15) **New Birth**: the new birth is secured by two acts.

1. The first act is Jesus' death. Jesus illustrated His point by using the Old Testament story of Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness (Num.21:4-9). The children of Israel had begun to murmur and grumble about the trials of the wilderness, wishing they had never left Egypt. God disciplined them by sending fiery serpents to plague them. The discipline worked; the people repented and begged for mercy. God met the people's need by telling Moses to make a bronze image of a serpent and to hold it up upon a pole in the midst of the people. The person who looked upon the *lifted up* serpent was healed.

Jesus said that He must be lifted up just as the serpent was lifted up. What did He mean? There are several pictures here.

a. The people of Israel had great need, for they were dying from the poison of the fiery serpents. Men today are dying from the poison of the serpent, the deadly poison of sin.
b. The serpent is a symbol of the evil one, Satan (Gen.3:1f; Rev.12:9; 20:2). Jesus Christ destroyed the works of the devil by being lifted up (Heb.2:14-15); therefore the serpent's hanging upon the pole symbolized the defeat of Satan. By looking upon the *defeated evil* (the serpent), Israel was healed. Today man is healed by looking upon the Son of Man who has been lifted up upon the cross.

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:31-32).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

c. The serpent was a cursed creature from the very beginning (Gen.3:14-15). Jesus became a curse for man (Gal.3:13).

> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**

2. The second act is man's belief in Jesus. The man who believes in the Son of Man's being lifted up...
   - will not perish (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perish*—Jn.3:16)
   - but will have eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Life*—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3).

Note: if an Israelite believed God's message (the good news of healing), he looked upon the lifted up serpent, and he was healed. If a man did not believe God's message, he did not look, and he died. Thus it is with us today: every man must believe the message of Christ in order to be healed, that is, be born again.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**

	E. Revelation 5: God's Great Love, 3:16-17	not perish, but have everlasting life.	b. To eternal life c. By believing
1 The fact: God so loved[DS1] **2 The evidence: God gave** **3 The purpose: To save** a. From perishing[DS2]	16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should	17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.	**4 The proof: God sent His Son (the Incarnation)** a. Not to condemn b. But to save **5 The means: Thru Him**

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

E. Revelation 5: God's Great Love, 3:16-17

(3:16-17) **Introduction**: this is the world's most well-known Scripture. Brief and to the point, Jesus revealed God's great love.

1. The fact: God so loved (v.16).
2. The evidence: God gave (v.16).
3. The purpose: to save (v.16).
4. The proof: God sent His Son (the Incarnation) (v.17).
5. The means: through Him (v.17).

1 (3:16) **God, Love of**: God so loved the world. He loved the whole world. Note several facts.

1. The idea that God loves the whole world is a new idea. The Jews believed God loved the religious (the true Jew) and hated the non-religious (the Gentiles). The same thoughts are held by many in every generation, especially by *religionists*. The fact that God truly loves is shocking to many. Some wonder and others question how God could possibly love the...

- vile person
- murderer
- immoral person
- wife beater
- child abuser
- prostitute
- thief
- alcoholic
- street person
- oppressor
- enslaver
- bitter, vengeful

Thought 1. God loves *every man*, not just the religious and the good. He does not love only the people who love Him. He loves everyone, even the unlovely and the unloving, the unbelieving and the obstinate, the selfish and the greedy, the spiteful and the vengeful.

> **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:16).**
>
> **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:12-13).**
>
> **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim.2:4).**
>
> **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).**

2. The basis of God's love is His nature. God is love (1 Jn.4:8, 16); therefore, He loves. He acts, demonstrates, and shows His love.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love....And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jn.4:8, 16).**

3. Love acts; it expresses itself. Love does not sit still, doing nothing. It is not dormant, complacent, inactive. If love actually exists, it has to act and express itself; it has to do something good. Love is *loving*; that is, love is always demonstrating love to others. Therefore, God's love acts and reveals Him to be love.

Thought 1. God wants man to know His love. He wants to reach everyone in the world with His love.

> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 Jn.4:9).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(3:16) **God Loved**: past tense. A past, proven fact. An outline of the greatness of God's love is seen in this verse. (1) Height: God loved. (2) Depth: so loved. (3) Length: God gave. (4) Breadth: whosoever. (See note—Jn.21:15-17.)

2 (3:16) **God, Love, of**: there is the evidence of God's love—God gave His only begotten Son. Note several points.

1. God demonstrated His love in the *most perfect way* possible: He gave His only begotten Son to the world. As God, He is perfect, which means His love is perfect. Therefore, God not only loves, but He *so* loves. He loves to perfection, loves to the ultimate degree. Whatever the ultimate degree and the perfect act and expression of love is, God shows it. Without question, the greatest act of love is the sacrifice of a man's own life; therefore, God sacrificed the life of His own Son to save man.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).

2. The word *gave* (edoken) has a twofold meaning. God gave His Son to the world, and He gave His Son to die. The idea of *sacrifice*, of great cost, is in both acts. It cost God dearly to give His Son *up to the world and up to the cross*.

a. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to leave His presence*, to leave the majesty and glory, worship and honor of heaven. (See note—Mk.9:2-3.)

b. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to come to earth…*

Into a world that was…	*Into a world full of…*	
fallen	darkness	selfishness
depraved	hostility	greed
wicked	bitterness	immorality
rebellious	wrath	barriers
revolting	anger	sin
apostate	war	shame

c. He gave up His Son to be separated from Him, *allowing Jesus to die* for the sins of men (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).

"In due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Ro.8:32).

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor.9:15).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

3. A most glorious evidence of God's love is that God took the *initiative* to save man. Man did not seek to save himself; God sought to save him. God gave His Son so that we might be forgiven and saved. God is the *seeking Savior*.

God is not…	*God does not…*
angry	hate men
unloving	have to be persuaded to love men
unforgiving	have to be convinced to forgive men

"The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer.31:3).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

4. The most glorious truth is that God gave His *only begotten Son*. This is the most remarkable proof of God's love. It magnifies and shows how great His love really is. He was willing to give the thing most dear to His heart in order to save the world. Note this: God even planned to give His Son throughout eternity.

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:23-24).

3 (3:16) **Salvation**: there is the purpose of God's love: to save men. God's purpose in giving His Son was threefold.

1. To save men from perishing (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perish*—Jn.3:16).
2. To save men to eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3).
3. To save men through belief (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24). Note: this fact says that salvation is conditional.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(3:16) **Perish—Perishing** (apoletai): to be lost, to destroy utterly, to lose utterly, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.

1. Perishing means to be in a lost state in this world. It means to be...
   - aging, deteriorating, decaying, dying. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.8:17; notes—1 Cor.15:50; Col.2:13; DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Pt.1:4.)
   - without life (purpose, meaning, significance). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)
   - without peace (assurance, confidence, security in God's keeping). (See note—Jn.14:27.)
   - without hope (of living forever). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18.)
2. Perishing means to be in a lost state in the world to come. It means...
   - having to die
   - facing judgment
   - being condemned
   - suffering separation from God and all loved ones
   - experiencing all that hell is

(See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27.)

4 (3:17) **God, Love of**: there is the proof of God's love, the Incarnation. God actually sent His Son into the world (see notes—Jn.1:14).

1. Christ was not sent to condemn or to judge the world. We, the world, deserve to be judged and condemned.
   ⇒ We are guilty both of breaking God's law and of coming short of God's glory (Ro.3:23).
   ⇒ We are convicted (Ro.3:9-18; cp. Ro.1:18-32).

However, Christ *was not* sent to condemn or judge us. Judgment and condemnation were not His purpose.

2. Christ was sent to save us. His purpose was to save us from perishing and to save us to eternal life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Cor.1:18.)

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Lk.2:11).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

5 (3:17) **Salvation—Jesus Christ, Mediator**: there is the means of salvation. Salvation is *through Him* (Christ Jesus) and through Him alone.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim.1:15).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (1 Jn.4:14).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Tit.3:4-7).

"Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (Jn.4:42).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

	F. Revelation 6: Man's Condemnation, 3:18-21	the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.	c. He loves darkness; loves his evil, his sin
1 Who is condemned: Not the believer, but the unbeliever	18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.	20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.	d. He does not come to the light
2 When is he condemned: Already			
3 Why is he condemned	19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into	21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.	**4 Who escapes condemnation**
a. He has not believed			a. He who practices truth
b. Light has come into the world			b. He who comes to light
			c. He whose works are wrought by God

DIVISION II

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21

F. Revelation 6: Man's Condemnation, 3:18-21

(3:18-21) **Introduction**: God sent His Son into the world to save the world, but this does not mean that everyone is automatically saved. In fact, some are condemned and doomed. Jesus reveals man's condemnation.

1. Who is condemned: not the believer, but the unbeliever (v.18).
2. When is he condemned: already (v.18).
3. Why is he condemned (v.18-20).
4. Who escapes condemnation (v.21).

1 (3:18) **Condemnation—Faith**: Who is condemned? Not the believer, but the unbeliever.

1. The believer is not condemned. Note three facts.
   a. The critical importance of belief cannot be overstressed. Belief stays, prevents, arrests, and stops judgment. The person who *believes on Christ*...
      - is acquitted as though he never sinned
      - is released
      - is not to be captivated again (by guilt, fear, bondage, shame)
      - is not to be condemned (judged)
      - is not to be dealt with in justice

   b. The believer is saved. He is as guilty as the unbeliever, but there is one critical difference: the believer believes on Jesus Christ and has committed his life to Him. The believer is actively and diligently seeking Christ (Heb.11:6). God will save any man who will believe and seek and honor His Son (cp. Jn.12:26. See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; note—3:17.)
   c. The believer is released from condemnation because he believes on Christ. The believer believes that Christ died for his sins, in his place, as his substitute, paying the penalty for his sins (which was death).

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Ro.8:1).**
>
> **"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34. See Deeper Study # 1,2—Ro.4:22; note—5:1.)**

2. The unbeliever is condemned. Note two critical points.
   a. Note who the unbeliever is. He is the person who has "not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." God has *only one* begotten Son. The man who *has not already* believed on God's Son is the unbeliever. It does not matter who the man is or where he is; he is an unbeliever if he *has not already* believed on the only begotten Son of God.
   b. Note what it means to be condemned or judged. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perish*—Jn.3:16 for discussion.)

2 (3:18) **Judgment—Condemnation**: When is the unbeliever condemned? Already, right now. It is not that he is to be condemned; he is already condemned. At least three things are meant by being "judged already" (ede kekritai).

1. Condemnation is a sure fact. The unbeliever's judgment is sure, so sure it is as though he has already been condemned. Nothing can change or stop the judgment from coming upon the unbeliever. Ignoring, denying, and struggling against the great day of judgment will not change one detail of the day. It is coming, and every single unbeliever will be judged.
2. The unbeliever is *already* under the present curse of sin. He is...
   - without Christ
   - an alien from the people of God
   - a stranger to the promises of God

- without hope
- without God in the world (Eph.2:12)

(See DEEPER STUDY # 2, pt.1, *Perish*—Jn.3:16 for a description of what this means.)

3. The unbeliever already stands guilty of all the sins he has ever committed; he is already condemned. The law of God already exists. Every time a man breaks the law of God, he immediately becomes guilty and is condemned. The judgment is already pronounced. The unbeliever must pay the penalty for every transgression of God's law. He is already *under the curse, the full force* of the law.

> **"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal.3:10).**
>
> **"And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Gal.3:12).**

3 (3:18-20) **Condemnation**: Why is the unbeliever condemned? Four reasons are given.

1. The unbeliever has not believed. The great sin of unbelief is that it neglects, ignores, denies, abuses, and rejects God's Son.
   - ⇒ The dignity of God's Son is ignored (see note—Jn.1:1-2).
   - ⇒ The truth of God's Son is not believed (see notes—Jn.1:14).
   - ⇒ The goodness of God's Son is not embraced (see notes—Jn.1:14).
   - ⇒ The dearest thing to God's heart is denied (see notes—Jn.3:16).
   - ⇒ The name that is above every name is abused and cursed (Ph.2:9).
   - ⇒ The only begotten Son of God is rejected (Jn.3:16-19).

Christ is the great remedy for man's sins. Therefore, unbelief—rejecting and refusing to believe Him—is the great damning sin.

> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).**

2. The unbeliever is condemned because Light has come into the world. The Light came into the world to give light to men, to enable men to walk out of the darkness of a sinful and perishing world. The Light came to show men the way, the truth, and the life:
   - ⇒ The Light shows man the way God intends for him to live.
   - ⇒ The Light shows man the truth of life, that is, the truth of God and of man and of the world that surrounds man.
   - ⇒ The Light shows man the life, that is, how to save his life and avoid the things that cause him to stumble and lose his life.

The point is this: the life of Jesus Christ now stands in the world to give Light. Any man who does not turn and walk in the Light is naturally in the dark. He is condemned to the darkness and to all that happens to those who walk in the darkness. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Light*—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:12.)

3. The unbeliever is condemned because he loves darkness. Why would he love darkness? Because his deeds are evil, and to turn and walk in the Light would expose his evil deeds for what they are: immoral, unrighteous, and disobedient to God. There are at least four reasons why man prefers to walk in darkness and prefer to hang on to his sins.
   a. The unbeliever loves his sin and does not want to turn and face the conviction of the Light. If he turned to the Light, He would have to give up his sin; and he loves the feeling, the stimulation, the comfort, the ease, the challenge, the recognition, the power, the fame, the possessions, the things which the sin brings. He loves it all too much to give it up.
   b. The unbeliever is full of pride. He does not want to confess his sin, the fact that he is in darkness and short of what God demands. He denies he is in darkness, refusing to turn to the Light (Christ).
   c. The unbeliever is enslaved, in bondage to sin and gripped by the darkness; he has been in darkness so long that he does not have the strength to break the enslavement.
   d. The unbeliever fears the shame, embarrassment, and consequence of his sin. In some cases he would like to confess his evil and correct it, but fear keeps him from coming out and facing the Light (Christ).

> **"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience....And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:3-6, 11).**
>
> **"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief....Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night" (1 Th.5:4, 6-7).**

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 Jn.1:6).

"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps.82:5).

"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Pr.4:19).

4. The unbeliever is condemned because he does not come to the Light. Whatever his reasons, the unbeliever refuses to come to the Light; therefore, he is condemned.

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Mt.15:14).

"Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:12).

"And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung" (Zeph.1:17).

Thought 1. The unbeliever is uncomfortable in the Light. Therefore, he shuns everything that presents the Light to him: the church, believers, the Bible, prayer, and spiritual conversation.

Note that unbelievers are said to hate the Light. They ignore, reject, deny, and fight the Light. They speak and write against it, ridicule and curse it, persecute and seek to stamp it out.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:4-5).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Is.9:2).

4 (3:21) **Condemnation**: Who escapes condemnation? The man who does three things.

1. The man who practices truth and lives righteously escapes condemnation. He knows what is right and he does it. The verb is continuous action. He practices truth, continually and habitually. Note two things about this man.
   a. This does not mean he lives perfectly, without ever sinning. No man is or can be perfect. It means that the man directs his life toward truth: diligently seeks the truth and seeks to be truthful. He may slip and sin, but he immediately turns back to God, repenting and hanging on to his integrity.
   b. Christ said that the man who does truth hears His voice (Jn.18:37; 1 Jn.1:6). Only the man who desires truth is saved, and every man who comes to the truth is saved. Christ is truth.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:32).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:6-7).

"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father" (2 Jn.4).

"For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth" (3 Jn.3).

"For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth" (Ps.26:3).

"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name" (Ps.86:11).

2. The man who comes to the Light escapes condemnation. Only the Light (Christ) can dispel the darkness in a man's life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9).

3. The man whose works are wrought in God escapes condemnation. The word "wrought" (eirgasmena) means to work, produce, perform, originate, manufacture, and fashion from something. The idea is that the man *comes to Christ* (the Light) so that his works will be "wrought," originated, and worked in and of God. The man who comes to Christ lives close to God. He walks and talks and listens to God (His Word), and he does what God says (cp. 2 Cor.1:12).

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1 Tim.6:17-18).

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity" (Tit.2:7).

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).

	III. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE NEW MASTER, 3:22-36	the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.	**was the Bridegroom** a. He is the One by whom the friend stands b. He is the voice that is to be heard c. He is the cause of joy d. He is the only object of loyalty
1 The setting for the revelation a. Jesus & His disciples were baptizing in Judaea b. John & his disciples were baptizing close by	22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. 23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. 24 For John was not yet cast into prison.	30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.	**4 Answer 3: Jesus alone was from above—from heaven** a. Meaning: "Out of"[DS1] b. Result: Jesus is above all
c. Two basic questions of life 1) Who really purifies man's heart? 2) Who is the supreme Master?	25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. 26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.	32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. 33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.	**5 Answer 4: Jesus alone was God's Spokesman** a. He testifies b. Some reject c. Some receive & seal His testimony[DS2] d. Proof: Sent from God & speaks God's Word[DS3]
2 Answer 1: Jesus alone was God's appointed Messiah a. God alone appoints men b. God had not appointed John as the Messiah, but as the forerunner	27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.	35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.	**6 Answer 5: Jesus alone had the full measure of the Spirit** **7 Answer 6: Jesus alone determines man's destiny** a. To believe Him brings everlasting life[DS4] b. Not to obey Him brings wrath[DS5]
3 Answer 2: Jesus alone	29 He that hath the bride is		

DIVISION III

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE NEW MASTER, 3:22-36

(3:22-36) **Introduction**: this passage does one thing—it points to Jesus Christ as the New Master, the One whom God has set before man as the only Master worthy of serving.

1. The setting for the revelation (v.22-26).
2. Answer 1: Jesus alone was God's appointed Messiah (v.27-28).
3. Answer 2: Jesus alone was the Bridegroom (v.29-30).
4. Answer 3: Jesus alone was from above, from heaven (v.31).
5. Answer 4: Jesus alone was God's Spokesman (v.32-34).
6. Answer 5: Jesus alone had the full measure of the Spirit (v.34).
7. Answer 6: Jesus alone determines man's destiny (v.35-36).

1 (3:22-26) **Jesus Christ, Baptized**: the setting for the revelation. After His interview with Nicodemus, Jesus moved out into the country districts of Judaea.

1. Jesus and His disciples were baptizing. The word "tarried" (dietriben) means to spend time with. It has the idea of spending *much time* in sharing and ministering. Note the statement: He baptized. This is the only place in Scripture where Jesus is said to baptize, though strictly speaking it was His disciples who actually did the baptizing (Jn.4:2). It was His baptizing that set the ground for what was now to happen.

2. John and his disciples were also baptizing in Aenon, which was near to Salim. Nothing is known about either place beyond what is mentioned here.

People began to flock from John to Jesus. This decline in John's popularity gave the religionists an opportunity to attack John. They attacked him by asking his disciples a crucial question, and in their questioning, they stirred the two basic questions of life.

3. The religionists questioned the purifying value of John's baptism. They thought he must be a sham, a false prophet. If John's baptism were really cleansing the people's hearts and giving them a sense of cleanliness, why were the people now flocking to Jesus? If his baptism were really meeting the people's needs, they would continue to come to him for cleansing. Instead, they were deserting him and flocking to Jesus.

This charge, of course, cut John's disciples to the core, so they asked John why all men were now turning to Jesus instead of remaining with him.

Note how the question of purifying strikes at the two basic questions of life.

1. There is the question of purifying and cleansing. Can the human heart really be cleansed? Can the need of men for cleansing really be met?
2. There is the question of supremacy, of a man's Master in life. Who is man to follow? To whom should men turn for cleansing? To other men such as religious leaders, or to Jesus Christ?

Thought 1. Note two tragic facts.

1) Every man seeks the cleansing of his heart from someplace. He seeks release from sensing wrong and failure; He seeks some dissolving of guilt. However, few seek cleansing in Christ. They seem to seek cleansing everywhere except in Christ:
   - ⇒ in religion.
   - ⇒ in attending church enough to salve their conscience and give a feeling of acceptance by God.
   - ⇒ in giving to charity.
   - ⇒ in doing some good deed for others.
   - ⇒ in being loyal to some good man's teaching or leadership.
2) Every man follows some master and gives his allegiance to something, whether person or thing (cp. Mt.6:24; Lk.16:13; Ro.6:16).

Thought 2. Note a significant point: only Christ can purify a man's heart and give him true cleansing from sin.

2 (3:27-28) **Jesus Christ, Messiah—Ministers:** first, Jesus alone was God's appointed Messiah. John answered the questions by pointing to Jesus Christ. He alone was Messiah, God's appointed One.

1. God is the One who appoints men.
   - ⇒ He is God, so He has the right to appoint men.
   - ⇒ He calls men to be His servants.
   - ⇒ He appoints those men to a particular service and equips those men with gifts.

No man can receive a *true* appointment, a *true* service, or a *true* gift unless it is given from heaven, that is, from God Himself. All appointments and gifts that have not come from heaven *are false*.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas.1:17).

"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability" (Mt.25:15).

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us" (Ro.12:6).

"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1 Cor.4:7).

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor.12:4).

"But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8).

2. God did not appoint John to be the Messiah, but to be the forerunner. John was clear about this. He was not the Messiah; Jesus Christ was the Messiah. Note several facts.
   - ⇒ John's strong witness to Jesus Christ's being the Messiah
   - ⇒ John's clear understanding of who he himself was and what his specific appointment and ministry were (the forerunner)
   - ⇒ John's humility

Thought 1. Jesus Christ is the Messiah; He *alone* is the One appointed from heaven. This is the strong declaration of John.

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.16:15-17).

"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mt.26:63-64).

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" (Lk.24:25-26).

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

Thought 2. The true servants of God are appointed to their service and ministry by God. This says several things.
1) The servant serves God and God alone.
2) The servant can trust God to take care of him and his ministry.
3) The servant should be humble.
   ⇒ He should not envy others, for every servant's ministry is special to God and necessary to His plan of salvation.
   ⇒ He should be satisfied in his service and ministry, for he is there by God's appointment.

> **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**

3 (3:29-30) **Jesus Christ, Bridegroom—Humility—Ministers, Purpose**: John declared that Jesus was the Bridegroom. The bridegroom is the One who has the bride (the church, the followers of God). The friend is important, but he is not the bridegroom. John said four things about Jesus as the Bridegroom.

1. The Bridegroom (Christ) is the One by whom the friend stands. It is true that the friend (God's servant) is important, for he takes care of matters for the bridegroom, and he has the privilege of bringing the bride to the bridegroom. But there is only one Bridegroom, and He is the focus of the friend's attention.
2. The Bridegroom's (Christ's) voice is the voice to be heard. His voice is the important voice. His will is the will to be done: serving Him and doing what He says are what is important.
3. The Bridegroom (Christ) is the cause of joy. It is not the friend who brings joy to the bride or to the guests and community; it is the Bridegroom. Everyone's joy is found in seeing the Bridegroom's will done and in seeing Him pleased.
4. The Bridegroom (Christ) is the only object of loyalty. The words "He" and "I" are an *emphatic contrast* (v.30). That is to say, there is a *compulsion* to lift up the Person and the honor of the Bridegroom. In no sense nor in any place does the servant try to draw attention, praise, or honor toward himself.
   ⇒ The servant draws back and shrinks from attention, decreasing himself in the eyes of all. He does nothing for himself but does *all for the Bridegroom*, for His honor and increase.
   ⇒ The servant focuses attention upon the Bridegroom: pushes Him out front, increases His presence and stature before everyone.

> **"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:23).**
>
> **"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).**
>
> **"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:5-9).**
>
> **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).**
>
> **"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb.3:3).**
>
> **"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:13).**
>
> **"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev.19:7).**
>
> **"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).**
>
> **"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Ps.34:3).**
>
> **"Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders" (Ps.107:32).**
>
> **"O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Is.25:1).**
>
> **"Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.4).**

4 (3:31) **Revelation—Heaven**: third, Jesus alone was from above, that is, from heaven. Note two things.

1. The meaning of "from above" is significant (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31).
2. The words "above all" are mentioned twice; they are very important. They mean superior and preeminent. Jesus, who came from heaven (out of the dimension of heaven), was the Superior and preeminent One. He was above all. The reasons He was "above all" are twofold.
   a. His origin was "from above." He was not of the earth, not earthly. Men are. Men are born of the flesh, that is, they are born of a man and woman who live on earth. Therefore, men are of the earth and are earthly.

But not Jesus. He was "from heaven"—*out of* God Himself. Therefore, He was superior and preeminent. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Flesh* pt.4—Jn.1:14.)

b. A man can only speak of the earth and of earthly things. He comes *only* out of the earth; therefore, he can know *only* earthly things. When he speaks of heavenly things, he only shares his *ideas* and *speculations*, for he has never been to heaven. Therefore, the only conceivable way for man to know anything about heaven is for Someone from heaven to come and tell him. (See notes—Jn.1:18; 3:13; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,3—14:6.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(3:31) **"From Above"—Jesus Christ**: Jesus came *out of* (ek) the spiritual world into the physical world, out of the heavenly dimension of being into the earthly dimension of being. Jesus came out of...

- the incorruptible world into the corruptible world.
- the glorious world into the dishonorable world.
- the powerful world into the weak world.
- the spiritual world into the natural world. (Cp. 1 Cor.15:42-44.)

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn.3:13).

"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world....For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:33, 38).

"The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (Jn.6:41-42).

"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).

"This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:58).

"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (Jn.6:62).

"And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn.8:23).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (Jn.13:3).

"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jn.17:5).

"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor.15:47).

5 (3:32-34) **Jesus Christ, Apostle; God's Spokesman**: fourth, Jesus alone was God's Spokesman. Jesus was "from above," *out of the dimension of heaven*; therefore, He had seen and heard the truth of heaven.

1. Jesus testified, revealed, and proclaimed what He had seen and heard. He was the Spokesman of God who revealed heaven and the truth of it. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24.) He is the only One who can share heaven with men.
2. Most men reject His testimony. Note the words "*no man*"—this simply means the vast, vast majority of men (cp. v.33 where some few do receive His words). So many men reject the Lord's words that it can be said that "no man" receives His message.
3. Some few men do receive and seal the Lord's testimony (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.3:33).
4. The proof that Jesus was God's Spokesman is clearly stated without any equivocation.
   ⇒ Jesus was sent from God. He was the *Apostle of God* (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34).
   ⇒ Therefore, He spoke the Words of God. Whatever He said was the Word of God. How can we be sure? Because God sent Him and gave His Spirit *without measure* to Him.

a. He was the Apostle of God.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

b. He is the Spokesman of God.

"He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God" (Jn.3:34).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Never man spake like this man" (Jn.7:46).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mk.13:31).

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Lk.4:22).

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Lk.4:32).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(3:33) **Seal**: a man's seal was affixed to a document to show he agreed with it. He reckoned it as legal, binding, valid, authentic. A seal guaranteed that the record was true and genuine. When a man receives the testimony of Jesus, he shows that God is true. Conversely, the only way a man can show that God is true is to accept the testimony of Jesus (cp. Jn.6:27).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(3:34) **"God has Sent"—Jesus Christ, Origin**: Jesus is the Apostle of God. He is God's Ambassador, God's perfect Spokesman. It should be noted that God poured out His Spirit *without measure* upon Jesus—the only apostle upon whom this was ever done. (Cp. Jn.4:34; 5:23-24, 30, 36-37; 6:38-40, 44, 57; 7:16, 18; 8:16, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44-45, 49; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21.)

6 (3:34) **Jesus Christ, Fulness of Spirit**: fifth, Jesus alone had the full measure of the Spirit. There was no limit to the Spirit's...

- presence
- call
- equipping
- blessings
- fulness
- appointment
- work

The Spirit was of the same Being with Jesus, in perfect harmony, communion, and fellowship with Jesus. He was given to Jesus in a way far different than He was given to other men. There was no measure of His presence with Jesus. Jesus had the perfect and full measure of the Spirit. The purpose for the full measure was clearly stated by Jesus.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk.4:18-19).

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

7 (3:35-36) **God, Love for Christ—Man, Destiny**: sixth, Jesus alone determines man's destiny.

1. There has never been a more tender statement than "the Father loves the Son." God loves His Son beyond anything that could ever be understood. How much does God love Him? So much that He has given all things into the hands of His Son: all power, all authority, all rule, all reign, all supremacy, all dominion, all honor, all glory, all praise, all worship, all service. As clearly and as simply as can be said, all things have been given to God's only Son. There is nothing existing that has not been given to Him.

"[Jesus Christ] who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

2. There are four primary reasons why God loves His Son so much.
   ⇒ Jesus is God's *only* Son, the Son in His very own bosom (see note—Jn.1:18).
   ⇒ Jesus is God's only *begotten* Son, the Son who willingly partook of flesh and came into the world to save men, thereby fulfilling the will of God perfectly (see notes—Jn.1:14).
   ⇒ Jesus gave Himself as an *offering* and a *sacrifice to God Himself.* (See note—Eph.5:2.)
   ⇒ Jesus willingly learned perfect obedience by the things which He suffered (see notes—Jn.13:31-32; Heb.5:5-10).

3. The man who believes *on* the Son has everlasting life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3). God will receive and honor anyone who receives and honors His Son whom He loves so much. It does not matter who the person is or what the person has done. If the person believes on God's only Son, God gives everlasting life to him.
4. The man who does not believe the Son faces two things.
   a. He will not see life. He perishes (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perish*—Jn.3:16).
   b. The wrath of God abides on him (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Jn.3:36).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(3:36) **Believe Not** (ho apeithon): to obey not. If a person does not obey, he does not really believe. Conversely, if a person really believes, he obeys. (See note and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.5:9.)

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(3:36) **Wrath** (orge): anger, temper, indignation. It is not an uncontrolled, unthinking, violent reaction. It is deep, permanent, settled, thoughtful, controlled anger and temper.

There is another Greek word which also means wrath (thumos), and it is also used of God's wrath. Thumos is anger that arises more quickly, blazes forth, and just as quickly cools down. It is an anger that is more turbulent, more sudden, but the agitation lasts for only a short period of time. This simply means that God does not dodge His responsibility to execute justice and to punish injustice and sin (cp. Ro.1:22). His wrath is His...

- anger against sin.
- reaction against unrighteousness.
- opposition to the injustices of men.
- punishment of evil and wicked men.

The wrath or anger of God is aroused for four reasons.

1. Men do not believe on the Son of God. They allow their hearts to become hardened and impenitent (Ro.2:5). They spurn and wound God's love—rejecting, abusing, cursing and denying His Son, the dearest thing to His heart (Jn.3:36; 2 Th.1:7-9. See notes—Jn.3:18-20; 3:35-36.)
2. Men reject God's mercy, which is ever attempting to reach out and save them (Ro.2:3-6).
3. Men transgress God's law (Ro.1:18f; Col.3:6).
4. Men sin and come short of God's will, violating His holiness (Eph.5:6).

God's wrath is real and active. God is holy, righteous, and pure as well as loving, gracious, and merciful. He executes justice as well as love. He shows wrath and anger as well as compassion. His wrath is both present and future.

1. God's wrath is present and active in this life. His wrath abides upon men now. His wrath is manifested against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Ro.1:18). God punishes sin in this life by giving men up...
   - to uncleanness.
   - to vile affections.
   - to reprobate minds.
2. God's wrath is future and it is to be actively executed in the next life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Lk.16:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27). God will punish sin by giving men up...
   - to everlasting fire (Mt.25:41; 25:46).
   - to hell (Mt.5:22).
   - to outer darkness (Mt.8:12).
   - to weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt.8:12).
   - to the Lake of Fire (Rev.20:15).
3. God's wrath will be especially manifested and active in the last days (cp. Rev.6:16; 11:8; 14:10; 16:19; 19:15).

	CHAPTER 4	away unto the city to buy meat.)	gone for food
	IV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42	9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.	c. The woman questioned Jesus 1) She was shocked that Jesus talked with her 2) She questioned racial prejudice
	A. The Offer of Living Water, 4:1-14	10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.	**2 Living water is alive** a. Is "of God" b. Is "the gift" of God c. Is given by asking for it
1 Jesus left Judaea a. He left out of necessity 1) For John's sake	When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,	11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?	**3 Living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father**
	2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)		
	3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.		
2) For His destiny: "Must"—had to	4 And he must needs go through Samaria.	12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?	
b. He left to confront a Samaritan woman 1) He entered Sychar, Samaria[psi,2]	5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.	13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:	**4 Living water is the only water that will quench thirst**
2) He was weary, sat on a well	6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.	14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.	
3) He requested drink from a woman	7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.		
4) The disciples had	8 (For his disciples were gone		

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

A. The Offer of Living Water, 4:1-14

(4:1-42) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Salvation**: Jesus offered the Samaritan woman living water, and she showed an intriguing interest. However, there were some matters that she had to straigthen out before she could ever have the living water. There was the matter of sin in her life, of worship, of the Messiah, and of laboring for God. Therefore, Jesus began to discuss these subjects with her one by one.

(4:1-14) **Introduction**: this is one of the most profound revelations of Jesus: He is the Living Water, the water which men can drink and thereby never thirst again.

1. Jesus left Judaea (v.1-9).
2. Living water is alive (v.10).
3. Living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father (v.11-12).
4. Living water is the only water that will quench thirst (v.13-14).

1 (4:1-9) **Jesus Christ, Mission**: Jesus left Judaea. Note two significant facts.

1. Jesus left Judaea out of necessity. He left for John's sake. The crowds were leaving John and coming to Jesus, and the religionists were using the fact to downgrade John's ministry (see note—Jn.3:22-26). Jesus did not want to create a competitive scene that would damage John's ministry, so He left the area to return to Galilee.

Note the words, "He *must* needs go through Samaria." The word *must* (edei) means necessity, compulsion, destiny. Jesus was driven to go through Samaria for the sake of His mission. Samaria needed the gospel as much as other areas. (The word "must" is so often used in connection with Jesus' mission that it makes an excellent word study. Cp. Jn.3:14; 9:4; 10:16; 12:34; 20:9.)

2. Jesus left Judaea to confront a Samaritan woman. He entered Sychar, a city of Samaria (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.4:5). He sat on the wall of a well, for He was both tired and thirsty from His journey. While sitting there, one of the events for which He had come into Samaria happened: He confronted a woman with the claims of the Messiah.

She came to draw water, and He initiated a conversation by asking her for a drink of water. She was shocked, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:5). She asked Jesus why He would ask her, a Samaritan, for a drink. It was this question, this subject of water, that Jesus used...

- to discuss one of the greatest truths of spiritual life, that of living water.
- to present the claims of God upon a life.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:5) **Samaria—Samaritans**: Samaria was the central part of Palestine. Palestine was a small country, stretching only 120 miles north to south. The country was divided into three sections:

⇒ Judaea, the southern section.
⇒ Galilee, the northern section.
⇒ Samaria, the central section, lying right between the two.

There was bitter hatred between the Jews and Samaritans. Two things in particular caused this hatred.

1. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed *by birth*. Centuries before (about 720 B.C.), the King of Assyria had captured the ten tribes of Israel and deported a large number of the people, scattering them all throughout the Media empire (cp. 2 Ki.17:6-41). He then took people from all over the Assyrian empire and transplanted them into Samaria to repopulate the land. The result was only natural. Intermarriage took place and the people became a mixed breed, a breed including...
   - the transplanted people.
   - the weak of the land who had been left behind.
   - the outcast and irreligious who had intermarried with the original Samaritans.

The fact of a mixed breed, of course, infuriated the strict Jews who held to a pure race.

2. The Samaritans were mongrel or half-Jews, a mixed breed *by religion*. The transplanted heathen, of course, brought their gods with them. Eventually the God of Israel won out, but the Samaritan religion never became pure Judaism. Three things happened to cause this.
   a. When Ezra led the Jews back from exile in Babylon, the first thing the Jews did was to start rebuilding their temple. The Samaritans offered to help them, but the Jews rejected their help, declaring that the Samaritans—through intermarriage and worship of false gods—had lost their purity and forfeited their right to worship the only true God. This severe denunciation embittered the Samaritans against the Jews in Jerusalem.
   b. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim to stand in competition with the Jewish temple at Jerusalem.
   c. The Samaritans twisted both the Scripture and history to favor their own people and nation.
      ⇒ They twisted Scripture in that they accepted only five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch. (Just imagine! They missed all the richness and depth of the Psalms and prophets.)
      ⇒ They twisted history in that they claimed three great events took place on Mt. Gerizim that set it apart as a place of worship. They claimed it was the place where Abraham offered Isaac, where Melchizedek met Abraham, and where Moses built his first altar after leading Israel out from Egyptian bondage.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:5) **Sychar**: little is known about the city; however, three significant Biblical events happened there.

⇒ Jacob bought a piece of land in the area (Gen.33:19).
⇒ Jacob, as he was dying, willed the land to Joseph (Gen.48:22).
⇒ Joseph's bones were buried there (Josh.24:32).

2 (4:10) **Water, Living—Jesus Christ—Salvation**: living water *is* alive. To the Jew, living water was water that was always flowing and moving along, such as a creek fed by springs or a lake with both an inflow and an outflow. Dead water was stagnant water such as ponds or pools that were always sitting still with no inflow or outflow. However, when Jesus spoke of "living water," He meant much more than living streams and lakes.

1. Living water is "*of God*." It is of Him who is living, always has and always will be living. The water that God gives is the most *alive* water there is. No other water, no matter how alive it may be considered, can compare with the living water that is of God.

"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Ps.36:9).

2. Living water is "*the gift*" of God. The word "gift" means it is freely given, is *not earned* and is *not deserved*.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

3. Living water is given by asking for it. Note what Jesus said: "If thou knewest...thou wouldest have asked." The woman had never received living water because she *had never known* about it and *had never asked* for it. It was now available simply by asking for it.

3 (4:11-12) **Water, Living—Jesus Christ**: living water is from a Person much greater than a religious father. The woman saw clearly that Jesus was making an unusual claim. She did not yet understand what the claim was, but she knew He was alluding to something. She noticed He had no leather pouch with which to draw water, so she asked two significant questions.

⇒ From where did He get this living water?

⇒ Was He *greater* than Jacob who was one of the great religious partriarchs of the Samaritans? Jacob had to dig the well in order to secure water for his family. Was Jesus greater, able to do more than Jacob did?

The point is this: the woman recognized something most people do not. Jesus was claiming to be greater than one of the greatest religious fathers, Jacob himself. He was claiming to have access to a much better water for quenching the thirst of men.

Thought 1. Throughout Scripture Jesus claimed to be...

- greater than the temple (Mt.12:6).
- greater than Jonas (Mt.12:41).
- greater than Solomon (Mt.12:42; Lk.11:31).
- greater than Abraham, "before Abraham" (Jn.8:53, 58).
- greater than Jacob (Jn.4:11-12).
- worthy of more glory than Moses (Heb.3:3; Jn.5:45-47).

"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (Jn.3:31).

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).

"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb.3:3).

4 (4:13-14) **Water, Living—Jesus Christ**: living water is the only water that will quench thirst. Men have two thirsts: a physical thirst and a spiritual thirst.

"As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God" (Ps.42:1).

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened...for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech.13:1).

Men know immediately how to quench their physical thirst, but their spiritual thirst is a different matter. Within their hearts men sense a thirst for...

- purpose
- meaning
- significance
- satisfaction
- fulfillment
- something that is missing
- something to fill the void, the emptiness and the loneliness
- deliverance from a sense of lostness
- freedom from undue anxiety, stress, and pressure

Men have a problem, however. They usually misunderstand the spiritual thirst and try to quench it with the stagnant waters of the flesh and of this world. The result is poison and death.

⇒ The stagnant waters of the flesh are such things as lust, immorality, drunkenness, indulgence, and pride.

⇒ The stagnant waters of the world are such things as the love of money, cars, houses, lands, clothes, extravagant living, position, and power.

The stagnant waters of the flesh and the world never quench a man's thirst. They are like salt water; they only make a man crave for more and more. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Lust*—Jas.4:1-3.)

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer.2:13).

Note several facts about the living water.

1. The living water comes from Christ. He and He alone is its source.

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Rev.21:6).

2. The living water keeps a man from ever thirsting again. His inner thirst is gone forever. It is quenched and fully satisfied.

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened...for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech.13:1).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

3. The living water is "a well of water" placed "*in*" the man. The well is not placed outside the man, not placed anywhere out in the world, not in his home, nor in his business. It is placed "*in*" him.

> **"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)" (Jn.7:38-39).**

4. The living water springs up and continues to spring up and bubble, flowing on and on. It is ever in motion.

> **"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).**

5. The living water springs up into everlasting life. It will never end.

> **"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev.7:17. Cp. Ezk.47:1-12, the river of life.)**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**

(Note: Jesus interpreted what He was saying in Jn.7:37-39. All five of the above facts are seen fulfilled in the Holy Spirit.)

	B. The Subject of Sin, 4:15-18	hither.	**truth, the fact of sin**
		17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:	a. Jesus stirred conviction b. Jesus accepted no evasion
1 There was the request for living water	15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.	18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.	
2 There was the first essential: Facing the	16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come		c. Jesus knew all d. Jesus reproved sin

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

B. The Subject of Sin, 4:15-18

(4:15-18) **Introduction**: Jesus promised the living water of spiritual rebirth. However, something had to be discussed before spiritual rebirth could be given: the subject of sin.

1. There was the request for living water (v.15).
2. There was the first essential: facing the truth, the fact of sin (v.16-18).

1 (4:15) **Water, Living—Satisfaction—Fulfillment—Purpose—Emptiness—Dissatisfaction**: there was the request for living water. Jesus had just made a profound claim. 1581 *

> **"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).**

The woman wanted such water. She asked for it, but note the reasons why:

⇒ That I thirst not (physical thirst).
⇒ That I will not have to come and draw water every day.

The woman may have been jesting with Jesus; some commentators think she was. They hold that she certainly knew this man (Jesus) did not have a well of water from which she could drink and never thirst again, water that would cause her to live forever, never having to die. She thought that Jesus was jesting with her, so she played along, humoring Him. Others think she was sincere and just did not understand, but whatever the man's magical waters were, she wanted a drink.

Whatever the case may be, the woman was thinking in terms of the physical world, only of the physical benefits. She had grasped nothing of the spiritual meaning, nothing of the inner satisfaction that Jesus could give which would quench all the thirst of a person's heart.

Thought 1. Note two facts.

1) Man does thirst, but his thirst is much deeper than physical thirst. Man has an inner, spiritual thirst. (See note—Jn.4:13-14 for discussion of man's thirst.)
2) Christ alone can satisfy man's thirst. If a man drinks of the water Christ gives, he is infused with purpose, meaning, significance, energy, and motivation. Once a man drinks of Christ, he does not mind drawing water; that is, he does not mind work and labor. In fact, the water of Christ stirs him to work and serve, helping mankind in every way possible. He wants to help and to share the wonderful news of a saving God, a God who can save from the thirst of...
   - emptiness
   - loneliness
   - lostness
   - despair
   - hopelessness

2 (4:16-18) **Sin, Exposed—Repentance**: there was the first essential of facing the truth, the fact of sin. The woman had requested living water, but before she could be given the living water of spiritual rebirth, she had to be convicted of her sin and renounce it. Note four things.

1. Jesus stirred conviction and the confession of sin. Why was this necessary? Why did the woman have to face the truth of her sin before she could be spiritually reborn? There are two reasons.
   a. She was weary and heavy laden, and it was caused by sin. She had to know this in order to seek the cure. Sin had to be removed and renounced, forgiven and cleansed before *true rest* and *true relief* could come. Once she was freed from sin, rest and relief would come. She would no longer be weary and heavy laden under the load of sin and irresponsibility, guilt and shame. She would be set free and given a life of spiritual rest and security. (See notes, *Rest*—Mt.11:28, 30; Heb.4:1 for more discussion.)
   b. She had the symptoms of disease and did not know what the disease was; therefore, she was unable to cure her disease. She needed deliverance and did not know how to be delivered. The woman's disease was the same as the disease of all men: sin. Sin had to be renounced before the living water of spiritual rebirth could be given.

> **"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (Jas.1:21).**

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).

"Now therefore make confession unto the LORD God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives" (Ezra 10:11).

2. Jesus accepted no evasion. Note how the woman tried to evade the fact of her sin. She told the truth; she did not have a husband, but she was living with a man just as she would live with a husband.

Thought 1. The point is clear: the sinner cannot evade his sin. He has to face it and renounce it if he wishes the living water of spiritual rebirth.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Pr.28:13).

"Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD" (Jer.3:13).

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD" (Jer.23:24).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

3. Jesus knew all about the woman, that she had gone through five husbands. He knew the truth about her, what she had done to fail in so many marriages. He knew whether she was guilty...

- of making ungodly, worldly choices.
- of being argumentative and defensive.
- of being a poor housekeeper, wife, and mother.
- of being cold, distant, withdrawn, and indifferent.
- of being unfaithful and immoral.

Jesus knew the truth about her sin, and He knows the truth about every man's sin.

"If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity" (Job 10:14; cp. Job 14:16).

"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God" (Jer.2:22).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" (Dan.2:22).

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Cor.3:20).

4. Jesus reproved her sin. She had not only gone through five different husbands, but she was now living with a man who was not her husband.

Thought 1. Christ not only knows all—He keeps an account. The sinner is guilty of every act of disobedience. He stands guilty of every law he breaks.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that *continueth not* in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them....And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Gal.3:10, 12).

Man has to face the truth, the fact of his sin, and renounce it if he wishes to receive the living water of spiritual rebirth. A man has to do what Christ is pointing out to the woman: renounce his sin. Once he has done this, he can then ask for the living water and Christ will give it. But note: drinking the water of Christ is essential.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device [imagination]. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:29-31).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

	C. The Subject of Worship, 4:19-24	Jerusalem, worship the Father.	
1 The woman was troubled a. She sensed Jesus to be a prophet b. She sensed her sin & the need for true worship	19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.	22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.	**3 Fact 2: True worship & salvation are of the Jews**[DS1]
2 Fact 1: The place of worship is not what is important	20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. 21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at	23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.	**4 Fact 3: True worshippers worship God in spirit & in truth**[DS2,3]

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

C. The Subject of Worship, 4:19-24

(4:19-24) **Introduction**: man's whole concept and approach to worship is changed by Jesus in this passage.

1. The woman was troubled (v.19-20).
2. Fact 1: the place of worship is not what is important (v.21).
3. Fact 2: true worship and salvation are of the Jews (v.22).
4. Fact 3: true worshippers worship God in spirit and truth (v.23-24).

1 (4:19-20) **Conviction, Response to**: the woman was troubled. Jesus had confronted her with her sin (v.15-18), and she could either respond or react. She could have reacted by…

- being angry
- ignoring
- neglecting
- arguing
- counting it as foolishness

However, she did not react. Instead, she was stirred and convicted, and she sensed two things.

1. She sensed that Jesus was a prophet, a man who was in touch with God; therefore, Jesus was a man who could help her.
2. She sensed her sin and the need to take care of her sin, to truly worship God. But where was she to worship? There was a dispute about where God's presence really was, a dispute about where a person could truly meet God. The Samaritans said that God's presence was in Mount Gerizim; the Jews said He dwelt in Jerusalem (see note—Jn.4:5).

Standing before her was the prophet who wrought the piercing conviction in her that she was to worship. He was a prophet; therefore, He could help and direct her, so she asked Him where to worship. Where could she find help from God?

Thought 1. The woman was under a powerful conviction. She knew that she had to worship God, to make sacrifice for her sin. When a man is stirred and convicted, he needs to turn to God immediately. If he does not know how to turn to God, he needs to ask a person who is in touch with God.

2 (4:21) **Worship**: first, the place of worship is not what is important. Note three things.

1. Note the phrase "the hour cometh." Jesus said that *an hour* was coming that would change the whole nature of worship. The way men approached God was going to experience a volcanic eruption. Worship of God was going to be radically and completely changed. There was an hour, an historical event coming that would change it. Jesus was, of course, referring to His death and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The place of worship is no longer the temple or any other particular location on earth. God's presence now dwells in the hearts and lives of His people. His people worship Him wherever they are, and they can worship Him every day all day long.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (Jn.14:16-17).

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness" (Ro.8:9-10).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.36:27).

2. The place of worship is not what is important. Some do worship in Mount Gerizim and some worship in Jerusalem, but the place is not what is important.

3. What is important is *the object of worship*, being sure one is truly worshipping *the Father, God Himself*. A person may be in the temple worshipping, and yet not be worshipping the Father: "Ye worship ye know not what" (v.22). A man's whole being must be focused upon the only true and living God, the Father Himself, to be truly worshipping.

> **"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).**
>
> **"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.15:6).**
>
> **"By him [Christ] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).**
>
> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).**

3 (4:22) **Salvation, Source—Jesus Christ, Mediator—God, Ignorance of—Jesus Christ, Ignorance of**: second, worship and salvation are of the Jews. Note three things.

1. The word "salvation" in the Greek has the definite article (he soteria), "*the* salvation." The Messiah, who is the salvation of all men, comes through the Jews, not from any other source.

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
>
> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).**
>
> **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).**
>
> **"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb.12:24).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).**

2. Jesus said "we." He identified Himself with the Jews. He was a fully born Jew; He was not of another nationality, nor was He a mixture of bloods.

3. Salvation is of the Jews. All other worship is an expression of man's own ideas, no matter how rational and highly esteemed and followed: "Ye worship ye know not what." (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Israel*—Jn.4:22 for more discussion.)

a. Men are ignorant of God Himself, of the only living and true God.

> **"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).**
>
> **"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (Acts 17:23).**
>
> **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Ro.1:20-23).**
>
> **"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Ro.1:28).**
>
> **"For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).**
>
> **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**
>
> **"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water" (2 Pt.3:5).**
>
> **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).**

"Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job 21:14).

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).

"Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God" (Jer.5:4).

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jer.8:7).

"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD" (Jer.9:3).

"For they know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces" (Amos 3:10).

"But they know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor" (Mic.4:12).

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets" (Zech.7:11-12).

b. Men are ignorant of Christ, the Son of God.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not" (Jn.1:10).

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (Jn.4:10).

"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes" (Jn.9:30).

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).

"And these things [persecutions] will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (1 Jn.3:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:22) **Israel—God's Plan—History—Jews:** why did Jesus Christ come to the Jewish nation and come to earth as a Jew? Very simply stated, the Jews were God's special people. They had been born by a special act of God. It all started long, long ago. God had wanted four things.

1. He wanted a people who would love Him supremely and give Him their first loyalty. (Cp. Gen.17:7; Is.43:10.)
2. He wanted a people who would witness to all other nations that He and He alone was the one true and living God. (Cp. Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Acts 13:26, 47.)
3. He wanted a people through whom He could send the promised Seed, the Savior and Messiah, Jesus Christ, to all men everywhere. (Cp. Gen.3:15; 17:7; 22:18; Gal.3:16; Jn.4:22.)
4. He wanted a people through whom He could send His written Word, the Holy Bible, and preserve it for all generations. (Ro.9:4-5; 1 Pt.2:10-12.)

In searching the earth for such a people, God could find none (cp. Ro.1:18-32). God could do only one thing. He had to find one man and through him begin a new people, a new nation.

1. God found and chose Abraham and through him established the Jewish nation. (Gen.12:1-5; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8, 15-19; 22:16-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 31:13; 35:9-12.) God chose one man and challenged him to worship God supremely. If that man would worship God supremely, then God would cause a special people to be born of his seed. That man was Abraham. Abraham was the first Jew (cp. Gen.12:1-4; Gal.3:16). In the Old Testament the Jews and their land (Palestine) were continually pointed to as the very special people and land of God. They were called...

⇒ God's special people (Dt.7:6).
⇒ God's peculiar people (Dt.14:2; 26:18).
⇒ God's peculiar treasure (Ex.19:5; Ps.135:4).
⇒ the Lord's portion (Dt.32:9).
⇒ the Lord's land (Lev.25:23; Jer.2:7; 16:18; Hos.9:3).
⇒ the holy land (Zech.2:12). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25 for more discussion.)

However, the Jewish nation failed to obey God supremely. The whole plot of the Old Testament centers around God's pleading and dealing with the Jews. Again and again, He gave the nation the opportunity to obey Him. He dealt with them in mercy and in judgment, but at every turn they refused to heed His pleading.

2. God chose the family of David. (See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn.1:49.) God had no choice but to make another move, so He chose one faithful family within the Jewish nation and gave to that family one great promise. The family was that of King David, and the promise was that of the Messiah, God's great King, God's very own Son. God's Son was to come through the line of David and establish an eternal nation of people who would love God supremely. However, the Jewish nation again failed God. They misinterpreted God's Word—the prophecies of His coming.

a. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying the seed of Abraham included only the Jewish nation. In their minds, God had no children except the children of the Jewish nation. The Bible says explicitly that the seed of Abraham is Christ, and the special people of God are those individuals within all nations who worship God supremely (Gal.3:16).

b. The Jews misinterpreted God's Word by saying that the eternal kingdom promised to David was the Jewish nation and the Jewish nation only. They expected Israel to be established as an earthly nation forever and all other nations to be subservient to Israel. But again, God's promise was not that narrow, nor was it that prejudiced. The Bible says there is not, and never has been, any respect of persons with God (Dt.10:17; 2 Chron.19:7; Job 34:19; Acts 10:34; Ro.2:11; Gal.2:6; Eph.6:9; Col.3:25; 1 Pt.1:17). God did say that Christ was to come from the Davidic line, but He also said that He was going to establish an *eternal nation* made up of people everywhere who would love God supremely (Ro.2:28-29).

By misinterpreting God's promises, the Jews failed to be the missionaries to the world that God had chosen them to be. They became *earthly bound* and *materialistic minded*. They twisted the idea of the promised Messiah to fit their own schemes. They conceived of Him as One who was to establish an earthly kingdom for the Jewish nation alone. They failed to see that God was speaking...

- of an eternal kingdom of righteousness.
- of a kingdom that is of another dimension entirely—the dimension of the spiritual.
- of a new heaven and a new earth that would give each person an eternal life beyond just one earthly generation.

3. God had no choice but to make a third move. This He did by sending His own Son into the world through the Jewish nation. God sent Him so that the world through Him might be saved (Jn.3:16-19). However, man rejected God's Son and crucified Him. This act—the killing of God's Son—was the final blow. When man slew the only Son of God, the whole world *was* involved. Both Jew and Gentile were represented symbolically in the Jewish religionists and the Roman authorities. They both actually did the plotting, sentencing, and execution. If the world were ever to be saved, it was now perfectly clear that God had to make every move Himself.

This He did once-for-all. In His eternal purpose and plan for man's salvation, God took the sins of all men and laid them upon His Son while He was being slain upon the cross. He allowed His Son to bear the sins of the world (1 Pt.2:24). Then He took His Son and raised Him from the dead—never to die again. He did what man had always failed to do: in His Son's resurrection God began to build a lasting kingdom of righteousness, a new nation that is presently being made up of men from all earthly nations who desire and are willing to follow Jesus Christ supremely. He is calling out and forming a new people who have genuinely been born again—spiritually. These new born people shall live eternally—beyond just one earthly generation. These people are identified as His church, as a body of people who genuinely believe and follow Him. They are destined to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and earth. (See notes—pt.5, Lk.8:21; Eph.2:11-18; 4:17-19.)

God, acting solely upon His own through the death and resurrection of His Son, has fulfilled His promises to both Abraham and David. All the people of the nations of the world now have the opportunity to become children of God, the special people of God.

4 (4:23-24) **Worship**: third, true worshippers worship God in spirit and in truth. Note four points.

1. Note the change in worship: "The hour cometh, and now is." Christ changed worship. Before Christ, men worshipped God in special places, for example, in temples and before altars. Since Christ, place and locality mean nothing. Christ has opened the door into God's presence from anyplace in the universe (see note—Jn.4:21 for more discussion).

2. Note the nature of worship: Man is to worship God in spirit and in truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.4:23.)

a. To worship God in spirit means to worship God...

- with the *spiritual drive and ability* of one's soul, seeking the most intimate communion and fellowship with God.
- with the *spiritual core* of one's life and being, trusting and resting in God's acceptance and love and care.

b. To worship God in truth means...

- to approach God in the right or true way. There is only one way, through His Son Jesus Christ (see note—Jn.4:21; 14:6).
- to worship God sincerely and truthfully, not coming half-heartedly with wandering mind and sleepy eyes.

3. Note the reason for worship: The Father seeks men to worship Him. God desires worship, for He created man to worship and fellowship with Him. Therefore, God seeks men who will worship Him in spirit and truth.

"The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Pr.16:4).

"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him....Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have

chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:7, 10).

"For whom he did foreknow [believe], he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn [preeminent One] among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).

"He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph.1:4-6).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9; cp. Ro.15:6; 1 Cor.6:20).

4. Note the one essential in worship: It is not the place that is important in worship but how a person worships God. A person must worship God in spirit and in truth. There is no other way. "God is Spirit, and they that worship Him *must* worship Him in *spirit* and in *truth*."

To worship in spirit means...

- *from* the spiritual drive and depth of the soul.
- *from* the spiritual core of the life and being.

To worship in truth means...

- as God dictates, that is, worship must be in the name of God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- in sincerity.

"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Mt.4:10).

"And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Lk.24:52).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).

"Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev.14:7).

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Ps.95:6).

"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth" (Ps.96:9).

"Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy" (Ps.99:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(4:23) **Man, Creation—Spirit—Worship**: man is to worship God in Spirit. Three points need to be looked at to fully understand what this means.

1. There is the creation of man.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen.2:7).

The material used to form man was *dust*; or as Isaiah said, "clay" (Is.64:8); or as Luther translated, a lump of earth (erdenkloss). Man's physical material or substance is of the earth; the forming of his body is like that of an earthen vessel (Job 10:8-9; Ro.9:21); the food he eats is of the earth (Job 28:5); and the end of his body is to return to the earth (Eccl.3:20).

There is a sense in which man is a paradox. He was created with all the dignity and honor possible—created by the hand of God and given the very breath of God. Yet, he was also created out of the most base and lowly stuff of all—dirt. So in one sense man has every reason to glory; in another sense he has every reason to be humble. What is to be man's attitude, his air? There is nothing wrong with glorying; there is nothing wrong with being humble. It is the reason or object for glorying and being humble that makes one right or wrong. Man is to worship and glory in God—that God gave him life and the dignity and honor (privilege) of life. Man is to walk humbly toward God and toward other men because all men come from the same material, the earth. (Jer.9:24; cp. 1 Cor.1:31; 2 Cor.10:17; Ro.11:36; Gal.1:5; 2 Tim.4:18; Heb.13:21; 1 Pt.5:11.) Therefore, man is exhorted to present his body to God as "a living sacrifice" and as "the temple of the Holy Spirit" (Ro.12:1; 1 Cor.6:19-20).

But note: man is not only body and soul; he is also spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.4:23-24). This is man's distinctive difference from all other creatures. As the Psalmist says, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made....my substance was not hid from thee" (Ps.139:14-15). Two distinctive facts need to be noted here.

a. It is not just the breath of life that is given to man. It is the very breath of God Himself. God's breath is life, eternal life; therefore, man was given the eternal life, the very Spirit of God Himself. Just think! God's very own breath, His Spirit, is within every person who is "renewed" (recreated) after the image of Him that created him.

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).

"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).

b. God breathes His own breath or spirit into the nostrils of man. Just imagine the picture. The body of Adam was lying before God; it had just been formed by God's hands from the dust of the earth. Adam was lifeless—just a body—never having breathed. God then breathed into Adam's nostrils His own breath or Spirit, the life of His very own being (which is the life that goes on and on, never ending, that is eternal).

Now, here is the point. God made no other creature like this. God gave no other creature His own breath, nor did He use this method of creation with any other creature. These two facts make man's creation distinctive.

What a shame that man cleaves to this earth and its worldliness! "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul" (Prov.15:32). How often the spirit of man should breath after God (Mt.5:6)!

2. The creation of man is in *the image and likeness of God.*

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....So God created man in His own image" (Gen.1:26-27).

Whatever *the image and likeness of God* means, it is that which distinguishes man from all other life which God created. No where else does God say He created a being in *His own image* and *after His own likeness*. Only man is in the image and likeness of God. What is the *image and likeness* of God in man?

a. It is unlikely that it means the *soul* of man. The Bible says all living creatures are souls. They were created as *living souls*. This is clearly pointed out in the Hebrew language of Gen. 1:20 which says, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly *living souls* [nephesh] that hath life." All living creatures possess the breath of life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 5, *Soul*—Mt.22:37 for more discussion.)

b. It is unlikely that it means the ability to reason. Apparently animals have the ability to reason and learn to varying degrees. Animals show ability to think when facing an enemy or difficulties in the innumerable experiences of life.

c. It is unlikely that it means the ability to be moral and just. Some animals (both individually and within family groups) have rules, practices, deeds, or acts that lead to moral and virtuous behavior among themselves and even toward others. There seems to be an exercise of right and wrong among some animals. However, it needs to be pointed out that just as man is far superior to animals mentally, they are also far superior to animals morally. Man is far superior to animals both as a rational being (a being that reasons) and a moral being (a being that is just, relating to others as he should). (Note that being *spiritually* and *mentally renewed* in Christ affects the rational and moral powers of man. Man can be *created* in righteousness and *true* holiness. Man can be delivered from the legalistic bondage and rules of a man-conceived righteousness and holiness. Cp. Eph.4:24; Col.3:10.)

d. It means that God gave man His spirit: His immortal breath, His life that lives forever just like God. God went beyond what He had made when He created the animals of the earth (a soul, an earthly life, a temporal breath); God made man a spirit (an eternal life, an immortal breath) that is just like Himself, just like His own life. To be in the image and likeness of God means "God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him *in spirit* and in truth" (Jn.4:24). Apparently, no animal is a spirit; animals are only souls. As living souls, they are enabled by varying degrees to breathe, to reason and to relate; but none of them have the inherent power to breathe eternally, nor the drive and ability to reason after God and to relate to God. Man does have that power, that drive, and that ability. *Man is spirit, even as God is Spirit.* Man is not only body and soul as the animals of creation. Man is not only a *living, breathing soul made for this earth; man is a spirit, an immortal being made to live with God eternally.*

3. In light of the above fact, there are at least two distinguishing marks of God's image in man, two distinguishing marks of man as a spirit.

a. God's image in man is the *spirit or power of immortality*. Man lives beyond this earth, lives eternally just like God. As mentioned above, according to the Bible, no animal is a spirit. Animals are only souls. As souls they are enabled to breathe and to live on this earth, but they do not have the inherent power to breathe eternally. However, man does have that power. Man is spirit, even as God is Spirit. *Man is not only a living, breathing soul and body like the animals made for this earth; man is a spirit, an immortal being made both for this earth and for eternity.*

b. God's image in man is the *spirit or the drive and ability (choice) to worship*. Man has not only the soulish ability to reason and to relate, but an unquenchable spiritual drive and ability to reason after God and to relate to God. Again, as mentioned above, no earthly animal has that spiritual drive and ability (freedom of choice). The Bible does ascribe to souls varying abilities, but no animal soul has the ability to reason *after God* or to *relate to God*. Worship is a spiritual drive and ability, an ability of spirit (of man) only. Just like animals, *man knows and understands the things* of this earth; but man is to know, believe, and understand God first and foremost (Is.43:10). Man is to worship God. God is Spirit and He has created man as spirit; therefore, man is to worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn.4:24).

There are two very significant facts to be noted about the image of God in man or of man as a spirit.

1. The rebellion of man against God (man's fall) affected God's image within man. God had created man as an immortal being. Man was to live on this earth and to live with God forever. When man exercised his ability or choice and turned against God, he lost both rights. He could no longer live on the earth forever, nor could he live with God forever.

In his rebellion against God, man was saying that he preferred a different world other than God's world and he preferred a different god (his own will) other than God Himself. Man thereby condemned himself to leave this earth (to die, Gen.2:17; 31f; 3:19) and to be separated from God eternally (Jn.3:18). Note that man was already created as an immortal being.

Therefore, man would continue on, he would exist forever—but he was (a) to be placed somewhere else other than this earth (he had chosen such); and (b) he was to be separated from God forever. It was his choice. The image of God—the power of immortality and the drive and ability to worship and live with God—was marred eternally.

2. The image of God within man can be renewed.

a. Man can now put on the new man.

> **"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph.4:24).**
>
> **"The new man...is renewed...after the image of Him [God] that created him" (Col.3:10).**

b. Man can be "born again" spiritually; he can be made alive to God just as he was in the beginning—never to perish. (Jn.3:3f; 1 Pt.1:23).

c. Man can live and worship God forever (Jn.3:16; 2 Pt.1:4). He can now partake of God's divine nature and be assured of living forever in the new heavens and new earth (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-18; Rev.21:1-7).

d. Man is renewed, reborn, recreated in Christ Jesus. "Who his own self *bare our sins* in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24; cp. 3:18. See notes—Ro.5:1; 2 Cor.5:1; cp. 5:17.)

> **"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen.1:26-27).**
>
> **"As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor.15:49).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(4:23-24) **Spirit—God, Spirit**: what is meant by "spirit"? At least three things are gleaned from Scripture.

1. Spirit is not flesh and bone. Spirit is not physical and material. Spirit is immaterial, non-physical, incorporeal. Spirit is of another dimension of being, another dimension entirely different from the physical and material dimension of being.

2. Spirit is the innermost part of being, the very core and heart of life. Spirit is the very *breath of God's life*, the very *breath of God's existence*, the very *being of God's life*. That is, spirit is *eternal existence and being*. It is permanent, unending existence. A spirit has the breath of life, of existence, of *being forever*.

> **"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen.2:7).**

3. God is Spirit. This means He is the very embodiment of life eternal, of permanent, unending existence. His nature is not flesh and bone; for the physical ages, deteriorates, dies, and decays—it ends. But not Spirit, not God. God exists forever and ever. He is life, the very embodiment of life eternal. Whatever life is—in all of its perfection—*God is*. God is the perfect Person, Life, Intelligence, Being. The basic nature of God is Spirit: eternal being, eternal life, the Perfect Being, the Perfect Life.

> **"And this is life eternal...thee the only true God" (Jn.17:3).**

	D. The Subject of Messiah, 4:25-30	he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?	**spirit of evil thought & pride**
1 There was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah	25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.	28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,	**4 There was the proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah**
2 There was the great claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah	26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.	29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?	
3 There was the spirit contrary to the Messiah: A	27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that	30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.	**5 There was the response of searching for the Messiah**

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

D. The Subject of Messiah, 4:25-30

(4:25-30) **Introduction**: this is a dramatic picture of conversion and witnessing. The Messiah was discovered, and the discovery was excitedly shared.

1. There was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah (v.25).
2. There was the great claim of Jesus: He is the Messiah (v.26).
3. There was the spirit contrary to the Messiah: a spirit of evil thought and pride (v.27).
4. There was the proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah (v.28-29).
5. There was the response of searching for the Messiah (v.30).

1 (4:25) **Jesus Christ, Messiah—Gospel, Open to—Truth, Open to**: there was the sense that Jesus was the Messiah. The woman's heart was burning within her. There was an intense, flaming sense of God's presence. The subject of her sin and of true worship was causing her heart to reach out for God. She sensed something very, very special about Jesus...

- that no man could speak as He had spoken unless He had a very special relationship with God.
- that perhaps He was the Messiah Himself.

She brought up the subject. Note the two things *she believed*.

1. That the Messiah was coming (erchetai). The idea is that the Messiah was *coming soon*. His coming was at hand, immiment. Her belief was based upon such Scriptures as Gen.3:15; 49:10; Num.24:17; Dt.18:15.
2. That the Messiah would be the Supreme Authority: "He will tell us all things."

The point is this: the woman did not deny the Messiah; she believed in the coming and authority of the Messiah. Her belief was not a saving belief, not a belief of commitment (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24). It was only a mental or an intellectual belief, a belief of knowledge; but the fact that she believed in the Messiah made her *open* to personal belief. She did not reject the witness of Jesus: she was not rude; she listened to Him. Therefore, God was able to give her a sense of His presence.

> **Thought 1.** The person who constantly rejects Jesus Christ or claims to be agnostic or atheistic is seldom reached for Christ. However, a person who listens to the Scripture and believes intellectually, mentally accepting the facts of God's promises, stands a much better chance of being reached by God. Mental or intellectual belief is more open; it is exposed to God's Word. Thereby it is more likely to become a saving belief, the belief of commitment.
>
> However, a warning does need to be issued. A person with only a mental belief can hear and reject so much that he becomes gospel-hardened, that is, so hardened against the gospel that he never trusts Jesus Christ as his Savior. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.13:4, 19 for more discussion.)
>
> > **"And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God" (Mk.12:32-34).**
> >
> > **"God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him" (Is.28:26).**
> >
> > **"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein" (Hos.14:9).**
> >
> > **"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going. A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident" (Pr.14:15-16).**
> >
> > **"The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge" (Pr.18:15).**

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Pr.22:3).

2 (4:26) **Jesus Christ, Messiah**: there was the great claim of Jesus, that He was the Messiah. Note three phenomenal claims.

1. He claimed to be "the Messiah" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20 for discussion).
2. He claimed to be the great "I Am," which is the basic name for God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20 for discussion.)
3. He claimed to be the Supreme One, the Supreme Authority who would tell her all things. He claimed...
   - that what He told her about her sin was true.
   - that she must take care of her sin.
   - that the only way to take care of her sin was to worship God in spirit and in truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.4:23 for more discussion).

3 (4:27) **Prejudice—Evil Thoughts—Tongue**: there was the spirit contrary to the Messiah, the spirit of evil thought and pride. Just as Jesus made His phenomenal claims, the disciples arrived. They marvelled (ethaumazon): were astonished, amazed, bewildered because He was talking with the woman. There were two reasons for this.

1. She was a woman. The Rabbis of that day would not be *alone* or *talk* with women in public. They feared what people might think and say.

Thought 1. Very honestly, there is some merit to this idea. A person, especially a leader, must guard himself and his thoughts around the opposite sex. Of course, one can carry the practice too far. Wisdom and self-control are both needed.

"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mt.5:28).

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor.10:5).

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5).

"A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief" (Pr.6:18).

"Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth" (Ezk.8:12).

2. She was a Samaritan, a person considered despicable, below their social standing, unfit to be seen with in public.

Note how Christ tore down the barriers of both problems and how the disciples controlled their tongue from questioning and gossiping.

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28).

"If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thine hand upon thy mouth" (Pr.30:32).

"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am" (Ps.39:1-4).

4 (4:28-29) **Witnessing**: there was the proclamation that Jesus was the Messiah. Note the tender, yet meaningful statement: "The woman then left her waterpot." She was very excited. The Messiah had confronted her; she had actually met Him, and He had met the need of her heart and life. She had to tell everyone about Him.

Note also the strength of the woman's witness. She was an outcast from society, had no friends because of the immoral life she had lived. However, meeting the Messiah changed all that. He dealt with her sin and shame. She could now face everyone. They, too, must have the opportunity to meet the Messiah.

Thought 1. What a lesson for every believer!

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mk.5:19).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:15).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit.2:15).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul" (Ps.66:16).

"I will mention the loving kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all the LORD hath bestowed on us" (Is.63:7).

"I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me" (Dan.4:2).

5 (4:30) **Jesus Christ, Response—Seeking, Jesus**: there was the response of searching for the Messiah. Note two facts.

1. The woman was of no social importance, not to the men of the city. In fact, she had often been misused, and she was often the very subject of gossip and jokes. But now something had happened to her: she had met the Messiah. The event had so changed her appearance, behavior, and attitude that people listened eagerly to what she said.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit.3:4-7).

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas.1:18).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezk.36:26).

2. The people responded—at least a good number did. The idea of the words "came unto Him" is that of a long streaming procession. The people "kept on coming to Him." It was her dynamic witness, the striking change seen in her life, that caused this enormous response. Because of her witness, many set out to find the Messiah for themselves.

"I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and laid meat unto them" (Hos.11:4).

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).

	E. The Subject of Labor for God, 4:31-42	that reapeth may rejoice together.	b. Eternal life c. Joy & rejoicing
		37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.	d. The privilege of having a specific part in God's great work
1 Physical vs. spiritual concerns a. The disciples' concern: Physical nourishment	31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.	38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.	e. The privilege of being sent by Christ f. The privilege of serving with other great servants of God
	33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?	39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.	**4 Labor—for results follow** a. Many believed the woman's testimony
b. Jesus' concern: Spiritual food—to do the will & work of God	34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.	40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.	b. Other opportunities were given
c. Jesus' challenge: Work & labor for God *right now*	35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.	41 And many more believed because of his own word;	c. Many more believed: He is "the Christ, the Saviour of the world"[DSI]
2 Labor—for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent		42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.	
3 Labor—for there are rewards & great benefits a. Wages	36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he		

DIVISION IV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIVING WATER, 4:1-42

E. The Subject of Labor for God, 4:31-42

(4:31-42) **Introduction**: the believer is to labor for God. His life is to be focused upon the will and work of God. His purpose for being on earth is to serve God, to obey and work for Him.

1. Physical vs. spiritual concerns (v.31-35).
2. Labor—for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent (v.35).
3. Labor—for there are rewards and great benefits (v.36-38).
4. Labor—for results follow (v.39-42).

1 (4:31-35) **Concern, Physical vs. Spiritual—God, Work—Diligence—Faithfulness—Commitment**: physical vs. spiritual concerns. The disciples returned from town. They had gone to buy food (v.8). Earlier, when they had arrived at the well on the outskirts of the city, Jesus had been tired and hungry. But now, as the disciples sat eating, they noticed Jesus made no effort to eat. He had been famished and exhausted. They were concerned, so they suggested He eat. Note two significant points.

1. The concern of the disciples was for physical nourishment. Their minds were not on the woman to whom Jesus had just witnessed, not on her spiritual needs. They had no spiritual depth yet. Their minds were not...
   - focused on Christ and His mission of salvation.
   - concentrating upon a world lost in sin and shame.
   - looking for every opportunity possible to reach and help people for God.

They had not yet learned the great warfare being waged between the physical and spiritual concerns of life. Their minds were on the physical: on food, on not missing a meal, on satisfying a temporary craving of the body.

2. The concern of Christ was for spiritual food and nourishment, to do the will and work of God. Three points are seen in this verse.
   a. The will that must concern men is *God's will*, and the work that must concern men is *God's work*, the will and work of...
      - leading people to the Living Water (Jn.4:10).
      - helping people quench their inner thirst (Jn.4:14).
      - bringing people to God.
      - seeking and saving the lost, even *Samaritans*: those who are looked upon with prejudice, thought to be of a lower caste, treated as the most despicable *outcasts* (Lk.19:10).

No greater will or work exists or can be done. *God alone* is God. His will and work is supreme.
⇒ Note the *esteem* with which Christ holds God: it is *God's will and work* that is to be done.
⇒ Note the *devotion* of Christ to God: God's will and work *must* be done.

b. God sent Christ. The words "sent me" are significant (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34). Christ was not sent to do the will of men, but of God. His work was not the work of men, but of God.

Thought 1. Note two lessons.

1) Note the warning to all believers. *Believers* are sent by God. They are to be single-minded. They are not to allow their *goals* and *energy* to become entangled with the business and affairs of the world.

> **"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:4).**

2) Note the mission to all believers. Believers are *sent* by God. They are on earth primarily to do the will and work of God, even in their *secular* labor in the world.

> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).**

c. Christ had to finish the will and work of God. God expected it to be completed. God expected obedience, faithfulness and perseverance until His will and work was done. Note: Christ did complete God's mission (Jn.17:4; 19:30). He now challenges His followers: "Labor for God—finish your task—complete your purpose for being on earth."

Thought 1. Note two warnings.

1) Note the responsibility and duty of believers. Believers are expected to finish the work that God sent them to do. Believers are not to become entangled and distracted by worldly affairs. They are to conquer wandering thoughts and desires, cravings for food, complacency, sleepiness. They are not to be given over to the world and the flesh, indulgence and license, money and material possessions.
2) Note the accountability of believers: God *expects* believers to be faithful, so there has to be a day of accounting, a day when wages are paid out.

2 (4:35) **Vision—Evangelism**: labor, for the harvest is ripe, the task is urgent. Note three points.

1. The heart of Jesus was upon the harvest of souls. Men focus their hearts upon the world's harvest, the planting of seed and the reaping of grain, the investment of energy and money, and the receiving of wages and gain. But the heart of Jesus was, and still is, upon people, upon the planting of the gospel seed and the reaping of souls for God.
2. The challenge of Jesus was, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields." The challenge was to quit looking down upon the earth and upon the affairs of the world, but instead to *look up* and observe the fields of people streaming across the world. The scene was probably dramatic. The Samaritans in their long flowing white robes were probably streaming across the fields by the hundreds, if not the thousands. Jesus' heart and arms reached out in a burst of compassion and intense feeling; He cried, "Look, lift up your eyes and look on the fields of lost souls streaming toward you. Let the things of earth grow strangely dim."
3. The fields of souls are white *already*: they are ready for harvesting *right now*. Since Christ has come to earth, God has put His Spirit into the world and supernaturally activated...
   - a thirst for God.
   - a sense of sin, a conviction of coming short.
   - a deep loneliness and emptiness.
   - a sense of purposelessness.
   - the knowledge that Jesus Christ has come to earth claiming to be the Savior of the world, the very Son of God.

It is absolutely necessary that believers lift up their eyes and look *now*. If not, the ripe harvest of souls and bodies will...

- remain in the fields of the earth.
- ripen *beyond* being tasteful and useful (be too old, too far gone).
- rot and be lost forever.
- fall to the ground and decay.

Thought 1. Two significant points for the believer.

1) We must lift up our eyes in order to look. We cannot see ahead or around us if we do not lift up our eyes to look. The things of the earth have to grow *strangely* dim *before* we can look and see.

> **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).**
>
> **"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor.7:31).**
>
> **"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal.6:14).**

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn.2:15).

2) We must look where we are so that our eyes will see the reality of what is around us. It is the harvest of souls around us that we are to look upon and focus our attention upon.

Note: we can look upon foreign fields through the challenge of others. Note another fact: the world is becoming more and more *one neighborhood*. Distance is becoming more and more insignificant. Every believer is becoming more and more responsible for the individual in the foreign land. In fact, a man's country is foreign to everyone else in the world, no matter who he is.

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal.6:8-9).

"But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mk.4:29).

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Lk.10:2).

"And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt.4:19).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit [souls] should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Ro.9:3).

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel [any nation] is, that they might be saved" (Ro.10:1).

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law....To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor.9:19-20, 22).

"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (Jas.5:20).

"And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:5-6).

"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hos.10:12).

3 (4:36-38) **Rewards**: labor, for there are rewards and great benefits. Christ mentioned six particular rewards and benefits.

1. The laborer will receive wages. God is going to pay the believer and pay him well. Note that the wages are already there, ready to be paid (see note, *Rewards*—Lk.16:10-12; Mt.20:8-16. Cp. Lk.10:7; 2 Tim.2:6.)

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:29).

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan.12:3).

2. The laborer gathers fruit unto *life eternal*. What he does is of supreme value. It is the greatest work imaginable. His work is lasting; it endures forever. His work actually delivers people from *ever* perishing, and it causes God to give them abundant and eternal life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

3. The laborer experiences the overflowing joy of serving God with other laborers. (See note, *Joy*—Ph.1:4.) Note: there is no envy or conflict between the two laborers. Both laborers work and rejoice together. (How different from so many!)

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall

be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Lk.15:6-7).

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Th.2:19-20).

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps.126:6).

4. The laborer is given the privilege of having a *specific part* in God's great work. It may be sowing; it may be reaping. It does not matter. It is God's work, and it is a *privilege for any man to have a part in it.*

Note something else. Each man has only a part. No man does it all. One man sows, and another man reaps. The task is too great for one man. All men are needed.

⇒ If the sower fails to sow, the reaper cannot reap. Some soul is not fed enough to ripen for the picking.

⇒ If the reaper does not reap, the soul ripened by the sower passes its usefulness: it rots and falls to the ground and decays.

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour" (1 Cor.3:6-8).

5. The laborer has the privilege of being chosen and sent by Christ, the Son of God Himself.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16.)

6. The laborer is given the privilege of serving with other great servants. Other great believers are laboring, and each servant enters into the labors of all others. (What a challenge to pray for all of God's servants and to get to the task of either sowing or reaping, whichever God has called us to do!)

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.3:9-11).

4 (4:39-42) **Witnessing, Results—Ministry**: labor, for results do follow. What follows gives a picture of exactly what Christ had been saying about laboring for God.

1. Many "believed on Christ" because of the woman's testimony. The seed had been sown in the woman's heart by the prophets of old and through the first five books of Scripture (cp. v.12, 19-20). Jesus reaped her soul. She in turn went and bore her testimony within the city. And "many...of that city believed on Him for the saying [testimony] of the woman."

2. Other opportunities were given. The new believers begged Christ to stay with them. They wanted to learn more, and they had friends who needed to hear Him as well.

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor.4:13).

"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" (Mal.3:16).

3. Many more believed that Jesus was "the Christ, the Savior of the world."
   a. The Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20).
   b. The Savior of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:42).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:42) **Jesus Christ, Savior**: the word "Savior" (soter) means a Deliverer, a Preserver. It has the idea of a Deliverer, a Savior who snatches a person from some terrible disaster that leads to perishing (cp. Jn.3:16). (See DEEPER STUDY # 6, *Salvation*—Mt.1:21 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus Christ is said to be the Savior (Lk.2:11; Jn.4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Eph.5:23; Ph.3:20; 2 Tim.1:10; Tit.1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Pt.1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18; 1 Jn.4:14).
2. God is said to be the Savior (Lk.1:47; 1 Tim.1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Tit.1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25).

	V. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43-54	to Galilee.	
		44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.	**2 Evidence 1: Honoring Jesus**
	A. The Evidence of Faith, 4:43-45	45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.	**3 Evidence 2: Welcoming & receiving Jesus**
1 Jesus entered GalileeDSt	43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went in-		

DIVISION V

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43-54

A. The Evidence of Faith, 4:43-45

(4:43-45) **Introduction**: this passage is very simple, yet it pictures one of the great lessons of the gospel—the evidence of faith.

1. Jesus entered Galilee (v.43).
2. Evidence 1: honoring Jesus (v.44).
3. Evidence 2: welcoming and receiving Jesus (v.45).

1 (4:43) **Jesus, Ministry**: Jesus entered Galilee. He had spent two days with the Samaritans and had experienced great success. However, Galilee was the area especially prepared by God for the Lord's ministry, so Jesus returned to the area where most of His ministry was to be conducted. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Galilee*—Jn.4:43.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(4:43) **Galilee**: the district of Galilee was the northernmost part of Palestine. Palestine was divided into three districts: Judaea in the far south, Samaria in the middle, and Galilee in the north. God had prepared Galilee down through history for the coming of His Son's ministry. Several facts show this (cp. Gal.4:4).

1. Throughout history Galilee had been invaded and repopulated again and again with different people and cultures from all over the world. Over the years such an influx of differing people had created an atmosphere susceptible to new personalities and ideas.
2. Galilee was strategically located. The world's leading roads passed right through its borders. Merchants from all over the world passed through and boarded in the inns of the cities.
3. Galilee was heavily populated. It was also surrounded by the Samaritans, Phoenicians, and Syrians, making it an open door for world evangelization. It was one of the most fertile lands in that part of the world. This fact, plus the travelling trade, led numbers of people to settle within its borders. There were within the district over two hundred cities with a population of fifteen thousand people or more (Josephus. Quoted by William Barclay. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1956, p.66). There were multitudes for Jesus to reach.
4. Galilee was open to new and fresh ideas. Its people, having come from all over the world, were liberal minded, always looking for new and fresh ideas to stimulate and challenge their thinking.

It was for these reasons that Jesus chose Galilee to begin His ministry. The area was an open door for people to spread the news that the Messiah had come and that the Kingdom of Heaven was being ushered in.

2 (4:44) **Honor—Jesus Christ, Honored—Belief**: the first evidence of faith is honoring Jesus. When Jesus went into Galilee, He stayed away from His hometown of Nazareth. His neighbors and fellow citizens had rejected Him and had attempted to kill Him (Lk.4:29). As a result Jesus had declared, "No prophet is accepted in his own country" (Lk.4:24).

⇒ Joseph was not honored by his brothers (Gen.37:23-36).
⇒ David was not honored by his brother (1 Sam.17:28).
⇒ Jeremiah was not honored by his hometown, Anathoth (Jer.11:21; cp. Jer.1:1).
⇒ Paul was not honored by his countrymen (Acts 9:23-24; see note—2 Cor.1:12-22).
⇒ Jesus was not honored by His hometown (Mk.6:1-6).

Now as Jesus returned to Galilee, bypassing the city of Nazareth, He again referred to the fact that a prophet has no honor in His own country.

A question needs to be asked. Why did Jesus make the declaration about dishonor here? It seems out of place. Glance at the three verses again (v.43-45). There are at least two reasons.

1. Jesus' heart was broken over His hometown. They were a special people to Him: He had played with some of them as a child, grown up with them, lived as a friend with them; and had fellowshipped, worked, eaten, and moved among them day in and day out. The thought of their rejection and hostility toward Him often preyed upon His mind. (See outline and notes—Mk.6:1-6 for discussion of their rejection.)
2. Jesus had to prepare the disciples for persecution. They were to be severely persecuted by their fellow countrymen. He repeated the fact time and again to drive it into their minds. He wanted them prepared and not caught off guard when persecution came.

Now, note the point: the first evidence that a person has faith is that he honors Jesus. A sharp contrast is being drawn between the refusal of Nazareth to honor Jesus and the receiving of Him by other Galilaeans. Several things need to be considered.

1. Jesus is due honor. He is due all the honor and glory in the universe.
   a. He is the Son of God who brought God's presence among men.

> **"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt.1:23).**
> **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).**

   b. He is the Savior of the world who came to save men from perishing and made it possible for them to live forever (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:42).

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
> **"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30-31).**

   c. He is the Son of Man who came to earth to experience all the trials of life that He might feel and be touched by man's infirmities and thereby become qualified to help man in all his suffering.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).**

2. People who believe in Jesus honor Him. Honoring Jesus is a clear evidence of faith. The word "honor" (timen) means to value, esteem, respect. It has three ideas that are significant.
   a. The idea of superior standing, exaltation, distinction, homage, reverence, and, of course, worship when referring to the Son of God.

> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).**

   b. The idea of a price paid or received, of credit due, of counting something of extreme value. Jesus is due the payment of man's life. True honor pays the price due to the Lord: the man who honors the Lord gives his life to the Lord (see note, *Self-denial*—Lk.9:23).

> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**
> **"Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Mt.13:46).**
> **"Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:11-12).**

   c. The idea of preciousness. The Greek word for precious (time) means *to be due honor, to be of precious value*.

> **"Unto you therefore which believe He is precious" (1 Pt.2:7).**
> **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).**

3. People who do not believe in Jesus do not honor Him. This is particularly seen in the dishonor of Jesus by His fellow citizens and the religionists (see outline and notes—Mk.6:1-6; Lk.4:16-30; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16). An unbeliever...
   - does not give Christ the worship, exaltation, or reverence due His name.
   - does not pay the price of surrendering his life to Christ as Lord.
   - does not count Christ as precious (due honor). Jesus' fellow citizens demonstrated this fact. He, the very Prophet of God Himself, had no honor in His own country.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).

"I am come in my father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:43-44).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:4).

"Men shall clap their hands at him, and shall hiss him out of his place" (Job 27:23).

"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jer.6:10).

"Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house" (Ezk.12:2).

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zech.7:11).

3 (4:45) **Faith, Evidence—Receiving, Jesus Christ**: the second evidence of faith is welcoming and receiving Jesus. The only way to be saved and to receive the benefits of Jesus' presence is to welcome and receive Him. Common sense tells us that a person who does not have the presence of Jesus Christ does not have the blessings of Jesus' presence. Jesus is just not there to bless and care for the person. However, this was not the case with the Galilaeans. They were receiving the benefits of Jesus' life and ministry, and they were receiving His blessings for three very specific reasons.

1. They had heard the Lord preach and seen His marvellous works in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast. They had not been the target of Jesus' ministry there; the citizens of Jerusalem had been the people upon whom Jesus had focused in Jerusalem. However, the Galilaeans had not felt slighted, not to the point that they shut Him out and refused to listen. They were attracted to Him, for their souls were reaching out for God. Therefore, they attended His preaching and observed His ministry. They opened their hearts to what He was saying about repentance and receiving the Kingdom of God. (See note—Mk.1:14-15.)

Thought 1. A man can never be led to believe in Christ *until* he is receptive to Christ. He *must be willing* to listen to the message of Christ.

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Mt.13:16).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th.2:13).

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (Jas.1:19).

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors" (Pr.8:34).

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise" (Pr.15:31).

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil" (Eccl.5:1).

2. They were a people seeking and worshipping God. Note why they had been to Jerusalem. They had gone to seek and worship God at the Passover, and it had cost them. The journey was long and difficult, for they were in the northernmost part of Palestine, whereas the temple was in Jerusalem which was in the south. Also, they had to take a circular route because Samaria lay between Galilee and Jerusalem, and the Samaritans considered them enemies, posing a threat to their safety.

The point is this: these Galilaeans had a hunger for God; therefore, their hearts were better prepared and willing to receive Christ.

Thought 1. A man who *sincerely* seeks God is better prepared to receive Christ. For this reason, men should be constantly seeking after God. Seeking God and receiving Christ are evidences of true faith (Heb.11:6).

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Mt.5:6).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

3. The idea being conveyed is that the Galilaeans welcomed and received Christ. They wanted to experience Christ for themselves. They had seen Him preach and minister in Jerusalem, and they wanted the same experience for themselves and for the rest of their people. Of course, some Galilaeans did not receive Him into their lives and hearts. They deserted Him (cp. Jn.6:66). But "as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (See note—Jn.1:12-13.)

Thought 1. Welcoming, receiving, and experiencing Christ for oneself is the greatest evidence of genuine faith.

> **"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit to perfection" (Lk.8:15).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**

	B. The Stages of Faith, 4:46-54	And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.	a. The promise: Go your way—your need is met b. He believed & obeyed Jesus' Word
1 A beginning faith a. There was a desperate need	46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.	51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.	**4 A confirmed faith** a. He "was now going"
b. There was hearing about Jesus c. There was coming to Jesus d. There was begging Jesus to help	47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.	52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.	b. He received glorious news: His prayer was answered c. He confimed the supernatural vs. the natural
2 A persistent faith a. A lesson in faith	48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.	53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.	d. He believed & knew that Jesus had healed his son
b. A desperate insistence	49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.	54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.	**5 A witnessing faith**
3 A trusting, obedient, & working faith	50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.		

DIVISION V

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE OBJECT OF FAITH, 4:43-54

B. The Stages of Faith, 4:46-54

(4:46-54) **Introduction**: this nobleman was a government official, probably holding some high position in Herod's court. His experience reveals the various stages of faith, the kind of growing faith that every man should experience.

1. A beginning faith (v.46-47).
2. A persistent faith (v.48-49).
3. A trusting, obedient, and working faith (v.50).
4. A confirmed faith (v.51-53).
5. A witnessing faith (v.53-54).

1 (4:46-47) **Faith—Seeking Jesus—Contrition**: the first stage is a beginning faith. When Jesus entered the city of Cana, a nobleman (basilixos), an official of the King's royal court, approached Jesus. The actions of the man demonstrated exactly what is involved in a beginning faith.

1. There was a desperate need. The man's son was at the point of death.

> **Thought 1.** Needs confront every human being. Eventually the severe needs arising from accident, illness, disease, suffering, and death strike everyone. No one is exempt. One may be an official in government or even the king himself—it does not matter. The day eventually comes when every man needs help. The severe disasters of life are beyond any man's control.

2. There was hearing about Jesus. The man heard about Jesus, and he listened attentively to what he heard. He did not…
   - turn a deaf ear to the message.
   - think himself too important.
   - consider the message to be foolish.
   - mock the person sharing about Jesus.
3. There was coming to Jesus. Facing one of the severe disasters of life, the man came to Jesus. Jesus was the only person he had ever heard about that might be able to help. Note what the man had to sacrifice in order to go to Jesus.
   a. The man had to leave the side of his dying son knowing he would be gone for many hours. Imagine the anxiety and fear that his son might die while he was away. The man would literally have to tear himself away from his son. Such an act shows how strongly he believed that Jesus could help him.
   b. The man had to travel almost a day's journey to reach Jesus. Capernaum was about twenty miles from Cana. Imagine the concern and apprehension gripping the father's heart every foot of the way, wondering if he should have left his son's side. The fact that he *persevered* and kept his eyes on the hope of Jesus shows the faith of his heart.

> **"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD" (Ps.31:24).**
>
> **"Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy" (Ps.33:18).**
>
> **"And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee" (Ps.39:7).**

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (Ps.42:11).

"For thou art my hope. O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth" (Ps.71:5).

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God" (Ps.146:5; cp. v.6-9).

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is" (Jer.17:7).

c. The man did not let his high position keep him from Jesus. He did not wrap himself in pride nor did he allow what others might say keep him from Jesus. Swallowing his pride, he confessed his need in the face of all who ridiculed, and he went to Jesus.

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity" (Is.58:9).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

4. There was begging Jesus to help. The man literally begged (erota) and kept on begging for Jesus to meet his need.

2 (4:48-49) **Faith—Belief—Signs**: the second stage was a persistent faith. Note two crucial lessons.

1. A lesson in faith. The man said, "Come down, and heal my son." Jesus was saying, "Unless I come down and you see signs and miracles you will not believe. Is that what you are saying?" Jesus had to teach the man that *His Word alone* was enough. *Belief in His Word* was what was going to assure the request. His power was at the nobleman's disposal if he would just believe Him. Belief is to precede signs and wonders. Note that "you" is plural. Jesus was addressing both the man and the crowd. He wanted the crowd to get the message as well. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—2:24.)

2. A desperate insistence. The man was in no position to argue, not even to think through what Jesus had just said. He was desperate. A severe disaster had stricken his life. He believed Jesus was the only One who could help him, and he was determined to secure Jesus' help. He cried out, "Lord [Kurie] come down ere my child die."

Note two significant points. (1) The man did not allow Jesus' rebuke to deter him, and (2) he kept after Jesus.

Thought 1. Note the crucial lessons.

1) Signs and wonders (the boy's healing) were not as important as *believing Jesus*. A man's eternal salvation was at stake, and the man had to believe to be saved.
2) The man was helped because he persisted. Persistence was absolutely necessary in securing the Lord's help. Persistence shows that one really recognizes and acknowledges his need and really believes God can and will help. Note: if a man ceases to ask, he shows that he does not believe God will answer. He gives up on God, disbelieving Him. This man did not allow the Lord's hesitation to stop him.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Mt.7:7-8; cp. v.9-11).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:4).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

3 (4:50) **Faith—Obedience**: the third stage was a trusting, obedient, working faith. Note three things.

1. The charge and the promise of Jesus was forceful.
   ⇒ The charge: "Go thy way."
   ⇒ The promise: "Thy son liveth."
2. The man's belief in Jesus' Word and his obedience. He "believed the word that Jesus had spoken," and "he went his way." The idea is that of *instantaneous faith and action*: he believed immediately and he turned immediately, heading home to his son. He *acted* on his faith. Note what he believed.
   ⇒ The Lord's love, compassion, and concern: that Jesus cared for those who had desperate need.
   ⇒ The Lord's knowledge (omniscience): that Jesus knew his son was healed, although he was twenty miles away.
   ⇒ The Lord's power (omnipotence): that Jesus had the power to heal his son, even from a great distance.
3. Both faith and obedience were necessary to receive the promise and help of Jesus. The man would not have received the help of Jesus if he had not *accepted and believed* the Word of Jesus or if he had rebelled and acted childishly. The man could have easily acted like so many when they bring their needs to God: "Your word is not good enough. My son is not healed. He is there in Capernaum and you are far away, *no place close* to him. How could he be helped with you so far away? Come, visit, *show yourself, stand before us*: help us." Such, of course, is pleading to God for help; but

it is not crying to God in faith, not basing one's request upon the Word and promise of Christ. It is asking God to help, but it is also dictating how God is to help. It is telling God how He is to act instead of *accepting and acting* upon His Word.

Thought 1. There is no real faith apart from obedience and work. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.5:9.)

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:26).

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed" (Lk.7:7).

"And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (Lk.17:14).

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Ps.34:22).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever" (Ps.125:1).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).

4 (4:51-53) **Faith**: the fourth stage was a confirmed faith. Note the words "as he was now going." He was in the act of *obeying Christ* when he received the glorious news that his prayer was answered. Again, it was believing the promise of Jesus and obeying Him that brought the blessing. Both belief and obedience were essential.

Note also that the man confirmed the supernatural vs. the natural. He asked the exact hour the boy recovered. He wanted to be certain; he wanted absolute confirmation. He was reaching out for stronger faith in Jesus. He was so full of joy and thankfulness to Jesus that he wanted to believe on Him more and more.

"And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk.11:22-24).

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (Jn.11:22).

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1).

"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezk.12:25).

5 (4:53-54) **Witnessing**: the fifth stage was a witnessing faith. Note two things.

1. The man witnessed to "his whole house." He told them about the experience, the Word of promise and instructions Jesus had given, and they all believed. They committed themselves fully to Jesus as the Messiah.
2. Witnessing for Jesus was not easy for this man. He was a high official, moving about in the halls of a corrupt government and among immoral officials. He would definitely be facing ridicule and persecution, and perhaps loss of position and even loss of life. But note: his faith was a witnessing faith. He loved Jesus for what Jesus had done for him, and he wanted others to know Jesus' glorious salvation.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mt.5:16).

"Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him" (Lk.8:39).

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

CHAPTER 5

VI. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE AUTHORITY & POWER OVER LIFE, 5:1-47

A. The Essential Authority: Power to Meet the World's Desperate Needs, 5:1-16

1 Jesus attended a Jewish feast in Jerusalem

After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Scene 1: The diseased & the ill—a picture of the world's desperate need

a. Man's desperate hope: Lying in a pool of water

b. Man's desperate faith: Hoping for healing power in a worldly source, in a pool of water

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

3 Scene 2: Jesus & the man—a picture of Jesus' power to meet the world's need

a. The man's plight

b. The Lord's compassion
1) Saw his state
2) Initiated a relationship

c. The man's helplessness: He had no family & no friends to help him

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

d. The Lord's power

e. The sinister problem: Jesus healed the man *on* the Sabbath

4 Scene 3: The religionists & the man—a picture of dead religion's trying to meet the world's need[DS1]

a. A religion of legalism

b. A religion ignorant of true authority

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

c. A religion blind to love & good

5 Scene 4: Jesus & the man after his healing—a picture of the believer's responsibility

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

a. To worship in the temple

b. To remember his healing

c. To sin no more

d. To fear the judgment

6 Scene 5: The religionists & Jesus: A picture of the world rejecting God's Savior[DS2]

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

DIVISION VI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OVER LIFE, 5:1-47

A. The Essential Authority: Power to Meet the World's Desperate Needs, 5:1-16

(5:1-47) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus, Authority**: Chapter 5 reveals Jesus to be the Authority over all of life. He is due the same worship, obedience, and service as God; for He is equal with God (Jn.5:17-18). As God possesses life within Himself, so Jesus possesses life within Himself (Jn.5:26). As God has authority over all of life, so Jesus has authority over all of life.

In revealing His authority, Jesus first demonstrated the truth of His authority. He healed a man who had been ill for thirty-eight years—and He healed him on the Sabbath. Both acts pictured the truth of His authority. The healing of the man showed His authority over the physical world, and the breaking of the Jewish Sabbath law showed His authority to determine the rules of worship. After demonstrating the truth of His equality with God, He then began to teach the truth. This procedure, first demonstrating some truth and then teaching it, was to be followed time and again as Jesus revealed who He was throughout the Gospel of John. (See Chapters 6, 8.)

(5:1-16) **Introduction—Sabbath**: through this healing miracle, Jesus was claiming to have supreme authority over the Sabbath (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sabbath*—Mt.12:1; cp. Jn.5:9-10, 16, 18). However, there are also other striking lessons: the Lord's compassion (v. 6-9), the problem of formal religion (v. 10-12), and the charge to a converted man (v. 13-14).

1. Jesus attended a Jewish feast in Jerusalem (v.1).
2. Scene 1: the diseased and the ill—a picture of the world's desperate need (v.2-4).
3. Scene 2: Jesus and the man—a picture of Jesus' power to meet the world's need (v.5-9).

4. Scene 3: the religionists and the man—a picture of dead religions trying to meet the world's need (v.10-12).
5. Scene 4: Jesus and the man after healing—a picture of the believer's responsibility (v.13-14).
6. Scene 5: the religionists against Jesus—a picture of the world rejecting God's Savior (v.15-16).

1 (5:1) **Feasts—Jesus Christ, Worship of God**: Jesus attended a Jewish feast in Jerusalem. The feast is not named, but it was probably one of the three Feasts of Obligation: the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, or Pentecost. These were called Feasts of Obligations because every male Jew who lived within twenty miles of Jerusalem was required by law to attend them. It is significant that Jesus was seen attending the feast.

1. It gave Him an opportunity to reach a large number of people. Most of the people who attended the feast would be God-fearing people and have their minds upon God; therefore, they would be more prepared for the gospel.
2. It gave Him an opportunity to teach people to be faithful to the worship of God. He, the Son of God Himself, was faithful.

Thought 1. All persons should be faithful in their worship of God.

2 (5:2-4) **Needy, The**: the first scene was that of the diseased and the ill. These—the diseased and the ill—picture those in the world who are gripped by desperate need. The setting is a pool by a sheep market. The word *market* is supplied by the translator; it is not in the Greek text. It may have been a sheep market or sheep gate or sheep stall where the animals were kept. Whatever it was, there was a pool to provide water for the animals to drink and five porches to provide a resting area for the comfort of the people. The pool and a "great multitude of impotent folk" lying around the pool were the focus of attention. Note two points.

1. Their need—which is a picture of all in the world who live in desperate need.
   ⇒ There were the blind who could not see.
   ⇒ There were the lame who could not walk.
   ⇒ There were the withered who were deformed and paralyzed.
   ⇒ There were so many who were poor and beggarly.

Thought 1. So many in the world are blind, lame and withered spiritually.

> **"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 10:1).**
>
> **"For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed" (Ps.31:10).**
>
> **"O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Ps.42:6).**
>
> **"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).**
>
> **"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).**
>
> **"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).**
>
> **"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion" (Ps.137:1).**
>
> **"The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).**
>
> **"Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go" (Jer.2:25).**
>
> **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [dead], that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Th.4:13).**
>
> **"That at that time ye were without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).**

2. Their desperate hope and faith. Either the description given in Scripture is to be taken literally or else men of that day gave their explanation as to what caused the pool to be *troubled*. If this account is man's description of what happened at the pool, then there was apparently a subterranean pocket of energy, either air or a stream underneath the pool that caused the pool to occasionally bubble up. The people of that day, grasping for something to help them in their daily lives, said that a supernatural occurance was happening when the water bubbled. An angel was thought to be swimming around in the water. The first person to move into the water after the bubbling was believed to be healed.

Thought 1. Men are always grasping for something to help them in their daily lives. It may be some *supernatural or destined power* in a pool of water or in the astrology of stars above or in some magical person on earth. Men never change, regardless of the generation. In their grasp for help in life, they continue to seek everywhere except in Christ, the Son of God Himself. They hope and put their faith in everything except Him.

> **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pr.14:12).**

3 (5:5-9) **Jesus Christ, Compassion—Power—Healing—Faith—Obedience**: the second scene was that of Jesus and the man. This is a picture of Jesus, who has the power to meet the needs of the desperate in the world. The outline of this point is adequate to see what happened.

1. The man's plight. He was either paralyzed or lame; he had been that way for thirty-eight *long* years.

2. Jesus' *compassion*: it was heart-warming, touching, and revealing—demonstrating how He wants to reach out to every person. He *saw* the man lying there and *knew* all about his desperate condition. Note the striking point: it was Jesus who initiated the relationship, approaching the man and reaching out to help Him.

Thought 1. Jesus *sees* and *knows* every man's condition. He reaches out to every man in compassion, offering help. He reaches out through...

- the message of the Word.
- the witness of family or friend.
- the beauty of nature.
- the thoughts about God that penetrate every man's mind.

"Who shall separate us from the love [compassion] of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again" (Ps.78:39).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not" (Lam.3:22).

3. The man's helplessness. He was all alone in this world, having no family or friend who could help him.

4. The Lord's power. This is a significant point: the man did not know he was healed *until he obeyed* the command of the Lord. Jesus did not pronounce a "word of healing"; He merely commanded the man to act. In the act the man was to show his faith. *If he believed*, he would arise and walk; *if he did not believe*, he would simply lie there, continuing on just as he had always done. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24.)

Thought 1. No man has to continue on and on through life just as he has always been, enslaved to the sin and corruption and desperate needs of the world. He can experience the healing power of Jesus Christ, the power to change his life and make him into a new man. All he has to do is one simple thing: believe the Word of Jesus Christ enough to obey, doing exactly what Jesus says. It is a clear fact: if we believe Him, we obey Him; if we do not believe Him, we do not obey Him. To be made whole and changed into a new man—a new man who is freed from the sin and desperate needs of this corruptible world—we have to believe Him enough to obey Him. (See note—Jn.4:50 for more verses of Scripture.)

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed" (Lk.17:14).

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).

5. The sinister problem: Jesus had healed the man on the Sabbath. By healing the man on the Sabbath, Jesus was breaking the Jewish ceremonial law; He was committing a serious sin, violating a ritual and rule of religion. The rest of the man's story centers upon this fact.

4 (5:10-12) **Religion**: the third scene was that of the religionists and the man. This is a picture of dead religion trying to meet the world's desperate need. Note three things.

1. Dead religion is a religion of legalism. The religionists were trying to meet the needs of people through rules and regulations, ceremony and rituals. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.6:2; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16.) They were more concerned with the man who was violating the ritual of the Sabbath than with the man who was suffering in a pitiful condition.

2. Dead religion is a religion ignorant of true authority. They should have known that the power of God had healed the man and should have been eager to share with the man Jesus, the man upon whom such power rested. But note: they cared little about the power of God and His messenger. They cared only that the status quo be maintained, that their religious practices continue as they were and not be violated. Their thoughts were upon their own religious position and security. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16 for discussion.)

3. Dead religion is a religion blind to love and good. Note the question of the religionists. It was not, "Who is the man who has healed and helped you so much?" but, "Who is the man that broke the religious law?" They did not see the good that had been done. They saw only that their position and security were threatened, that someone had more power and influence, doing more good than they were.

Thought 1. How many true messengers of God are criticized by powerless religionists, criticized because they do things differently or do more good than others? Men fear the loss of their position and security, fear that people may begin to wonder about their lack of true power—power that honestly helps men.

> **"But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Mt.12:7-8).**
>
> **"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mk.7:9).**
>
> **"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:10).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:16-17).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(5:10) **Jews**: the Jews (Ioudaio) are spoken of some seventy times in the Gospels. They are always spoken of as the opposition to Jesus Christ—as those who set themselves against Him. They include some Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, priests, and secular leaders. They were the religionists and leaders who personally refused to believe Jesus Christ. They rejected both His claim to be the Son of God and His offer of salvation and eternal life (cp. Jn.1:10-11, 19. See Subject Index.)

5 (5:13-14) **Follow-up—Maturity—Growth**: the fourth scene was that of Jesus and the man after healing. This is a picture of the believer's responsibility. Note that Jesus had left the man right after healing him because of the large crowd on the porches. For some unstated reason, Jesus did not want to attract a crowd at this time. The point is striking: Jesus sought the man out again! Remember, Jesus had reached out to save the man; now He was reaching out for another purpose. When He found the man, a picture of the believer's responsibility was painted.

1. There was the duty to worship. Jesus found the man in the temple worshipping and giving thanks to God.

> **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb.10:25).**
>
> **"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron.16:29).**
>
> **"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Ps.23:6).**
>
> **"Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple" (Ps.65:4).**
>
> **"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Ps.84:2).**
>
> **"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Ps.100:4).**

2. There was the duty to remember his healing, his salvation. The moment should never be forgotten or lost (cp. 2 Pt.1:9).

> **"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col.1:12).**
>
> **"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph.5:20).**
>
> **"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).**
>
> **"Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons" (Dt.4:9).**

3. There was the duty to sin no more. Apparently the man had been lame or paralyzed because of some accident caused by sin. Jesus cautioned the man: "Sin no more."

Thought 1. How many are physically crippled or diseased because of some sin? Many suffer *crippling accidents and diseases* because of sin such as drunkenness, immorality, or driving over the speed limit.

"She said, No man, Lord. and Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (Jn.8:11).

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Ro.6:12).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Is.1:16).

4. There was the duty to fear the judgment. Jesus warned the man that if he did not repent and turn from his sin, he would face a more terrible judgment than his crippling paralysis.

6 (5:15-16) **Jesus Christ, Rejection**: the fifth scene was that of the religionists and Jesus. This is a picture of the world rejecting God's Savior. Note two things.

1. The man told the religionists who had healed him. He did not do this to bring harm to Jesus. He thought the religionists should know and would want to benefit from knowing Jesus personally.
2. The reason the religionists opposed Jesus needs to be studied closely (see note—Jn.5:17-18 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(5:15-16) **Religionists—Rules and Regulations—Jesus Christ, Opposed**: breaking the Sabbath law was a serious matter to the Jew. Just how serious can be seen in the strict demands governing the Sabbath. Law after law was written to govern all activity on the Sabbath. A person could not travel, fast, cook, buy, sell, draw water, walk beyond a certain distance, lift anything, fight in a war, or heal on the Sabbath unless life was at stake. A person was not to contemplate any kind of work or activity. A good example of the legal restriction and the people's loyalty to it is seen in the women who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion. They would not even walk to His tomb to prepare the body for burial until the Sabbath was over (Mk.16:1f; Mt.28:1f).

It was a serious matter to break the Sabbath law. A person was condemned, and if the offense were serious enough, the person was to die.

The leaders' conflict with Jesus over religious beliefs and rules is sometimes thought by modern man to be petty and harsh, or else such conflicts are just not understood. Three facts will help in understanding why the conflicts happened and were life-threatening, ending in the murder of Jesus Christ.

1. The Jewish nation had been held together by their religious beliefs. Through the centuries the Jewish people had been conquered by army after army, and by the millions they had been deported and scattered over the world. Even in the day of Jesus they were enslaved by Rome. Their religion was the *binding force* that kept Jews together, in particular...
   - their belief that God had called them to be a distinctive people (who worshipped the only true and living God).
   - their rules governing the Sabbath and the temple.
   - their laws governing intermarriage, worship, and cleansing.
   - their rules governing what foods they could and could not eat.

Their religious beliefs and rules protected them from alien beliefs and from being swallowed up by other nationalities through intermarriage. Their religion was what maintained their distinctiveness as a people and as a nation. Jewish leaders knew this. They knew that *their religion was the binding force* that held their nation together. They therefore opposed anyone or anything that threatened or attempted to break the laws of their religion and nation.

2. Many of the religionists were men of deep, deep conviction, strong in their beliefs. Therefore, they became steeped in religious belief and practice, law and custom, tradition and ritual, ceremony and liturgy, rules and regulations. To break any law or rule governing any belief or practice was a serious offense, for it taught loose behavior. And loose behavior, once it had spread enough, would weaken their religion. Therefore, in their minds Jesus was committing a terrible offense by breaking their law. He was weakening their religion and threatening their nation.

3. The religionists were men who had profession, position, recognition, esteem, livelihood, and security. Anyone who went contrary to what they believed and taught was a threat to all they had. Some religionists undoubtedly felt that Jesus was a threat to them. Every time Jesus broke their law, they felt He was undermining their very position and security. (See notes—Mt.12:1-8; 16:1-12; 21:23; 22:15-22; 22:23-33; 22:34-40; 23:1-12.)

The error of the religionists was fourfold.

1. They misinterpreted and corrupted God's Word (see notes—Mt.12:1-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22; cp. Ro.9:4).
2. They committed serious sin after sin in God's eyes (see notes—1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.2:17-29).
3. They rejected God's way of righteousness, God's Messiah, who is Jesus Christ (see notes—Ro.11:28-29; 1 Th.2:15-16; cp. Ro.10:1-21, esp. 1-4, 19-21).
4. They allowed religion in its tradition and ritual, ceremony and rules to become more important than meeting the basic needs of human life: the need for God and the need for spiritual, mental, and physical health. Being the true Messiah, Jesus was bound to expose such error. Therefore, the battle lines were drawn.

The Messiah had to liberate people from such enslaving behavior. He had to liberate them so they could be saved and worship God in freedom of spirit.

The religionists had to oppose anyone who broke their law. They had to oppose Jesus because He was a threat to their nation and to their own personal position and security.

The religionists' attack took two forms.

1. First, they tried to discredit Jesus so the multitudes would stop following Him (cp. Mt.21:46).

"And they asked him, saying; Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse Him" (Mt.12:10).

"And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him" (Lk.6:7).

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" (Mt.22:15-17).

2. Second, failing to discredit Jesus, they sought some way to kill Him.

"The Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him" (Mt.12:14; cp. Mt.26:3-4).

"And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people" (Lk.22:2).

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God" (Jn.5:18; cp. Jn.7:1; 7:19-20, 25).

B. The Astounding Authority: Equality With God, 5:17-30

1 Jesus claimed equality with God
- a. His claim: My Father
- b. His claim clearly understood

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

2 Proof 1: His obedience
- a. He did not act alone
- b. He did exactly what He saw the Father do

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

3 Proof 2: His great works
- a. God loves His Son
- b. God shows Him what to do

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

4 Proof 3: His power to quicken and to give life, to raise up the dead

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

5 Proof 4: His control over the whole judicial process
- a. Purpose: That men may honor the Son
- b. Fact: If Christ is not honored, God is not honored

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

6 Proof 5: His power over man's destiny, to save men from death to life
- a. How men are saved
  - 1) Hearing His Word
  - 2) Believing that God sent His Son, Jesus
- b. Result: Eternal life
- c. Facts
  - 1) The spiritually dead can hear the voice of God's Son[psi] —*now*
  - 2) The spiritually dead can live—*now*

7 Proof 6: His energy of life, His self-existence

8 Proof 7: His authority to execute judgment

9 Proof 8: His claim to be the Son of Man

10 Proof 9: His power to resurrect all men from the grave
- a. Men who have done good: Resurrected to life
- b. Men who have done evil: Resurrected to damnation
- c. The judgment: Will be a just judgment

DIVISION VI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OVER LIFE, 5:1-47

B. The Astounding Authority: Equality With God, 5:17-30

(5:17-30) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Claims—Deity**: all men have to face this earth-shaking, shattering claim of Christ. He made the astounding claim that all authority belonged to Him. How could He make such an astounding claim? Because He proclaimed that He possessed equality with God and then He proceeded to give proof after proof which unequivocally verified His claim.

1. Jesus claimed equality with God (v.17-18).
2. Proof 1: His obedience (v.19).
3. Proof 2: His great works (v.20).
4. Proof 3: His power to quicken and to give life, to raise up the dead (v.21).
5. Proof 4: His control over the whole judicial process (v.22-23).
6. Proof 5: His authority over man's destiny, to save men from death to life (v.24-25).
7. Proof 6: His energy of life, His self-existence (v.26).
8. Proof 7: His power to execute judgment (v.27).
9. Proof 8: His claim to be the Son of Man (v.27).
10. Proof 9: His power to resurrect all men from the grave (v.28-30).

1 (5:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Claims—Deity—Religionists, Opposed Christ**: Jesus claimed equality with God. Note the astounding claim: He called God "My Father" not "our Father." Jesus was claiming a unique relationship, a Father-Son union with God; and note: the shattering fact was *clearly understood* by the religionists. They understood clearly...

- that He had said God was *His Father*. (Cp. "His *own* Son" Ro.8:32.)
- that He was making Himself equal with God. (Cp. "Equal to God," Ph.2:6.)

His claim was unquestionable. They knew exactly what He was claiming. (See note—Jn.1:34 for more discussion.)

A second claim was this: Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto" (heos arti ergazetai), which means "My Father keeps on working even until now." That is, God never ceases to work, even on the Sabbath (Sunday). It is true that when God created the world, Scripture says He rested on the Sabbath day; but this means He rested from His creative work, not from His other work. His work of love and mercy, helping and caring (compassion), looking after and overseeing (sovereignty) continued. Note: Jesus said, "And I work," meaning that He did good on the Sabbath as well as God. Again, He was claiming to be equal with God, claiming to have the same right to work even as God works: that is, to erase the wrong laws of men and to establish the just and compassionate laws of God.

It was for these two reasons that the religionists sought to kill Jesus.

1. He clearly said, "My Father," claiming that God was His Father and making Himself *equal* with God. He was clearly claiming that He was "*the* Son of God," "the only begotten Son of God" (cp. Jn.3:16).
2. He broke the law against working on the Sabbath (Sunday), claiming that He had the same authority as God, the authority to do good on the Sabbath: to be compassionate by teaching and helping and caring for men.

> **Thought 1.** A person either accepts the claim of Jesus to be equal with God or else he rejects the claim. The claim was clearly made. There is no longer a middle ground upon which men can stand. Man is now forced to make a decision.
>
> **Thought 2.** Some take the words and behavior of Jesus on the Sabbath as the approval for working on Sunday. This is false reasoning. Jesus was not violating nor erasing the Lord's day as the day for man's rest and worship. Just the opposite is true. He was saying that the day was to be used for compassion and mercy and good, helping men in their needs.

2 (5:19) **Obedience—Jesus Christ, Nature—Deity**: the first proof that Jesus was equal with God was His obedience. Jesus stated two astounding facts.

1. He did not act alone. He did not act independently of God (cp. Jn.5:30; 7:28; 8:28; 14:10). He was not disobedient to God. He did not...
   - take His life into His own hands
   - do His own thing
   - act selfishly
   - walk separately from God

Note the stress, the crucial importance of this point. Jesus said, "Verily, verily"; that is, listen, listen. Pay close attention to what is said.

2. He did exactly what He saw the Father do. There was no divergence whatsoever between the Father and Jesus. There are three claims here.
   - ⇒ Jesus was in *perfect, unbroken communion* with God.
   - ⇒ Jesus was of the very *same nature and person* as God.
   - ⇒ Jesus *acted as God because He was God*: He did exactly what God did. He did "the very same things" (tauta) in "the very same manner" (homoios). He acted and behaved exactly as God acted and behaved.

Jesus Christ was perfectly obedient; He acted exactly in the nature of God. (What a lesson *on* obedience! A challenge *for* obedience!)

> **"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Mt.11:27).**
>
> **"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).**
>
> **"Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:55).**
>
> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).**
>
> **"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).**
>
> **"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**
>
> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).**
>
> **"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn.17:21-22).**
>
> **"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:25).**

3 (5:20) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Works**: the second proof that Jesus was equal with God was His great works. Two astounding statements were made. (See note—Jn.5:36 for more discussion.)

1. The Father loves the Son. The idea is that the Father continues to love and never stops loving the Son. There is never a moment when the love diminishes. It is a perfect love that never ceases to give.

> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again" (Jn.10:17).**
>
> **"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came**

out from God" (Jn.16:27).

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:23).

"And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn.17:26).

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Mt.17:5).

"And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mk.1:10-11).

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph.1:6).

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).

"Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee" (Heb.5:5).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21; cp. Jn.14:23).

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (Jn.15:9).

2. Therefore, the Father showed the Son all things which He did.
   a. All things which Jesus did were the very things which the Father did.
   b. Jesus said that the Father was going to show Him greater things to do, greater things than the healing of the paralyzed man (v.8-9). Jesus would be...
      - controlling the forces of nature (storms on the Sea of Galilee).
      - multiplying food.
      - raising the dead and healing multitudes of people.
      - instituting a greater law, the law of the Son of Man. (See note—Mt.5:17-18.)
      - instituting new ordinances.
      - creating people anew.

"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).

"I must work the works of him that sent him, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:10-11).

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).

4 (5:21) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Life—Salvation—Resurrection**: the third proof that Jesus was equal with God was His power to give life.

1. God gives life, and only God *can* give life. Therefore if He wishes to give life to a dead body, He can. In giving life and raising the dead, God...
   - is sovereign, acting fully as He alone wills.
   - is not constrained nor restrained.
   - has the power and authority.
   - exercises perfect love, justice, and wisdom. He knows exactly what He is doing, and He does it perfectly.

2. The Son, Jesus Christ, gives life to whom *He wills*. Just as God does, so Christ does. Christ is equal with God in giving life and raising the dead. Note...
   - there is a state of death (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).
   - there is a state of life, of being quickened, of being made alive from the dead. (Cp. Eph.2:1f.)

Christ quickens and gives life to a person when that person believes on Him, and the life which He gives is both abundant and eternal (see note—Jn.3:16).

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Mt.9:6).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (Jn.17:2).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1; cp. v.2-3).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:4-9)

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col.2:13).

5 (5:22-23) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Judgment—Honor, of Jesus Christ—Relationship, To God**: the fourth proof that Jesus was equal with God was His control over the whole judicial process. Most men think that God (the Father) will judge the world and that they will have to stand before God in the day of judgment. But not so, Jesus says. He claims that God will judge "*no* man, but [He] hath committed *all judgment unto the Son.*" The scene is the picture of a supreme court—not just the supreme court of a nation, but the supreme court of the universe presided over by Jesus Christ.

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Mt.25:32).

"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick [the living] and dead" (Acts 10:42).

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Ro.14:10).

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom" (2 Tim.4:1).

"[Men] who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead" (1 Pt.4:5).

1. The purpose for all judgment being given to Christ is onefold: God has willed that all men honor the Son just as they honor Him. The idea is that God has determined that men will *keep on honoring the Son* with the very same honor and worship they give Him. (This is seen in the Greek tense which is *present active* subjective.)
2. This is a truth that shatters men, for it means that if a man does not honor Christ, he does not honor God; and if he does not worship Christ, he does not worship God.

"He that hateth me hateth my Father also" (Jn.15:23).

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"He that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me" (Lk.10:16).

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).

6 (5:24-25) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Salvation—Sin—Death**: the fifth proof that Jesus was equal with God was His power over man's destiny, the power to save men from death to life. Note three significant points.

1. How men are saved.
   a. They are saved by hearing Jesus' Word. The idea is *commitment and obedience* to it. In order to be saved, men must hear and follow Jesus' Word, doing exactly as He says.
   b. They are saved by believing God, that is, by believing that God has sent His Son Jesus Christ to save them.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

2. The result of being saved: eternal life. A man passes from the state of death into the state of life, from the state of condemnation into the state of justification. When a man is truly saved, he is never condemned to die; he is declared righteous and given eternal life. Note the descriptive way of expressing it: "is *passed* from death to life." Note also that man is

presently in a *state of death*; that is, man is in the process of dying. Man *must die and will die*. He cannot stop the process. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27. Cp. Eph.2:1, 5; 5:14.)

3. The facts are twofold. The hour has come and now is...
   - when the spiritually dead *can hear* the voice of the Son of God.
   - when the spiritually dead, who hear, *can live*.

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:25) **Jesus Christ, Son of God**: there are three places in the Gospel of John where Jesus calls Himself the Son of God (Jn.5:25; 10:36; 11:4; cp. Jn.19:7). Note also the claim to be the Son (Jn.5:19-23, 26; 6:40; 8:35-36; 14:13; 19:1). John's stated purpose should also be noted at this point.

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

7 (5:26) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Life, Source**: the sixth proof that Jesus was equal with God was His energy of life, His self-existence. God is the...

- Energy of life
- Power of life
- Being of life
- Possessor of life
- Source of life
- Essence of life
- Sovereign of life
- Self-existent life

God has life within Himself. And note: God has given the very same energy of life to the Son. Jesus Christ possesses "the very being" of life, the power and energy of self-existence within Himself.

The implication is clear: Jesus Christ has the *power* to give everlasting life to those who hear Him and believe on God.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen.2:7).

"That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days" (Dt.30:20).

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job 33:4).

"The Lord is the strength of my life" (Ps.27:1).

"For with thee is the fountain of life" (Ps.36:9).

"Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life" (Ps.42:8).

"[God] holdeth our soul in life" (Ps.66:9).

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.5:21).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:12).

8 (5:27) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Judgment—Sympathy**: the seventh proof that Jesus was equal with God was His power to execute judgment. Jesus Christ is the Son of Man, having lived just as all sons of men live. He walked through life as Man, bearing all the weight and pressure, trials and temptations, sufferings and death, joys and victories that men experience. He knows every facet and fiber of human life; therefore, He is able to execute perfect judgment. For this reason, God has given Him the right and the authority to judge men. (See note, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51.)

9 (5:27) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Son of Man**: the eighth proof that Jesus was equal with God was His claim to be the Son of Man. This was Jesus' favorite description of Himself (see notes, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51 for discussion. Cp. 3:13-14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:3-34; 13:31.)

10 (5:28-30) **Resurrection, the—Judgment**: the ninth proof that Jesus was equal with God was His power to resurrect all men from the grave. Note several facts.

1. It is the voice—the Word, the power of Jesus—that shall resurrect "all that are in the graves."
2. "All that are in the graves" shall be resurrected. Not a single one will be left in the earth. Everyone "shall come forth."
3. "The hour is coming" when all shall be resurrected. The hour is set, fixed, already determined.
4. Men are to "marvel not at this." It is not incredible or ridiculous, for *God is*; He does exist, and He has a plan for the world. The world has not just happened. Life has not happened by chance, without purpose and meaning beyond a

few brief years. Life is not doomed, without hope, destined to despair and dirt. There is meaning, purpose, and significance, both to life and to the world.

5. Men who have done good shall "come forth to the resurrection of life." How one lives matters. The man who professes and lives for God will take part in the resurrection of life, but they who have done evil will "come forth to the resurrection of damnation" (judgment, condemnation, cp. Jn.3:17). What a person has professed will not matter. All that will matter will be how a person has lived. Has he lived righteously and godly in this present world—believing on Christ and serving Him? Believing on Christ means that a person has committed His life to follow Christ, to obey and serve Him (see note—Jn.2:2).

Thought 1. Note two critical facts about the resurrection.

1) There is to be a resurrection of all who have believed and obeyed the Lord Jesus Christ.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:25).**
>
> **"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).**
>
> **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor.15:22).**
>
> **"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).**
>
> **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:16-17).**
>
> **"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (Ps.49:15).**
>
> **"Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth" (Ps.71:20).**
>
> **"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos.13:14).**

2) There is to be a resurrection not only of believers but also of all those who have rejected and disobeyed the Lord Jesus Christ.

> **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).**
>
> **"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).**
>
> **"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan.12:2).**

6. The judgment of Christ will be a *just* judgment. He will judge precisely as He "hears," exactly as *God wills*. He hears and does the will of God perfectly; therefore, He will hear God and execute God's judgment exactly as He wills. Only men who have lived godly lives will take part in the "resurrection of life." All others will come forth to the "resurrection of damnation."

> **"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).**
>
> **"Who will render to every man according to his deed" (Ro.2:6).**
>
> **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).**
>
> **"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pt.1:17).**
>
> **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:12-15).**
>
> **"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev.22:12).**
>
> **"Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work" (Ps.62:12).**
>
> **"I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).**

	C. The Five Witnesses to Jesus' Authority & Power, 5:31-39	36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.	**4 The witness of miraculous works**
1 One's own testimony is unacceptable	31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.		
2 The witness within: The Spirit	32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.	37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.	**5 The witness of God Himself**[DSI]
3 The witness of John the Baptist	33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. 34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. 35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.	38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. 39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.	**6 The witness of the Scriptures**

DIVISION VI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OVER LIFE, 5:1-47

C. The Five Witnesses to Jesus' Authority and Power, 5:31-39

(5:31-39) **Introduction**: there are five witnesses to Jesus' authority.

1. One's own testimony is unacceptable (v.31).
2. The witness within: the Spirit (v.32).
3. The witness of John the Baptist (v.33-35).
4. The witness of miraculous works (v.36).
5. The witness of God Himself (v.37-38).
6. The witness of the Scriptures (v.39).

1 (5:31) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Witness—Judicial System**: a man's own testimony is unacceptable and suspicious. The witness of a man has to be supported by other witnesses, and at least two witnesses are required. This is one of the most fundamental laws of society throughout the world. (Cp. Dt.17:6; 19:15; Mt.18:16; 2 Cor.13:1; 1 Tim.5:19.) This is the point that Jesus was making. Note how He was stooping down to the level of man. What He had said was true. He was the Son of God; He could not lie. He was precisely who He claimed to be and the fact should have been known. Men should have been searching and seeking after God so diligently that they could not miss the fact that He was the Son of God. He was so different and so Godly. However to meet their need, He would prove the fact by meeting the demands of justice. He would call forth five witnesses to prove His claim.

> **Thought 1.** The fact that a man's word is untrustworthy reflects the poor stuff of which men are made. Man's word, his honesty and integrity, cannot be trusted—not even in a court of law. Note his nature of self-centeredness: he loves himself much more than truth, even when the life of society and its laws are threatened.
>
> **Thought 2.** Note the love of Christ for man—His seeking after man, using every method He can to convince men so that they might be saved.

2 (5:32) **Holy Spirit—Jesus Christ, Witnesses to**: there is the witness within, the Holy Spirit. Christ did not identify who He meant by "another" (allos). (Cp. Jn.14:16.) Most commentators believe He was referring to God Himself. There are three reasons why the Holy Spirit is thought to be the One to whom Christ was referring.

1. The Holy Spirit had already been given to Christ "without measure" (see note—Jn.3:34). He was, of course, very conscious of the witness of the Spirit both within and without Him. The Spirit was empowering Him and doing the works of God through Him.
2. The Holy Spirit is One of the witnesses that bears witness of Christ (cp. 1 Jn.5:6-12). When John the apostle discusses the witness to Christ in his epistle, he mentions the Spirit. If the present verse is not referring to the Spirit, then the Spirit is not listed as one of the witnesses in the present passage. This would be most unlikely, especially since the witness of the Father is covered in v.37-38, and the ministry and witness of the Spirit is covered so thoroughly in this Gospel. (See outline and notes—Jn.14:15-26; 16:7-15.)
3. Note how the verse reads. Christ seems to be talking more about an inner witness, the witness of a Presence which He senses within His innermost Being, a Power that works in and through Him. This of course could be God, but again it could also be the Spirit which would fit more naturally in the context.

Note the Lord's words, "I *know* that the witness He witnesseth of me is *true*." The Lord meant at least two things.

1. He knew the truth of the witness within His own heart and life. He had the consciousness, the sense, the awareness, the personal knowledge of the Spirit's witness within His own inner Being. The Spirit bore witness with Jesus' own Spirit that He was the Son of God.
2. He knew that the witness and the work of the Holy Spirit, in and through Him, was true. The Spirit was convicting men, working in their hearts and lives, convincing them of the claims of Christ. (See outline and notes—Jn.16:7-15 for the Lord's discussion of the Spirit's work.)

> **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).**
>
> **"It is the spirit [Holy Spirit] that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).**

3 (5:33-35) **John the Baptist**: there was the witness of John the Baptist. The religionists had sent some men to ask John about his witness, and John bore witness to *the truth*. Note several points.

1. The words "bore witness" (memartureken) mean a permanent and continuing witness. His message was not a fly-by-night witness that appeared on the scene and suddenly disappeared. His witness continued and still continues and will always continue. It was a trustworthy message, a witness to the truth. (Cp. Jn.1:19-27, 29-36.)

> **"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand....Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:1-2, 8).**
>
> **"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Mt.3:10-11).**

2. The words "the truth" are a reference not only to the truth of John's message but also to Christ Himself, who is *the Truth*, the very embodiment of Truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.14:6.)

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**

3. Jesus did not need or plead the witness of a mere man. The implication for man is clear: men should not plead the witness of a mere man when dealing with eternal issues that determine their destiny. The testimony of God's Son should be counted the strongest of witnesses, yet tragically men want the testimony of other men just like themselves.

Note: Jesus did not receive the witness of men, for He knew what was in man (cp. Jn.2:24-25). He also rebuked Nicodemus for not receiving His witness and letting it be enough (Jn.3:11).

4. Jesus reached out to men, giving them what they required, hoping to save some. He gave them the most dynamic human witness He could—John the Baptist. John's witness was as clear and pointed as it could be: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn.1:29).
5. The witness of John was that of a burning and shining light. His light was clearly seen to be of God, lit by God as the light of God. That John's message (witness) was of God could not be questioned by any reasonable and honest person. John definitely showed men the way to God, just as a light shows men the way out of darkness.
6. The people rejoiced in John's light, but *only for a season*. They looked upon John as a sensation, a moment of excitement, listening and accepting only what they wished. Very simply, if John said anything that did not allow them to do as they desired, they rejected it.

4 (5:36) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Works—Witness to**: there was the witness of miraculous works. Four significant things were said by Jesus. (See notes—Jn.5:19; 5:20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—10:25 for more discussion.)

1. Jesus' works were a greater witness than the witness of John the Baptist.
2. Jesus' works were given to Him by the Father. He was on a mission for God; therefore, what He did—all the works—were of God (cp. Jn.3:35).
   - ⇒ He was the One appointed by God to carry out the works of God.
   - ⇒ He was the One empowered by God to do the works of God.
3. Jesus' works were the Father's works. The Father was the Originator, the Planner, the Overseer of the works. He was the One who had given the works to be done and completed. Note that Jesus claimed to have completed the works perfectly (cp. Jn.17:4; 19:30).
4. Jesus' works proved that the Father had sent Him. They were works which had never been, or ever would be, done by others (Jn.15:24). They were so unusual—so full of power and wisdom, love and care, glory and honor to God—that all men who failed to see and believe were without excuse. Remember, He had just performed one of the Godly works, healing the paralyzed man.

> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).

"And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?" (Mt.13:54; cp. Mk.6:2, 14).

5 (5:37-38) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Witnesses to—Word of God**: there was the witness of God Himself. God sent Christ into the world, so Christ naturally bore witness of God. The witness included all that God had ever revealed to man down through the centuries. Everything God did was to prepare the way for His Son, and every single act bore witness that God was sending His Son. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22.)

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

The point is striking: the way was being prepared for the coming of God's Son...

- every time God spoke.
- every time God appeared (theophany, in whatever form or manner).
- every time God acted.

Christ made two charges against the religionists. (The same charges can be made against the world.)

1. "Ye have neither heard His [God's] voice *at any time*, nor seen His shape, what He is like." Some people may think they have seen God, but they have not. However, it is not because God has not spoken or shown what He is like. He has revealed the truth about Himself and the coming of His Son.

⇒ Some in the *Old Testament* did hear and see what God was like (Gen.32:30; Ex.24:10; 33:11; Num.12:8; Dt.4:12; 5:4, 24).

⇒ Some in the *New Testament* did hear and see what God was like: Simeon (Lk.1:25f), Anna (Lk.1:36f), and others (Jn.1:40f; 12:28-30).

However, most down through the centuries have not heard and seen God, and most still do not.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (Jn.1:18).

"[Jesus Christ] who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15).

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Tim.1:17).

"[God] who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim.6:16).

"No man hath seen God at any time" (1 Jn.4:12).

"And he said, thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Ex.33:20).

"Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not" (Job 9:11).

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him" (Job 23:8).

2. "Ye have not His word abiding in you." They had the Old Testament Scriptures, but they did not have the Word of God *abiding* in their hearts and lives (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.5:38 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(5:38) **Word of God—Abiding**: the Word of God must abide in a person for a person to know God in a personal way. Two things are necessary for the Word of God to abide in a person.

1. The Word of God must be accepted as *God's* Word. The Word must be accepted as coming from God; it must be accepted as truth, as fact, as gospel. Where the religionists failed is seen in the next point. (Also see note—Jn.5:39.)
2. The Word of God *must be abiding* in a person. This means two things.
   a. The Word of God must be "*in* you" not just *among* you (v.38). The religionist had the Word of God all around him: on his desk and table, in his home and church, on his tongue, and sounding upon his ears. However, he did not have the Word *in* his heart, and *unless something is within, it is not abiding* in a person.
   b. The Word of God must be "abiding." It must not only be allowed to come into a person's mind and heart, it must be grasped and clung to. It must stay within and remain and not be allowed to depart. *Abiding* means the Word of God is...
      - living, moving, ruling, and reigning in a person's life and heart.
      - stirring, convicting, and challenging a person.
      - leading to confession, repentance, growth, and maturity.
      - teaching love, compassion, forgiveness, goodness, and just behavior.
      - causing one to believe and trust God's Son, Jesus Christ, as his Savior and Lord.

Thought 1. When God's word *truly abides* in a person, that person naturally *accepts what God says and lives as God says*, and that person believes God's Son. It would be impossible to accept what God says and not accept what He says about His Son. To reject what God says about His Son is to reject God's Word. If a person does not believe God's Son, to whom God witnesses, then God's Word does not abide in that person.

> **"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).**
>
> **"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb.4:12).**

6 (5:39) **Scripture—Jesus Christ, Deity—Eternal Life**: there is the witness of Scripture. Note three things.

1. The word "search" (eraunate, "ye search") can be either a fact, that "ye search the scriptures," or a command, "search the scriptures." It seems that the words "for in them ye think" point toward the meaning's being a statement of fact. The religionists do "search the scriptures," for they think they have eternal life "in their searching."

2. The Scriptures *proclaim* the message of eternal life and show us how to secure eternal life, but the Scriptures do not impart or give eternal life. Only Christ can give eternal life. A person does not secure eternal life...
   - by reading the Scripture, no matter how much he reads.
   - by knowing the Scripture, no matter how much he knows.
   - by being religious, no matter how religious he is.
   - by doing religious works, no matter how much good he does.

A person receives eternal life only by believing and giving his heart and life to Jesus Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24.)

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).**

3. The Scriptures testify of Christ.

> **"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself....Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (Lk.24:27, 45).**
>
> **"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pt.1:10-11).**

	D. The Rejection of Jesus' Claim, 5:40-47	44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?	**4 Men seek the approval & honor of mere men**
1 Men do not "will" to come to Christ	40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.	45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.	**5 Men do not believe prophecy—do not believe Moses' writings**
	41 I receive not honour from men.		
2 Men do not love God	42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.	46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.	
3 Men receive false messiahs	43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.	47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?	**6 Men do not believe the words of the true Messiah**

DIVISION VI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OVER LIFE, 5:1-47

D. The Rejection of Jesus' Claim, 5:40-47

(5:40-47) **Introduction**: men reject Jesus' claim to be "equal with God" (Jn.5:18). Jesus gave six reasons for their rejection.

1. Men do not "will" to come to Christ (v.40-41).
2. Men do not love God (v.42).
3. Men receive false messiahs (v.43).
4. Men seek the approval and honor of *mere* men (v.44).
5. Men do not believe prophecy—do not believe Moses' writings (v.45-46).
6. Men do not believe the words of the true Messiah (v.47).

1 (5:40-41) **Will**: men do not "will" to come to Christ. The *will* is stressed. Men deliberately choose to reject Jesus Christ. They actually exercise the will not to come to Him for salvation. There is an obstinacy and a hardness within man, a rebellion against God (cp. Jn.1:11; Mt.23:37).

> **"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51).**
>
> **"Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them: but they would not give ear" (2 Chron.24:19).**
>
> **"And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction" (Jer.32:33).**
>
> **"As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee" (Jer.44:16).**

1. Jesus claimed that life was in Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3).

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (Jn.5:26).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**

2. Men receive life by coming to Jesus Christ. They keep from dying by coming to Jesus Christ (see notes—Jn.5:21; 5:24-25; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).

> **"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (Jn.5:21).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24-25).**

3. Jesus was not claiming to be the Son of God in order to receive the praise and glory of men (v.41). He was proclaiming the truth because He loved them, and the fact of His deity is the truth. Men must face up to the truth if they wish

to be saved. Man's rejection cuts the heart of Christ, and the hurt is seen in the tenderness and appeal of this verse. There is a pleading in His words: "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).**
>
> **"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb.12:25).**

2 (5:42) **Rejection—Profession, False**: men will to reject Christ, to reject the claim of Christ because they do not love God. The love of God is not in their hearts.

1. The people to whom Jesus was speaking professed to love God deeply. They...
   - worshipped faithfully.
   - knew the Scriptures.
   - were always praying.
   - were unashamed to talk about Him.

However, the love of God was not *in* them, not really. It was not shed abroad in their hearts, not the kind of love that honors and praises God, giving all that one is and has to love and help people.

> **"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:5).**
>
> **"Beloved, let us love one other: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love" (1 Jn.4:7-8)**
>
> **"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Mt.15:8).**

Thought 1. If men loved God, they would receive Christ.

> **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins....And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him....We love him, because he first loved us" (1 Jn.4:9-10, 16, 19).**

2. Jesus said, "I know you." He knows a man's heart, if a man's profession is true and genuine or false and counterfeit. Jesus sees right through a man's words, down deep into his heart.

> **"For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad" (Lk.8:17).**
>
> **"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).**
>
> **"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings" (Pr.5:21).**
>
> **"For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD" (Jer.2:22).**
>
> **"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).**
>
> **"Great in counsel, and mighty in work: for thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.32:19).**
>
> **"And the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them" (Ezk.11:5).**
>
> **"For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins: they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" (Amos 5:12).**

3 (5:43) **Messiah—Messiahship**: men receive false messiahs. There is a contrast here.

1. Jesus said, "I have come in my Father's name," but "another shall come in his own name." Jesus came in the name, that is, in the authority and truthfulness, of God. "Another," the false messiah, comes in the authority and word of himself.
2. Jesus said, "Ye receive me not," but "him ye will receive." Men reject God's Son, the true Messiah, but they receive the false messiah. Why?

Men want either to escape from the world or to get all they can from the world.

⇒ Some want to escape the pressure, tension, immorality, selfishness, hatred, and injustices of the world.

⇒ Others want either a reasonable amount of prosperity, pleasure, power, recognition, or fame of the world.

Jesus, being the Son of God, cannot lie to man. He has to tell the truth. The way to life is not by escaping the world nor by getting plenty of the world. The way to life is to do exactly as Jesus said:

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:23-25).

The false messiah or human deliverer is not truthful. He is a mere man, full of all the weaknesses and infirmities of men. A false messiah is a person born of mere man and woman; he is a person who will die as a mere man just as all other men die. The false messiah is a deceiving person with leadership qualities and charisma who has learned to promise what men crave: escapism and possessions. Therefore, he sets himself up claiming that belief in his "name," that is, in what he says, will meet man's needs. Jesus says that most men "will receive" such a false messiah or deliverer. (Cp. Mt.24:23-26. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.1:18.)

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:19).

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:13-15).

"Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm" (1 Tim.1:7).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:3-4).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 Jn.2:22-23).

4 (5:44) **Seeking Approval—Pride—Self-Suffering**: men seek the approval and honor of *mere* men. Men make two gross mistakes.

1. They seek the acceptance and approval, the recognition and honor, of other men, and such becomes the driving force of their lives. People seek...
   - the right position in which to be seen
   - the right place to live and work
   - the right car to drive
   - the right clothes to wear
   - the right looks to attract
   - the right gifts to secure honor
   - the power and wealth to possess
   - the recognition and fame to be known

They do not seek the acceptance and approval nor the recognition and honor of God.

2. They measure themselves against other men, not against God. When a man measures himself by other men, he is seen to be good and acceptable. He does not come short often, if at all. But note something: when a person is being praised and honored by others, he feels acceptable, complete, fulfilled. Therefore, he often senses no need for God. Only when men measure themselves against God do they see themselves for what they are: "short of God's glory" (Ro.3:23). Only then do they bow in humility and beg forgiveness and cast themselves upon the mercy of God. Note the question of Christ: "[In light of this,] how can ye believe?"

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas.1:26).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn.1:8).

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).

"For men to search their own glory is not glory" (Pr.25:27).

"Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" (Is.5:21).

"Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men" (Hos.10:13).

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (Obad.3-4).

5 (5:45-46) **Man, Unbelief—Prophecy**: men do not believe prophecy, do not believe Moses' writings. Note two things.

1. Jesus said, "Moses wrote of me." All the prophecies in Genesis through Deuteronomy are the prophecies to which Jesus was referring (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.1:45 for the prophecies by Moses).

2. Jesus said that Moses was the one who condemned man's unbelief, not Him. The men standing before Jesus professed to believe Moses, but they did not—not really.

⇒ They did not believe what Moses said about the promised Messiah.

⇒ They did not live as Moses said to live.

⇒ Their profession would be condemned by the very one whom they said they trusted, by Moses himself.

"And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mk.7:9).

"Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye" (Mk.7:13).

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee" (Ps.50:17).

"Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Is.5:24).

"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD" (Is.30:9).

"Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon: therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant" (Is.30:12-13).

"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jer.6:10).

"Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it" (Jer.6:19).

"The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them?" (Jer.8:9; cp. Jer.9:13-16; Hos.4:6; Amos 2:4).

"Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts" (Zech.7:12).

6 (5:47) **Unbelief—Jesus Christ, Words—Word of God**: men do not believe the words of the true Messiah. Jesus gave two reasons why men do not believe Him.

1. They did not believe Moses' writings, the words of Scripture. How then could men believe the promises of the Messiah?

2. They did not believe the testimony of a man whom they professed was a great and honorable man. They honored Moses, calling him great and honorable; yet they treated him as a liar, a man whose testimony was unreliable. How then could men believe the words of Christ?

Thought 1. How many acknowledge Christ as a great and honorable man yet treat Him as a liar, a man whose testimony and claims are totally untrustworthy?

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (1 Tim.6:3-4).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jn.14:15).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

CHAPTER 6

VII. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

A. Jesus Feeds Five Thousand: The Provision for Human Need, 6:1-15

1 The setting
- a. After these things Jesus crossed the Lake of Galilee[DS1]
- b. Feverish, surging crowds followed Him
- c. Jesus sought rest & relief
- d. The pilgrims were gathering for the Feast
- e. The two concerns of Jesus[DS2]
  - 1) The missing of a meal—Jesus wants to meet every need
  - 2) The testing & strengthening of His disciples: Teaching the kinds of faith

2 Lesson 1: There is a pessimistic faith[DS3]

3 Lesson 2: There is an optimistic but questioning faith[DS4]

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.
2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.
3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.
4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.
5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?
6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.
7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.
8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,
9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?
10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.
11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.
12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.
13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.
14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.
15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

- a. Andrew searched for & brought food
- b. He questioned the supply

4 Lesson 3: There is a positive, unswerving faith
- a. Jesus' faith
  - 1) He took & gave thanks for what He had
  - 2) He gave what He had
  - 3) He used others to help Him
- b. God's answer & provision
  - 1) He met the people's need: He fed & filled them
  - 2) He gave an overabundance
  - 3) He allowed no waste

5 Lesson 4: There is a materialistic profession of Jesus
- a. The people's profession: Jesus was the Messiah
- b. The people's concept: Jesus was an earthly, materialistic king

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

A. Jesus Feeds Five Thousand: The Provision for Human Need, 6:1-15

(6:1-71) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Man, Needs of—Christ, Bread of Life**: Chapter 6 reveals Jesus to be the Provision for every human and material need. Jesus first demonstrated the truth, then He began to preach and teach it. He showed that He was...

- concerned with every need in life (even a missed meal, Jn.6:1-15).
- concerned with every overpowering need (the calming of a storm, Jn.6:16-21).

No matter how small the need or how stormy the problem, Jesus is the Provision, the Bread of Life, and the power to meet man's every need. He can provide a single meal, and He can calm the most stormy problem.

(6:1-15) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life, the Provision for human and material needs. (See outline and notes—Mt.6:25-34.) Note two significant facts.

First, trying to meet human needs by any other source than Christ is doomed to failure and will not satisfy.

Second, believing and trusting are essential for God to meet human need. However, there are several levels of faith and trust. This is the lesson man must learn in order to see that Christ is the Bread of Life, the Provision for human need.

1. The setting (v.1-6).
2. Lesson 1: there is a pessimistic faith (v.7).
3. Lesson 2: there is an optimistic but questioning faith (v.8-9).
4. Lesson 3: there is a positive, unswerving faith (v.10-13).
5. Lesson 4: there is a materialistic profession (v.14-15).

1 (6:1-6) **Jesus Christ, Concerns—Ministering**: the setting is descriptive. Jesus crossed over the sea or lake of Galilee (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.1:16; note—Lk.8:22). The lake was about thirteen miles long and eight miles wide. The feverish, surging crowds saw where He was heading, so they rushed around the lake by foot. The journey was about nine miles.

Note the words "followed" (eklouthei) and "saw" or beheld (etheoroun). The two words mean that the people *had been following* Jesus for a long time and *kept on following Him, beholding the ministry* of His miracles upon people (the Greek imperfect active tense).

Jesus was tired and weary from the pressure of facing the crowd day after day. He sought refuge across the lake on the top of some unknown mountain. He needed time to be alone with God and with His disciples. It was the Passover season, a time when thousands of pilgrims flooded Jerusalem and the surrounding suburbs.

The picture is that of Jesus sitting on the mountainside, lifting up His eyes from resting upon His knees and seeing "a great company" of thousands streaming across the fields and up the mountain toward Him. The "great company" included both those who had followed Him around the lake and pilgrims who were caught up in the excitement of hearing about Jesus, the proclaimed Messiah.

Jesus used the occasion to demonstrate two concerns.

1. His concern for meeting the needs of man, even the most minute need of missing a meal. There is no need that Jesus does not want to meet. The multitude that had been following Him for days had just made a nine mile journey, having rushed ("followed," eklouthei) to keep from losing Him. They were not only hungry and apparently out of food, but they were in mountainous country, an area without any possibility of purchasing food. The point is this: the people were so desperate to find and keep up with Him that they just forgot about eating. As usual, Jesus was filled with compassion for those who so desperately sought Him out. He used the occasion to teach the great lesson: He will meet even the most minute need of men. He asked His disciples, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"
2. His concern to strengthen the disciples. He knew what He was going to do, but He used the occasion to test and strengthen the disciples, teaching them a tremendous lesson on faith. They were as we are, full of needs; and their greatest need was the same as ours, to grow in faith.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(6:1) **"After These Things"**: this is a reference to the closing days of the Galilaean ministry, the events covered between Mt.4:12-14:12. These events are not covered by John. His concentration is the Judaean ministry of Jesus; therefore, He simply moves over the Galilaean events by using the words "after these things."

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:5-15) **Faith**: Jesus was showing that He was concerned with every little need in life (even a missed meal), and that He was able to provide for every need—if man would just believe Him. Therefore, He taught a necessary lesson: there are four ways to respond to needs. (See note—Mk.11:22-23.)

2 (6:7) **Faith—Pessimism**: there is a pessimistic faith. This is seen in Philip. Philip needed to see his faith for what it was—pessimistic. Philip was from Bethsaida, so he was the natural disciple to question Jesus (Jn.1:44). The disciples either had two hundred denarii in their treasury or else Philip was just pulling a figure out of the air stressing that even such a large amount would not feed the crowd (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Denarii*—Jn.6:7).

1. A pessimistic faith sees money and human resources, and that is all. A pessimistic faith...
   - sees only the available resources. It stresses the hopelessness.
   - stresses the impossibility of the situation.
   - despairs of such meager resources.
   - is swamped by the hopelessness of an answer. (Note the tone of Philip's answer, v.7).
2. A pessimistic faith does not see God nor the power of God. A pessimistic faith *professes* God and *professes* Christ to be the Son of God. It professes the belief that Christ has the power to meet the needs of man. It even witnesses the miraculous working of Christ in other instances. But when a problem arises, the immediate response of a pessimistic faith is to see the problem, not the power of God. It does not see the opportunity for the power of God to be demonstrated in conquering the problem and bearing a strong testimony to His name. In the crises of the problem, the power of God seems forgotten.

   a. A pessimistic faith forgets God's glorious power in the past.

> **"And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:38-40).**
>
> **"Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" (Mt.16:8-9).**

   b. A pessimistic faith fails to think of God's power. It's mind is on earthly things, not on spiritual things. It is carnal, not spiritual.

> **"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).**

c. A pessimistic faith feels that the problem is too big for God's power or either too little for God to be interested in.

> **"And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Mt.19:24-26).**

d. A pessimistic faith fears that God's power will fail and the person's faith will be weakened. Therefore, the person is safer to pray weakly, "Lord, if thou will, handle this problem."

> **"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (Jas.1:6-8).**

e. A pessimistic faith fails to see God's care and love, interest and concern, over every little thing that happens to a person.

> **"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Mt.6:26).**
>
> **"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Mt.10:30).**

f. A pessimistic faith gives thanks and praise to God for what one has (health, money, things) but fails to trust God for the miraculous (healing and multiplication of resources so that one can better serve and help others).

> **"Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Mt.17:19-20).**

g. A pessimistic faith looks to others for help instead of looking to God and depending upon Him alone.

> **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).**
>
> **"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer.10:23).**
>
> **"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain" (Ps.127:1).**
>
> **"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Is.2:22).**

h. A pessimistic faith fails to see that God is glorified when He provides and meets the need.

> **"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity" (Ph.4:10).**
>
> **"But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever" (Ph.4:18-20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(6:7) **Denarii**: one denarii was the average pay for a day's work. The amount in any generation's coinage would be equal to that generation's average daily wage.

3 (6:8-9) **Faith—Optimism**: there is an optimistic, but questioning faith. This is seen in Andrew. Note three things.

1. An optimistic, questioning faith loves the Lord and is committed to the Lord. Andrew saw Christ's concern, so he went among the crowd to search for food. He found and gathered all the resources he could.
2. An optimistic, questioning faith lays what it can find before the Lord. No matter how little the resources or how poor the quality, it is all laid before the Lord. The barley bread was the bread of the poor, the very cheapest bread that could be made or bought. It was anything but a delicacy. The two fish were even "small." Note the simple, optimistic faith of Andrew. He had searched and could find nothing but five small barley cakes and two small fish, but he offered what he had found—the *boy* and his *food*—to the Lord.

3. An optimistic, questioning faith does question: "What are they among so many?" The questioning faith often deteriorates into...
   - complaining about the problem
   - being anxious about meager resources
   - grumbling over the small provision
   - griping over the poor quality

A questioning faith looks at the need and then looks at the *meager resources*, both how little and how poor the quality of the resources are, and it questions God. It questions instead of believing God to take care of the problem. The need may be what it is in this event, the need for food; or it may be the need for health, money, deliverance, or a myriad of other human needs. Whatever the need may be, the fundamental need is for one to learn to trust Christ and not to question and doubt His love and care, wisdom and power.

> **"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Mt.6:25).**
>
> **"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Mt.6:31-32).**
>
> **"But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things" (Lk.10:40-41).**
>
> **"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind" (Lk.12:29).**
>
> **"Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Ph.4:6).**
>
> **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas.1:5-6).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(6:8-9) **Andrew**: little is said about Andrew in the New Testament, but what is said shows a faithful and humble follower of the Lord. (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 7—Mk.3:18.)

1. Andrew was a follower of John the Baptist (Jn.1:35-40).
2. Andrew willingly took the second place. He was one of the very first to follow Christ, and he was also one of the very first to bring another person to Christ (his own brother, Peter). However, Andrew was called to take a back seat. He was to live under the shadow of Peter. Throughout the New Testament Peter is always mentioned first, but from all indications Andrew never resented his place. To be with Jesus and to do what Jesus wanted was enough for Andrew.
3. Andrew was the man who was always bringing others to Jesus. He was the focus of attention only three times in the New Testament, and in all three cases he was seen bringing someone to Jesus: Peter (Jn.1:41), the small boy with the loaves and fish (Jn.6:8-9), and the Greeks (Jn.12:22).
4. Andrew was an approachable person. He was able to approach his brother Peter without difficulty, and the small boy with the loaves and fish felt comfortable enough with him to follow him to Jesus. The Greeks also felt comfortable enough to approach Andrew first in seeking an interview with Jesus.

4 (6:10-13) **Faith—Positive—Provision—Supply—Necessities**: there is a positive, unswerving faith. This is seen in Christ. Christ Himself demonstrated for His disciples the kind of strong faith they were to have in God.

1. Note Jesus' faith.
   a. Jesus took what He had and gave thanks to God for what He had. He had only a meager supply of bread. In fact, He could hold all He had in the palm of His hand. But note...
      - He did not stand there looking at the meagerness of what He had, questioning, being gripped with despair and hopelessness, wondering how the need was going to be met.
      - He looked up and gave thanks to God. The small supply and poor quality did not matter. What mattered was that He had something; there was some provision. A gift, a sacrifice, a resource—small though it was—had been given and laid at His feet for Him to use as He willed. So He took it, being ever so appreciative, and lifted it up to God, giving thanks to God and trusting God to meet the need of the hour. Note how positive and unswerving the act of Christ was. He knew beyond any question that God would meet the need and multiply the resources.
   b. Jesus gave what He had, and note: all He could do was distribute what was in His hands and trust God. This He did. He simply gave what He had and God did the rest.

Thought 1. All any man can do is give what he has, what he holds in his hands. But he can do that, and he is expected to do that. If a man so gives, God does the rest. The need will be met. (Note: the needs of the whole world can be met only if we will give what we hold.) Because many are holding and grasping after more and more, the world is reeling in the desperation of hunger and disease, war and death, sin and evil, doomed to live apart from God eternally.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt.6:21).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Mt.19:21).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mt.22:39).

"He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (Lk.3:11).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" (Ro.12:13).

"As we have therefore opportunity [to give], let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"...let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph.4:28).

"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate [give]" (1 Tim.6:18).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb.13:16).

c. Jesus used others to help Him in meeting the need. Note that He gave to the disciples and the disciples gave to the people. His *disciples were essential* to the task. They were the ones made responsible for feeding the people.

⇒ Christ received the offering of the resources, meager as they were.

⇒ Christ trusted God to multiply the resources.

⇒ Christ then gave the supply to the disciples, not to consume but for the purpose of distributing. This is critical to note.

⇒ The disciples distributed the food and fed the people. They were a vital part of the Lord's plan.

2. Note that God met the need *because* of the positive, unswerving faith of Jesus. God met the people's need and filled them. In fact, and this is extremely important, He *more* than met their need. There was provision *left over*. How much? Twelve baskets full. Why twelve baskets? There were twelve disciples, twelve servants who had so obediently and trustingly helped Christ. Each servant had a supply that would last him for days. God always provides abundantly for His true servants (Ph.4:19). Note: not a morsel was to be wasted. Every ounce of provision was to be used at some future date.

Thought 1. While a man is giving what he has, he must trust the power and provision of God.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt.6:33).

"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Lk.1:37).

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:19).

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas.2:17).

"Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all" (1 Chron.29:12).

"I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2).

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps.24:1).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pr.3:5).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal.3:10).

5 (6:14-15) **Messiah—Profession**: there is a materialistic profession of Jesus. The people professed Jesus to be the Messiah, but they were thinking of an earthly, materialistic king, a Messiah who could meet both their personal and community or national needs (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20; note—1:23).

Jesus had fed and healed them. He had done what every man wanted, met their need for health and food. Therefore, they wanted to set Him up as the King of their lives. They did not want to ever hunger or be sick again, not as long as they lived. They saw in Jesus the possibility of an earthly, human Messiah, One who could provide...

- food for their hunger.
- healing for their sicknesses.
- deliverance from their trials.
- comfort for their sorrows.
- plenty for their wants.
- peace through their disturbances.
- victory over their enemies.

Jesus, of course, can help any person through anything. But the problem with the crowd was their desire for earthly and worldly satisfaction. They thought in terms of the physical and material, not the spiritual. Even when Christ meets physical and material needs, the physical and material are only temporary. They pass away. The Lord's concern is primarily spiritual—spiritual strength and spiritual blessings, the strength and blessings that last forever (see note—Eph.1:3). This is the reason most men forsake Christ. He demands the...

- denial of self.

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).**

- separation from the world.

> **"Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed" (Jn.6:26-27).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

	B. Jesus Walks on Water: The Deliverance from Fear, 6:16-21 (Mt.14:22-33; Mk.6: 45-52)	son of a great wind that blew. 19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.	d. Being tired & gripped with a sense of horror, of impending death
1 The disciples set sail to cross the sea	16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,	20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.	**3 The answer to fear**
2 The causes of fear	17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.	21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.	a. The presence & Word of Jesus: "I Am"*DSI*
a. Being in the dark			b. Receiving the presence of Jesus
b. Being without Jesus			c. The result: Deliverance thru the storms of life
c. Being caught in a storm	18 And the sea arose by rea-		

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

B. Jesus Walks on Water: The Deliverance from Fear, 6:16-21

(6:16-21) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ is the great Deliverer from fear. He is definitely revealed as the great Deliverer in this experience.

1. The disciples set sail to cross the sea (v.16).
2. The causes of fear (v.17-19).
3. The answer to fear (v.20-21).

1 (6:16) **Temptation, Fleeing**: the disciples set sail to cross the sea. The crowd was about to take Jesus by force and make Him a king (see outline and note—Jn.6:14-15). There was danger in that the disciples might be swept up in the *excitement of the temptation*, so Jesus instructed them to set sail. They obeyed Jesus, did exactly what He said: they fled and escaped the temptation.

Note the words: "Jesus was not come to them." Apparently, Jesus had told them to row out some distance and then to turn and pick Him up at some other point on the shore. However, they were not to wait for Him beyond a certain time. He was going to send the crowd away and withdraw to pray (cp. Mk.6:45-46). The "great," violent storm caught the disciples by surprise and, apparently, pulled them out to sea (v.18).

2 (6:17-19) **Fear—Trials—Storms—Frailty, of Man**: the causes of fear. This experience of the disciples clearly illustrates the causes of fear.

1. Being in the dark will cause fear. It was now dark, so the disciples could not see. The threat and danger and the emotional strain of the storm was to be much more intense because of the dark.

Thought 1. A person in spiritual darkness cannot see. His blindness is a great threat and emotional strain upon him.

1) It is a great threat in that he does not know what lies ahead (trouble, sorrow, difficulty, loss, death).

> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
>
> **"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Mt.15:14).**
>
> **"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).**
>
> **"But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 Jn.2:11).**

2) It is a great danger in that he will definitely face some difficult times ahead. Being in darkness, he will be caught unprepared. He will be *in the dark* about God, about how to call upon Him and to receive strength and help from Him.

> **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**
>
> **"They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course" (Ps.82:5).**
>
> **"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble" (Pr.4:19).**
>
> **"Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God" (Jer.5:4).**

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel: for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor" (Mic.4:12).

3) It is a great emotional strain in that fear will swarm over his being, covering him with a sense of helplessness and hopelessness.

"And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee" (Dt.28:29).

"Let their way be dark and slippery: and let the angel of the LORD persecute them" (Ps.35:6).

"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness" (Is.59:8-9).

"Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein" (Jer.23:12).

2. Being without Jesus will cause fear. Jesus had not yet come to the disciples; therefore, they did not have His presence and help. They were left alone to fend for themselves, having only the help of each other. The strength of each other's mind and arm had to save them or else they were lost; they were going to die. They had every reason to fear, for they were honest men, and each one knew down deep within his heart that their strength was limited and would eventually fail.

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not" (Is.66:4).

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel [God's people], and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

3. Being caught in one of the great, *violent storms of life* will cause fear. "Great [gale like] winds" and a violent storm arose. Note: when they had launched out, it was calm and peaceful; they thought their journey would be successful, confronting no trouble whatsoever. They never expected a violent storm, but the winds and clouds *did come*. The terrible storm *did strike and threaten* their lives.

So it is with the "great," violent storms of life. Trouble, trial, sickness, death, financial difficulties, and a host of other storms strike everyone. They strike unexpectedly, too often when we are least prepared. The result is great fear and the emotional upheaval of our lives.

4. Being tired and gripped with a sense of horror, of impending death, will cause fear. The disciples had been struggling against the storm for six to nine hours, and they had progressed only three or four miles.

"[Men] who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:15).

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Ro.5:12).

"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him" (2 Sam.14:14).

"For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living" (Job 30:23).

"For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (Ps.49:10).

"What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" (Ps.89:48).

"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity" (Eccl.3:19).

"Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him. For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be? There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death" (Eccl.8:6-8).

"And behold at eveningtide trouble; and before the morning he is not" (Is.17:14).

Note what happened (cp. Mk.6:47-49 for full explanation). The disciples saw Jesus "walking on the sea." They were stricken with a horrifying fear. Remember, they were physically exhausted and mentally drained from using all the seaman skills at their disposal. Their lives were at stake; they were struggling for survival. All of a sudden out of nowhere they saw a figure, an apparition (ghost) walking on the water. And it was not just one of them who saw it; all of them saw the figure. They were frightened, perhaps bordering on going into shock—perhaps thinking that the death angel or a premonition of their death was at hand.

The point is forceful: the storms of life can cause a sense of horror, of impending death, and can strike an awful fear in our hearts.

"We told you before that we should suffer tribulation [trials]; even as it came to pass, and ye know" (1 Th.3:4).

"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor.4:8-9).

"Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7).

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1).

"But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn" (Job 14:22).

"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow" (Ps.116:3).

"We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" (Jer.8:15).

"Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help" (Ps.22:11).

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me" (Ps.42:7).

"Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul" (Ps.124:4).

"The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head" (Jonah 2:5).

3 (6:20-21) **Fear—Receiving Jesus**: the answer to fear is Jesus Himself. Note three points.

1. The Word of Christ delivers from fear. He proclaimed, "It is I; be not afraid" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, "*It is I*"—Jn.6:20).

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mt.28:18).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

2. Receiving the presence of Christ delivers from fear. This is critical to note, for having Christ present and hearing His Word to "fear not" are not enough. A person must "willingly receive" Christ into his life. Deliverance came to the disciples only after they had received Jesus into the ship.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).

3. The results of receiving Christ were twofold: deliverance from fear and the calming of the storm. Jesus Christ gives the strength to row through all the storms of life. He has the power to erase fear and calm any storm.

"For which cause [the glory of God] we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day be day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor.4:16-18).

"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:15).

"So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb.13:6).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence" (Ps 91:3).

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling" (Ps.116:8).

"And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him" (Is.59:16; cp. Is.63:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:20) "**It is I**" (eimi): this is one word in the Greek, *eimi*, which is simply "I AM" (Jn.18:6). Jesus was saying, "I AM" has come—fear not. He was reminding the disciples who He was, the Son of God Himself. He possessed all power; therefore, there was no need to fear. This was the same message that God gave to Moses at the burning bush, "I am that I am" (Ex.3:13-15, esp. 14). It was the same message that Jesus used as a defense against the religionists, "Before Abraham was, I am" (Jn.8:58). It is the same message that Col.1:15-17 claims for Him; and it is the same message that is proclaimed by the book of Revelation, "He that is, and was, and is to come" (Rev.1:4, 8; 11:17; 16:5). (See note—Jn.1:1-2.)

There are several "I Am's" claimed by Christ.

⇒ I Am the Messiah (Jn.4:26).
⇒ I Am (It is I); be not afraid (Jn.6:20).
⇒ I Am the Bread of Life (Jn.6:35).
⇒ I Am from Above (Jn.8:23).
⇒ I Am the Light of the World (Jn.8:12; 9:5; 12:46).
⇒ I Am before Abraham was, I am (eternal) (Jn.8:58).
⇒ I Am the Door (Jn.10:7).
⇒ I Am the Good Shepherd (Jn.10:14).
⇒ I Am the Son of God (Jn.10:36).
⇒ I Am the Resurrection and Life (Jn.11:25).
⇒ I Am the Lord and Master (Jn.13:13).
⇒ I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn.14:6).
⇒ I Am the True Vine (Jn.15:1).
⇒ I Am Alpha and Omega (Rev.1:8).
⇒ I Am the First and the Last (Rev.1:17).

	C. The Answer to Man's Great Hunger, 6:22-29	him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?	e. The people questioned Jesus' absence
1 Answer 1: Know that man has a great hunger, a great need a. The people were miraculously fed, v.1-15 b. The people acknowledged their need c. The people noted Jesus' absence	22 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone; 23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)	26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. 27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.	**2 Answer 2: Acknowledge that man's motive is corrupt** a. Sought the Messiah for what they could get out of Him b. Sought food that perished—misplaced labor **3 Answer 3: Labor for food that endures—that gives eternal life** a. Source: Son of Man[DS1] b. God guaranteed[DS2]
d. The people sought Jesus	24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. 25 And when they had found	28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.	**4 Answer 4: Do the work of God—believe**

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

C. The Answer to Man's Great Hunger, 6:22-29

(6:22-29) **Introduction**: man has a gnawing hunger within for both the physical and the spiritual. He hungers for both food and material things and for God and spiritual things, things such as love and joy and peace. Therefore, most of man's time and energy are spent in seeking to satisfy his hunger. This passage deals with the answer to man's great hunger.

1. Answer 1: know that man has a great hunger, a great need (v.22-25).
2. Answer 2: acknowledge that man's motive is corrupt (v.26-27).
3. Answer 3: labor for food that endures—that gives eternal life (v.27).
4. Answer 4: do the work of God—believe (v.28-29).

1 (6:22-25) **Hunger, Spiritual—Seeking Jesus**: the first answer to man's great hunger is to *recognize* the hunger. The people had been miraculously fed. It was a common belief that the Messiah would give manna from heaven even as Moses had done; in fact, it was thought that the Messiah would give more than Moses had given. The people were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, so they wanted to lay hold of Him and make Him king (v.1-15). Note four things.

1. The people acknowledged their need for the Messiah. They had need and they knew it. Confessing their need was not a problem for them (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Messiah*—Jn.1:20).

2. The people noted Jesus' absence. There had been only one boat docked at shore, and the disciples had taken it to cross the lake. However, Jesus had not accompanied them; He had stayed behind. The people thought He was over in another section of the crowd or else off somewhere by Himself. The fact that He was not close by did not dawn upon them until the next day. The point is filled with lessons: the people, knowing they had need, wanted their need met. Jesus had proclaimed that He could meet their need, but He was gone; therefore, their need was going to go unmet unless they could find Him.

Thought 1. Man does have a great need for God's Messiah.
1) Man must acknowledge his need.
2) Man must observe to see if Christ is present. If Christ is absent, then man's need goes wanting.

3. The people sought Jesus. Believing that Jesus was the answer to their need, they did what they should have done: they sought Him. Other boats had drawn up to shore during the night, probably seeking refuge from the storm. Therefore, the people immediately took passage on these boats to cross over to Capernaum, hoping to find Jesus. Note how diligent they were in seeking Him.

Thought 1. Man should search diligently to find Christ. He should seek and seek until the Lord is found.

> **"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).**

4. The people questioned Jesus' absence. In their minds the Messiah was to give manna from heaven to meet the needs of the people just as Moses had done, only more so. They could not understand why Jesus would leave them, especially if He were the true Messiah.

Thought 1. This point is crucial, for men of every generation do wonder and question the fact: If Jesus is really the Messiah, why does He so often seem absent and far away, especially in times of trouble? Another way to word the same thought is: If there is a God and if Christ really is the Son of God, why is the world in so much trouble and why are so many people suffering? Why would Christ not place Himself right in the midst of the world and its problems? Why would He not go ahead and solve the problems, meeting man's needs immediately? The answer, of course, is what this passage is all about.

2 (6:26-27) **Motive—Messiah—Seeking Jesus—Utopia**: the answer to man's great hunger is acknowledging that man's motive is corrupt. This point is critical to see. Jesus stressed it with a solemn *attention getter*, "verily, verily" (listen, listen). Man's motive in seeking the Messiah—in seeking the answer to his problems—is often corrupt. In the case of these people it was, and tragically, it is with so many in every generation.

1. Man seeks a Messiah (Savior), but not to worship and serve Him. He seeks a Messiah for what he can get out of Him.

   a. *Man is interested* in getting his needs met, whether by someone human or divine. Man is interested in himself, not in acknowledging and honoring Jesus to be Lord and not in serving Him and making Him known to a lost world. The thoughts of the crowd were focused on how wonderful it was to be *saved from hunger* and to have their *needs met*. Here was a Savior (Messiah) who could meet all their needs, who could satisfy and give them a complete and full life. He could provide all things for them and deliver them from all their enslavements and enemies. He could bring utopia (the Kingdom of God) to earth. Every need could be filled and satisfied. Note that man's thoughts are focused...
      - on the earth
      - on material things and personal possessions
      - on the flesh and its satisfaction
      - on the human and the carnal only

   b. *Man should be interested* in the Messiah for who He is and not for what he can get out of Him. Very simply, as with any person, the Lord wants to be sought and loved for who He is and not for what He can do for a person. The Lord (Messiah) is not a tool to be used; He is a Person to be sought and loved. The crowd should have seen that such a miracle could have been done *only by the Son of God* Himself. Therefore, seeing and standing before the Son of God, they should have fallen down before Him in all humility. They should have humbled themselves...
      - to recognize and acknowledge Him to be the Son of God.
      - to worship and praise Him for who He is.
      - to offer their lives to Him, all they were and had.
      - to see that all things belonged to Him and were due Him.
      - to see that He was not the One who should be giving to them but that they were the ones who should be giving to Him. He was the One who should be receiving, not them.

2. Man seeks food that perishes. He simply misplaces his labor. He centers and focuses his thoughts, energies, and efforts upon the moment, that is, upon his years on earth. Man seeks to *feed his soul* on...
   - feelings and pleasures
   - comfort and ease
   - plenty and more
   - recognition and honor
   - position and power
   - fame and self

Such self-seeking is foolish, for all things pass away, even man himself. A day is not guaranteed, much less a year. Even if a man has years left to live, they pass ever so rapidly, as any middle age or older adult knows. Man desperately needs to heed two eternal truths.

   a. The things of the earth with all their pleasures and feelings do not satisfy (Is.55:2). They still leave a man empty, incomplete, unfulfilled, hungry, dissatisfied, seeking more and more.

> **"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:2-4).**
>
> **"And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all" (Rev.18:14).**
>
> **"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor.6:13).**
>
> **"He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand" (Job 15:23).**
>
> **"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled" (Eccl.6:7).**
>
> **"It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite" (Is.29:8).**
>
> **"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Is.44:20).**

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Is.55:2).

b. The earth and its things with all their pleasures and feelings pass away. They age, deteriorate, die, and decay. (See notes—Mt.8:17; 1 Cor.15:50; Col.2:13; 2 Pt.1:4; Heb.9:27.)

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:16-17).

3 (6:27) **Seeking Jesus—Jesus Christ, Son of Man—Provision**: the third answer to man's great hunger is to labor for food that endures, that gives or lasts "unto eternal life" (eis zoen aionion). The basic hunger within man is for...

- an abundant life, a life that is complete and fulfilled, full of love, joy, peace and all the good things of life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:10).
- an eternal life, a life that survives, that is not snatched away, but goes on forever and ever. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:2-3.)

1. Jesus said that the Son of Man is the One who can give food that lasts forever, the One who can give life that is both abundant and eternal. (See note, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51.)
2. Jesus said that the Son of Man is sealed, that is, guaranteed by God (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.3:33). God guarantees...
   - that Christ is the Messiah.
   - that Christ is the One who can give food that is abundant and lasts forever.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14; cp. Jn.7:37).

"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:33-35).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:27) **Son of Man**: see note—Jn.1:51.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(6:27) **Seal**: see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.3:33.

4 (6:28-29) **Works vs. Grace**: the fourth answer to man's great hunger is to do *the work* of God—believe. Note two crucial facts.

1. The people thought in terms of work*s* (plural). They thought that by *doing good works* they could win the approval and acceptance of God. If they did enough good and lived a life that was moral and just, God would save them and give them the food that satisfied, the food and life that was both abundant and eternal.

Thought 1. There are those who see people in three categories.

1) There are *good people*, people who do plenty of good works. They live good, moral, and just lives; therefore, they are acceptable to God.
2) There are *bad people*, people who do mostly bad works. They live immoral and unjust lives; therefore, they are not acceptable to God. They are not saved.
3) There are *compromising people*, people who do both good and bad. They live both moral and immoral, just and unjust lives. They are close to securing God's approval, not quite, but close. By doing just a few more *good works* and living just a little more morally, God will accept them.

2. Jesus corrected the people's thoughts, their concept of salvation by works. They did not secure the favor of God and were not acceptable to God because of works (plural). They received God's favor and acceptance because of a work, one work (singular). The work of God is only one: believe—"believe on Him whom God hath sent" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

"Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did" (Jn.2:23).

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:8-9).

	D. The Bread of Life: The Source of Spiritual Satisfaction, 6:30-36	but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.	true bread: true satisfaction
		33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.	**3 Christ is the Bread of God** a. He came from heaven b. He gives life
1 The people demanded proof a. Jesus' great claim, v.27-29	30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?	34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.	**4 Christ is the Bread of Life**[DSI] a. The request for the Bread of God
b. The specific proof demanded	31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.	35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.	b. The phenomenal claim c. If man comes to Jesus, he will never hunger b. If man believes, he will never thirst
2 Christ is the true bread a. Man cannot provide true bread: satisfaction b. God alone provides	32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven;	36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.	**5 Christ was seen, but rejected**

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

D. The Bread of Life: The Source of Spiritual Satisfaction, 6:30-36

(6:30-36) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Bread of Life—Satisfaction**: Jesus Christ is the Source of spiritual satisfaction, of man's spiritual nourishment. He is the only Bread that can feed man's great hunger, the hunger that gnaws and gnaws within his inner being. There is no other source upon which man can feed and be nourished.

1. The people demanded proof (v.30-31).
2. Christ is the true bread (v.32).
3. Christ is the Bread of God (v.33).
4. Christ is the Bread of Life (v.34-35).
5. Christ was seen, but rejected (v.36).

1 (6:30-31) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: the people demanded proof. Jesus had just made some phenomenal claims. He claimed to be...

- the Son of Man (v.27).
- the One who feeds man, who gives man bread which issues forth eternal life (v.27).
- the One whom God had sealed (v.27).
- the One whom God had sent into the world (v.29).
- the One upon whom men were to believe (v.29).

The people demanded proof. Note two revealing things about the nature of man.

1. Man focuses upon the physical and material. (See notes—Jn.6:26-27.) He ignores all the signs, even the miracles of God which surround him. Christ had just miraculously fed the crowd, yet the crowd ignored the witness of that particular sign (Jn.6:1f). It was not enough. They were so attached to the earth, to its physical pleasures and material goods, that they wanted more and more. To them...
   - Moses had fed Israel for forty years in the wilderness. Christ had fed them only once.
   - Moses had fed Israel with manna falling out of the sky from heaven. Christ had merely multiplied bread from a few loaves in His hands.
2. Man demands that he first see, *then he will believe*. This is contrary to *true* faith. It is not the way faith works. A man must first believe God, then he sees. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.11:6.) However, note this fact: faith is not fate; it is a matter of the heart, a matter of how the heart must relate to others. God relates with us just as we relate to others. If a person does not believe in us, they do not see; that is, they may ask all they want, but it is unlikely that we will do what they ask. But if they believe and trust us, we usually do whatever they ask, and they see their desires and requests fulfilled by our hands. Repeating the above, a man must first believe God, then he sees. Faith must precede sight. Believe God and He will fulfill the desires of your heart (Ps.37:4-5)

The people's complaint was twofold.

1. Christ had not fed them enough—not enough to prove that He was who He claimed to be.
2. Christ had not fed them in the right way, not given "them bread from heaven to eat."

Thought 1. Man never has enough. He craves and craves, never being fully satisfied. He experiences a gnawing hunger, a restlessness, emptiness, loneliness, vacuum, and a lack of purpose, meaning, and significance. Even in dealing with God, he never has enough evidence or proof to believe—not within his human nature.

Note another fact: man always wants to tell God how to act and deal with him and his life. Man wants his needs met in certain ways. It is not enough for God to meet his needs; man wants his needs met as he wills and desires. He tries to dictate how God is to act and behave toward him. So much human religion is nothing more than this, nothing more than man trying to spell out how God is to act and behave toward him.

2 (6:32) **Jesus Christ, Bread of Life—Satisfaction—Hunger**: Christ is the true bread. Note two strong points.

1. Man cannot provide true bread, that is, true satisfaction. Only God can. Moses was not the one who gave Israel the manna from heaven; God was the One who gave the manna. A man has to do something if he wishes…
   - to have his hunger met.
   - to be truly filled.
   - to be completely satisfied.
   - to be content.
   - to be comfortable.
   - to be at peace.

A man must look both beyond other men and beyond the things of this world. Men and things cannot meet the gnawing hunger of man; they cannot provide true satisfaction, for they do not possess the *true* bread.

2. God alone provides true bread, that is, provides true satisfaction. Note three things.
   a. Christ called God "My Father" (see note—Jn.1:34; 10:30-33).
   b. The bread God gives is "true" bread (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *True*—Jn.1:9).
   c. The "bread" or "manna" of God is not physical and material bread: it is spiritual. God may provide and actually does promise to provide for the physical necessities of *His followers* (Mt.6:24-33), but physical and material bread is not what Christ was talking about in this passage. Physical and material bread lasts only for a short while. Once consumed, it is gone. Its satisfaction passes and man's gnawing hunger arises again. But the bread God gives is spiritual bread, that is, spiritual food for the soul (see note—Eph.1:3). It is the bread that man really needs more than anything else on earth. It is the only bread that can feed and meet the need of man's…
      - gnawing hunger
      - restlessness
      - emptiness
      - vacuum
      - loneliness
      - lack of purpose, meaning, and significance

> **"This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:50-51).**
>
> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:53-54).**
>
> **"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:57-58).**

3 (6:33) **Jesus Christ, Origin**: Christ is the Bread of God. Christ made at least two points.

1. The origin of the true Bread is God Himself. It is bread which came down from or "out of" (ek) heaven itself. This means several things.
   a. The bread of God is not bread which comes out of the clouds above earth. Rather, it is bread which comes "out of" (ek) heaven itself, out of the spiritual dimension of being, from the very presence of God Himself. It is bread which comes from the very household of God.
   b. The bread of God is not physical bread. It is of the nature of God Himself, spiritual and eternal bread (cp. v.50-51).
   c. The bread of God is possessed by God; therefore, only He can give it, and man cannot have the Bread of God unless God gives it to man.
   d. The Bread of God was a person. Note the personal pronoun "He" and the word "bread" (ho artos) which is masculine. Note that "He," the Bread of God who feeds and nourishes man, came down or "out of" heaven. He was not born of the earth. He came from the very presence of God Himself.

> **"He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (Jn.3:31).**
>
> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn.8:23).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he that sent me" (Jn.8:42).**
>
> **"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).**
>
> **"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor.15:47).**

2. The Bread of God gives *life* to the world. The purpose of bread is to give life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)

a. Bread gives life by...
- nourishing and sustaining
- satisfying
- energizing
- creating desire (the need) for more (See note—Lk.4:3-4. Cp. Neh.9:15.)
- being partaken on a regular basis

Thought 1. Christ (and the Word of God) gives life to the believer by doing the same five things as bread.

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:2-3).**

b. The Bread of God came from heaven to give life to the *whole* world. It was not just to one person or to one nation that He came. He came to the whole world (cp. 1 Jn.2:1-2). He came to sacrifice Himself, to feed and save a starving world.

Note that His coming as the sacrificial Bread of God had been foreshadowed by the sacrifices of the Old Testament. They are said to be the Bread of God (Lev.21:21-22. Cp. Jn.6:50-51.)

> **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).**
>
> **"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).**
>
> **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:4-6).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).**

4 (6:34-35) **Jesus Christ, Bread of Life**: Christ is the Bread of Life. There are four significant points here.

1. The people requested the Bread of God. The people called Jesus "Lord" (Kurios), but how much they understood of His deity is not known. Apparently it was just an address of respect. However, the point is clear in the Bible. When a person asks for the Bread of God, he must call Jesus "Lord" and be ready to submit to Him as Lord, serving Jesus day by day (cp. Lk.9:23; Ro.10:13).

Note that the people requested: "evermore give us this bread" (pantote dos herim ton arton touton). This was a *once-for-all* request (the Greek aorist tense). The people wanted this Bread of God once-for-all, so that they might have a *permanent provision*. The Bible is again clear on this point. Salvation, that is, partaking of the Bread of Life, is to be a permanent experience. It is to be a once-for-all experience.

2. The phenomenal claim of Jesus: "I am the Bread of life" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, "*I Am*"—Jn.6:20. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.) Jesus Christ made the phenomenal claim: He was...
- the true Bread.
- the Bread of God.
- the Bread of Life.

3. If a man comes to Christ, the Bread of Life, he will never hunger. Man has a starving, craving need for life. Man craves a life that...
- is full and satisfying.
- is nourishing and sustaining.
- is energizing and has its desires fulfilled.

If a man comes to Christ, He will never hunger. The gnawing of starvation, the craving for life will be fully satisfied.

4. If a man believes, he will never thirst. The picture (symbolism) is switched from hunger to thirst. Man's need is more than met; not only is his hunger satisfied, but his thirst is quenched. Every need of life, of nourishment, and of growth is met. Nothing is left out or lacking. When a person comes to Christ and believes (continuous action, meaning continuing to believe), every need of his life and growth is met. Of course, this does not mean he will never hunger after righteousness. He will, but his hunger and thirst will never go unsatisfied. He "shall be filled" (cp. Mt.5:6). Note the words "not" and "never." They are strong, emphatic words: "No, shall never, never thirst."

Note how a person is *saved* from hungering and thirsting after life. One is saved...
- by "coming to Christ" (v.35, 37, 44-45, 65).
- by "believing on Christ" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).**

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life" (Jn.6:47-48).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:34-35) **Jesus—the Living Bread**: bread does at least four things. It nourishes or sustains life; it satisfies; it energizes; and it creates a desire (the need) for more and more. (See note—Lk.4:3-4. Cp. Neh.9:15.)

5 (6:36) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: Christ was seen, but rejected. The point is that the people were without excuse. They had every opportunity in the world.

⇒ The Bread of God had "come down from heaven."
⇒ The Bread of God had come to give life to the world.
⇒ The Bread of God had been seen (cp. 1 Jn.1:1-3).
⇒ The Bread of God was being seen and proclaimed that very moment.

Any of the people could have easily come to Christ, yet sitting there and hearing the glorious news, they still did not believe.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

	E. The Assurance of the Believer, 6:37-40	will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise	**for those whom He gives to Christ** a. That Jesus should not lose a single one b. That Jesus should resurrect every one
1 Assurance 1: God's predestination	37 All that the Father giveth	it up again at the last day.	
2 Assurance 2: Jesus' Word	me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will	40 And this is the will of	**5 Assurance 5: God's will for the believer**
3 Assurance 3: Jesus' purpose—to do God's will	in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.	him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.	a. Is eternal life b. Result: Jesus "will raise him up"
4 Assurance 4: God's will	39 And this is the Father's		

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

E. The Assurance of the Believer, 6:37-40

(6:37-40) **Introduction**: the believer has great assurance and security.

1. Assurance 1: God's predestination (v.37).
2. Assurance 2: Jesus' Word (v.37).
3. Assurance 3: Jesus' purpose—to do God's will (v.38).
4. Assurance 4: God's will for *those whom He gives* to Christ (v.39).
5. Assurance 5: God's will for *the believer* (v.40).

1 (6:37) **Assurance—Predestination**: the first assurance for the believer is God's predestination. The meaning of the verse is clear. It is those whom "the Father gives" that come to Christ. However, note a critical fact. The stress is not predestination; it is assurance to the believer. Christ wants believers to take heart and to be assured of their salvation. It is God Himself who has drawn believers, who has moved upon and stirred them to *come to Christ*. (See note, *Draw*—Jn.6:44-46 for explanation and more discussion.) Something should be noted at this point. There is a predestination thread that runs throughout John's gospel. Things are controlled and happen as God means them to happen. The purpose of God is being done. He is God; therefore, He rules and controls all things (cp. Jn.1:12-13; 6:37; 6:44-46; 10:26; 16:8).

> **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:27-29).**
>
> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Ro.8:28-30).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:3-5).**

2 (6:37) **Assurance—Security**: the second assurance for the believer is Jesus' Word. Note the enormous security given to the believer.

1. Jesus clearly said that any man who comes to Him will "in no wise" be cast out. This is a double negative, a strong, forceful promise: "Never, no never be cast out."
2. Jesus was claiming the authority to accept and reject men (cp. Mt.8:12; 22:13). He accepts the person who comes to Him, the person who turns from the world and the flesh to Him.

The point is simply this. Jesus gives His Word: "Him that cometh to me I will never, no never cast out." The believer's assurance and security are as good as Jesus' Word. If Jesus is who He claimed to be, "the Bread of Life," then the person who comes to Him for spiritual nourishment can rest assured that...

- Jesus will receive him into God's household.
- Jesus will feed, nourish, satisfy, and fill him.
- Jesus will not cast him out.
- Jesus will keep His Word with every generation of people.

> **"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).**
>
> **"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Lk.21:33).**
>
> **"The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure" (Ps.111:7).**

"For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass" (Ezk.12:25).

3 (6:38) **Assurance—God, Will of**: the third assurance for the believer is Jesus' purpose. He came to do God's will. Note two points.

1. Jesus declared His origin: He came down out of heaven (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31).
2. Jesus came *not* to do His own will, but the will of God.
   a. Jesus had a mind and a will distinct and separate from the Father's. He could will and act separately from God. In Gethsemane He prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Mt.26:39). He actually willed something different from God. He willed the cup to be removed, for some way other than the cross to be chosen for man's salvation. Jesus had a distinct, separate will from God.
   b. Christ subjected His will to God's will. He fought and struggled to control His mind and will, to do exactly as God willed, and He conquered His will. He always succeeded. In every instance He subjected Himself totally to God. He always did what God willed—perfectly.

"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do" (Jn.14:31).

"I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Ro.5:19).

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Heb.10:9).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

The believer's assurance is Jesus' purpose. He set out to do God's will and He did it perfectly. The believer can rest assured—Jesus is the full revelation of God. Jesus revealed God perfectly. What Jesus did—everything He did—is a picture of the perfect will of God. Man can come to Jesus for spiritual food and nourishment and *know* that He is coming to God.

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (Jn.12:49).

"He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:9-10).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

4 (6:39) **Assurance—Predestination**: the fourth assurance is God's will for *those whom He gives* to Christ. Note: the fact that God sent Christ is stressed again (v.38). Note also that Jesus calls God His "Father." This stresses the love and care of God. God's will is like the will of a father for His children. He wills only good and loving things.

1. God wills to give some followers to His Son: "All which He hath given me." This has to do with predestination, but in the sense covered before (v.37). God wills that His Son Jesus be the first, that is, the most preeminent Person among many brothers. Jesus is to have many brothers and sisters (see note—Ro.8:29). The follower of Jesus can rest assured that he is chosen by God to follow Jesus; therefore, he will not be lost, not ever.
2. God wills that Jesus should *lose nothing*. The words "I should lose nothing" (me apoleso ex autou) mean that He will not lose anything, not even a fragment, not any part of what God has given to Him. No person, not a single one, will be lost.

It was true while He was on earth: He lost none (Jn.17:12). It will also be true of every believer throughout history.

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Th.3:3).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

"O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).

"For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off" (Ps.37:28).

"He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints" (Pr.2:8).

"Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages" (Is.49:8).

3. God wills a most wonderful thing: Jesus shall save every true believer through all, even up until the final hour of the very last day—the day of the resurrection. The Lord's salvation is complete, ultimate, and final. No matter the trials, the heartaches, the hurts, the attacks of the enemy and the evil persecutors, Christ will save His dear follower through all; and He will raise him up at the last day. The *genuine believer* is assured and secure in the will of God. God wills that His Son lose no one—that each one will be saved through all circumstances—saved right up to the point of being raised up at the last day.

5 (6:40) **Assurance—God, Will of**: the fifth assurance is God's will for *the believer*. This verse also concerns God's will, but it differs from the former point in that it centers upon those who *see and believe* on Jesus. In the former verse the stress is upon *God choosing* those who come to Christ, whereas in this verse, the stress is upon *man choosing* Christ. Both are necessary steps in salvation as already discussed (v.37. See note—Jn.6:44-46.)

A person must "see" (behold, grasp) and believe Jesus...

- that God "sent" Him to spiritually feed and nourish man (to save and to give life).
- that He is "the Son," the Savior of the world.

1. God wills that a person who *sees and believes* Jesus should have eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3).

2. The result of seeing and believing Jesus is being *raised up from the dead*. Jesus said very emphatically, "I will raise him up at the last day." "I" is emphatic. Jesus and no one else can raise the dead, and He will take the person who sees and believes and raise him up. The believer is assured of three very significant things.

a. The believer is assured of eternal life.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

b. The believer is assured of victory over death.

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:52-57).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

c. The believer is assured of the resurrection.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:25-29; cp. Jn.11:25).

"And [I, Paul] have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you" (2 Cor.4:14).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Th.4:16).

	F. The Way a Person Partakes of the Bread of Life, 6:41-51		
1 The religionists rebelled against the claims of Jesus	41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.	therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.	c. He must hear & learn *through Christ* (man's part) 1) Bc. no man has seen God 2) Bc. Christ is of God & has seen God
a. They questioned Jesus' origin b. They misunderstood the incarnation	42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?	47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.	**3 A person must believe on Christ** a. Believe He is the Bread of Life
c. Jesus appealed: Murmur not	43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.	50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.	b. Believe He is "out of" heaven—has come to deliver man from death
2 A person must be drawn by God a. The result: He will be raised up at the last day b. He must be taught of God (God's part)[DS1]	44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man	51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.	c. Believe He is the living bread—the One who gives life to man forever d. Believe He gave His flesh for the life of the world[DS2]

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

F. The Way a Person Partakes of the Bread of Life, 6:41-51

(6:41-51) **Introduction**: how one partakes of the Bread of Life, that is, how one comes to know Jesus personally, is the focus of this passage.

1. The religionists rebelled against the claims of Jesus (v.41-43).
2. A person must be drawn by God (v.44-46).
3. A person must believe on Christ. (v.47-51).

1 (6:41-43) **Religionists, Opposed Jesus**: the religionists rebelled against the claims of Jesus. They murmured (gogguzete) against Him. The word refers to the murmuring, the buzzing, the discontent that arises from a crowd that is upset and confused; that is, misunderstanding, rejecting, and opposing a speaker. They radically disagreed with Jesus' claim that He had come "down from heaven."

They questioned His origin. They knew Him personally; and they knew His father, Joseph, and His mother, Mary. They knew He was a mere man just as they were, having been reared by human parents. How could He possibly claim to be "from heaven"? Note: their problem was twofold.

⇒ They were ignorant of the incarnation (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16; DEEPER STUDY # 8—1:23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:10; 1:14-18).

⇒ They were so fixed on His origin, on where He had come from, that they lost sight of His mission, which was to feed and nourish men spiritually (to save and to give life).

Jesus appealed to the crowd, "stop murmuring." He loved and cared for them and longed for them to listen to the truth. As long as they murmured, they would never be willing to listen to the truth. (What a lesson for us all: "Be still, and know that I am God" [Ps.45:15].)

2 (6:44-46) **Draw (helkuein)—Salvation—Predestination**: a person must be drawn by God. These three verses have to do with predestination (cp. v.37). The truth of predestination in the Bible is not so much a statement of theology or philosophy as it is a message that speaks to the spiritual experience of the believer. If the pure logic of philosophy and theology is applied, then predestination says that God chooses some for heaven and others for a terrible hell. But this is simply not what God means in the passages dealing with predestination, and this fact needs to be given close attention by all who so interpret the Scriptures. What God wants believers to do is to take heart, for He has assured their salvation. This is what He means by predestination. (See note—Ro.8:29.)

The person who comes to Christ is a person who has been *drawn by God*, a person who has experienced the *divine initiative*. A man does not act alone, coming to Christ by his own effort and energy, not by his own works, whether mental (thought or will, Jn.1:13) or physical labor (good deeds, Eph.2:8-9). A man is a dead spirit; therefore, he can do nothing spiritually just as a dead body can do nothing physically. The natural man prefers self and sin; therefore, if a man with a dead spirit is to come to Christ, he has to be acted upon and drawn by God. Both God and man have a part in salvation.

1. God's part in salvation is to draw man. God has to draw because man resists the gospel. Man's resistance is seen in the word *draw*. The word "draw" has the idea of both initiative and rebellion, of constraint and resistance. For exam-

ple, the pulling in of a net loaded with fish involves both actions of pulling and resistance (cp. Jn.21:6); a person being dragged to court encounters both actions of pulling and resistance (Acts 16:19).

How God draws a man is clearly stated. He draws by teaching (v.45). The teaching may come from the voice of a preacher, the observation of nature, the reading of Scripture or a myriad of other sources. But one thing is always common: the movement of God's Spirit upon the human heart, teaching the need for God and drawing the heart toward God for salvation. The Spirit of God teaches a man and moves upon the heart of a man.

a. The Holy Spirit quickens the gospel to a man's mind so that he *sees it as never before*. He sees, understands, grasps as never before that "the Father...hath sent" Christ to feed and nourish man (to save and to give him life).

> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3).**
>
> **"For as the Father raiseth up the dead [spiritually dead], and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (Jn.5:21).**
>
> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).**
>
> **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).**
>
> **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).**
>
> **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind" (Eph.4:22-23).**
>
> **"Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col.3:10).**
>
> **"So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army" (Ezk.37:10).**

b. The Holy Spirit convicts a man of sin, of righteousness and of judgment, that is, of his need to be fed and nourished (saved and given life).

> **"And when he [the Holy Spirit] is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn.16:8).**

c. The Holy Spirit attracts men to the cross of Christ through its glorious provisions.

> **"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me" (Jn.16:32).**
>
> **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).**
>
> **"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal.6:14).**
>
> **"That he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:16).**
>
> **"Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).**

d. The Holy Spirit stirs a man to respond by coming to Christ.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**
>
> **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Is.30:21).**
>
> **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you" (Is.55:1-3).**

2. Man's part in salvation is threefold.
   a. Man must hear the voice of God when God draws. When the pull, tug, or movement of God's Spirit is felt, man must listen to the conviction of the Spirit.
   b. Man must learn of God. However, he can learn of God only through Christ. If a man wishes to learn of God, He has to come to Christ. The reasons are clearly stated by Christ (v.46):
      ⇒ No man has seen God.
      ⇒ Christ alone is of God.
      ⇒ Christ alone has seen God.

> **"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:16-17).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).**
>
> **"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:3).**
>
> **"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD" (Jer.9:24).**
>
> **"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hos.6:3).**

   c. Man must come to Christ: he must yield to the drawing power of God. God reveals, pulls, and tugs at the heart of a man to come to Christ. Why? Because the only way a man can *learn of God* is to come to Christ, and God wants every man to learn of Him, to know Him personally.

      Being self-centered and rebellious, man likes to feel independent; consequently, man resists the quickening pull and drawing power of God. However, those who give in to the godly constraint (Jn.6:44) and who partake of Christ (Jn.6:47-51) learn of God and are accepted into His household to partake and feast at His table. (See this note, pt.1c for verses of Scripture.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:45) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Is.54:13.

3 (6:47-51) **Salvation—Believe**: a person must believe on Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24.) The person who believes has eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3). Christ calls for man to pay close attention, "Verily, verily," that is, "listen, listen" (cp. v.26, 32). What He now says is critical: a person must believe four things.

1. A person must believe that Christ is *that* Bread of Life: the Bread that feeds and nourishes man spiritually, that saves and gives man life (see notes—Jn.6:32; 6:33; 6:34-35). Note the Lord's claim: "I am that Bread of Life."
   ⇒ Note how straightforward the claim is.
   ⇒ Note how brief, clear-cut, straight to the point, and unmistakable the claim is.
   ⇒ Note His claim to deity: "I Am." There is no hesitation—no reservation—no holding back. He pulls no punches: "I Am" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20).
   ⇒ Note how Christ refers to the manna again (cp. v.32). Eating physical food will only sustain man temporarily; man still dies. The point is clear: man's concern should not be physical food. If it is, man has only death to anticipate.

> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).**

2. A man must believe that Christ is "out of" heaven, that He has come to deliver man from death. Christ claims two things.
   a. He has come "out of heaven," from God Himself (see note—Jn.3:31).
   b. If a man eats and partakes of Him, that man will not die (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Heb.9:27). Note: the word "eat" (phagei) is in the Greek aorist tense. This means that a man eats and partakes (receives) of Christ *once-for-all*. It is a one-time experience.

> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:38-40).**
>
> **"This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever" (Jn.6:58).**

3. A man must believe that Christ is the living Bread, the One who gives life to man forever.
   a. The Bread is living; it is a life (Jn.1:4; 5:26). The words are literally, "the Bread, the Living" (ho artos ho zon). (Cp. v.35, 41, 48.)
   b. The Bread "came down from heaven." The phrase "came down" (katabas) is again in the aorist tense which means Christ *came once*. The incarnation had never taken place before, nor will it ever take place again. The miraculous entrance of the living Bread into the world is a *one-time-only event*.
   c. The Bread, the Lord Jesus Christ, came to provide spiritual food for man: spiritual and eternal life.
   d. The offer of eternal life is conditional, "*If* any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever."

> **"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed" (Jn.6:53-55).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**
>
> **"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:26).**

4. A man must believe that Christ gave His flesh for the life of the world. Note that Christ identifies the Bread: it is His flesh which He gives for the life of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.6:51).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(6:51) **Jesus Christ, Humanity; Death**: the phrase "my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" says two things.

1. Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

> **"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:2-3).**

2. Jesus Christ gave His flesh (life) for the life of the world.

> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Ro.8:3).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

	G. The Results of Partaking of the Bread of Life, 6:52-58	him up at the last day.	
1 The religionists were perplexed a. They questioned partaking of His flesh b. Jesus proclaimed a much more shocking thing: Unless one partakes of Him, he does not have life[DSI]	52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?	55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.	**3 Result 2: True, not false, satisfaction**
2 Result 1: Eternal life—conquering death & being resurrected	53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise	56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.	**4 Result 3: Supernatural companionship & fellowship** **5 Result 4: A life that is full of purpose & meaning** **6 Result 5: Incorruptible food received within the heart—energizing life forever**

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

G. The Results of Partaking of the Bread of Life, 6:52-58

(6:52-58) **Introduction**: a man must receive and partake of the Bread of Life. When he does, he receives five wonderful things.

1. The religionists were perplexed over Jesus' words (v.52-53).
2. Result 1: eternal life—conquering death and being resurrected (v.54).
3. Result 2: true, not false, satisfaction (v.55).
4. Result 3: supernatural companionship and fellowship (v.56).
5. Result 4: a life that is full of purpose and meaning (v.57).
6. Result 5: incorruptible food received within the heart—energizing life forever (v.58).

1 (6:52-53) **Man, State of—Sin, Dead in**: the religionists were perplexed and argued among themselves. The word "strove" (emachonto) means to argue, fuss, debate. They were debating what Jesus meant. He had just said:

> **"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).**

1. The Jews (religionists) began to argue over the meaning of the words. "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"
   ⇒ Some interpreted His words as a parable, in a figurative and symbolic way. They knew He often spoke in parables.
   ⇒ Others had no idea what He meant, but they did see that He was claiming to be the most important person in the world, the very Savior of men. This, of course, bothered them beyond reason. How could any man claim to be so important to the world? As materialists and humanists they asked, "How can this be? He is but a man. How can He give His flesh for the world and the world receive eternal life?"
   ⇒ A few disciples, genuine followers of the Lord, perhaps understood.

The point is that the religionists were disturbed. The message had been going on for a long time, and Jesus had made claim after claim—all most unusual. Moreover, what He was saying was not clear, and some of it was offensive. Therefore, they were angry and perplexed and began to argue among themselves about what He meant and how they should respond to Him.

2. Jesus responded by proclaiming a much more shocking thing: unless a man partake, that is, receive Him, that man has no life dwelling within him.

The words "eat" and "drink" are in the Greek aorist tense which means a once-for-all act. Jesus was not speaking of partaking time and again. He was not speaking of feasting upon Him day by day through prayer and Bible study. He was speaking of a one-time event. A person is to eat and drink of Christ, that is, receive Him once for all. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:53.)

> **Thought 1.** Unless a man receives (eats and drinks) Christ, he has no life within him. He is a dead man spiritually and eternally. He is walking around as a dead man.
> ⇒ Physically he is in the process of aging and dying, of living in the realm of death and being doomed to die.
> ⇒ Spiritually he is already dead, having no life with God. He has no life, no real and true relationship with the *true and living God*. He is doomed to eternal death and separation from God.
>
> Partaking, eating and drinking, of Christ is absolutely essential in order to truly live—in order to possess real life that lasts now and forever.

> **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).**
>
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**
>
> **"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col.2:13).**
>
> **"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim.5:6).**

"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev.3:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(6:53) **Eat—Drink—Salvation**: to receive, accept, partake, appropriate, assimilate, absorb, and to make part of oneself. A person can actually receive and partake of Christ in the most intimate and nourishing sense of his being (flesh and blood). The receiving and partaking can be just as intimate and nourishing as eating and drinking.

The point is this: a man must receive Christ into his heart, into his innermost being if he wishes to live. In fact, he is dead spiritually and eternally unless he so receives Christ.

2 (6:54) **Salvation, Results—Growth**: the first result of receiving Christ, the Bread of Life, is eternal life. Note three things.

1. The word for "eat" (trogon) is different. It means to eat eagerly, to grasp at chunks, to eat with pleasure. It is the picture of hungering after Christ and eagerly wanting to feed and feast on Him.
2. The tense is also different. It is present tense, which means continuous action. A person must continue to eat and to develop and grow into the habit of feasting upon Christ. Christian growth day by day is the picture.

Now note the point. A genuine believer, a man who really receives Christ, is a man who partakes of Him continually. Day by day the man will feast upon Christ. It is this man who has the promise of eternal life, and eternal life includes three great things.

a. Abundant and eternal life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)
b. The conquest of death. (See note—Jn.3:14-15.)
c. The resurrection. (See note—Jn.5:28-30.)

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:3).

3 (6:55) **Satisfaction—Life, Abundant**: the second result of receiving Christ is true satisfaction, not false, satisfaction.

1. The word "indeed" (alethes) means true as opposed to false (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9). The things of the world do not feed and fill men, not with a true satisfaction. Worldly pleasures and satisfactions are false; and false satisfaction does not last, not permanently, not with full assurance and confidence and security. Worldly pleasures and satisfactions always leave men somewhat empty, dissatisfied, craving, void, unassured and wondering if this world is all there is—wondering if there is not more to life than what this world and its possessions have to offer.
2. True satisfaction comes from receiving Christ into one's life, and it comes only through Christ. This is the Lord's point in this verse. Just as real life on the earth comes from eating and drinking food, so real and abundant life comes from eating and drinking Christ. One must receive Christ in the closest and most intimate and nourishing sense in order to have true life, life that is abundant and full of...

- assurance
- strength
- meekness
- goodness
- love
- security
- decisiveness
- temperance
- patience
- joy
- confidence
- courage
- faith
- gentleness
- peace

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn.7:37).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat" (Rev.7:16).

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps.17:15).

"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Ps.36:8).

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Is.44:3).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

4 (6:56) **Abiding—Companionship—Fellowship—Care—Providence**: the third result is supernatural companionship and fellowship, care and being looked after. This is seen in the word "dwell" (menei). It means to abide, continue, dwell, rest in or upon. It is being fixed and set and remaining there, continuing on and on. Such is the state and condition and being of the person who receives Christ. The person receives Christ into his being, and Christ enters the person's life, abiding within him. The person is also placed into Christ, that is, placed with all other believers into the spiritual body of Christ. (See notes—1 Cor.12:12-31; Eph.1:22-23; 2:11-22. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4, the section on baptism for more discussion.) The person abides in Christ even as Christ abides in him. This, of course, means fellowship and companionship with Christ and the presence of His care and watchful eye in looking after us. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Acts 2:42 for more discussion.)

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:4-5).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:27).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

5 (6:57) **Purpose—Life, Spiritual**: the fourth result of receiving Christ is a life that is full of purpose, meaning, and significance.

1. Jesus said, "I live by the Father." This means at least two things.
   a. He lived *by* the Father, that is, because of, on account of the Father. His life was due to the Father.
   b. He lived *for* the Father; that is, He lived to do the Father's will. The Father "sent" Him to live on earth for a specific purpose: to fulfill the Father's will and task.
2. The man who receives Christ ("eateth me") *lives by Christ*. He begins to live in all the purpose, meaning, and significance of life, for apart from Christ there is no life. Note: the tense is present, continuous action. A person must *continue* to partake, eat, and feast upon Christ to keep his sense of purpose and meaning, to really live and live abundantly.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Ph.1:21).

"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).

3. Jesus called God "the living Father."

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (Jn.5:26).

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt.16:16).

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor.6:16).

6 (6:58) **Life—Jesus Christ, Only Savior**: the fifth result of receiving Christ is incorruptible food within our hearts—energizing our lives forever. Christ made a strong, descriptive contrast.

⇒ The manna eaten by Israel in the Old Testament *did come* from the clouds above, but it did not give life to the people. They were *all dead*.

⇒ "This [the Lord Himself] is that Bread which came down from heaven...he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

The idea is striking: it is the Living Bread, Christ Himself, who energizes and quickens a man to live forever. Christ has the quality, the power, the substance to energize a man and give him eternal life. However, He and He alone has such energizing power.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (Jn.5:26).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

	H. The Reason Some People Are Offended by Christ, the Bread of Life, 6:59-71	not, and who should betray him.	
		65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.	**5 There is the fact that God saves man; man does not save himself**
1 Jesus' message was to the synagogue crowd in Capernaum a. Many disciples were present b. They had difficulty accepting His message	59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.	66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.	**6 The concl.: There were three responses** a. The disciples who turned back
	60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?	67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?	b. The disciple who believed Jesus was the Christ
2 There is the idea of eating Jesus' flesh & drinking His blood v.51-56	61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?	68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.	
3 There is the ascension & exaltation of Christ	62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?	69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.	
4 There is the teaching that the spirit quickens & the flesh profits nothing	63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.	70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?	c. The disciple who betrayed Christ
	64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed	71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.	

DIVISION VII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE, 6:1-71

H. The Reason Some People Are Offended by Christ, the Bread of Life, 6:59-71

(6:59-71) **Introduction**: men are often offended by Christ. Four things in particular offend them.

1. Jesus' message was to the synagogue crowd in Capernaum (v.59-60).
2. There is the idea of eating Jesus' flesh and drinking His blood (v.61).
3. There is the ascension and exaltation of Christ. (v.62).
4. There is the teaching that the spirit quickens and the flesh profits nothing (v.63-64).
5. There is the fact that God saves man; man does not save himself (v.65).
6. The conclusion: there were three responses (v.66-71).

1 (6:59-60) **Jesus Christ, Preaching**: Jesus' message was to the synagogue crowd in Capernaum. Many disciples and followers of His were present, but they had difficulty accepting what He had said. The words "hard saying" (skleros) mean rough and harsh. What Jesus had said was *hard* and *difficult to accept*, but His words were clearly understood. The people's problem was not in their understanding, but in their hearts. Jesus knew this, so He covered some reasons why men are offended by Him.

2 (6:61) **Blood, Repulsive—Cross, Offense**: men are offended by the claims of Christ and the idea of eating His flesh and drinking His blood (cp. v.51-56). Men, including counterfeit disciples, are offended and repulsed by what is sometimes called...

- a *grotesque god,* a god who came to earth to impregnate a young girl, becoming incarnated into human flesh, being born half-man and half-god.
- a *bloody religion* or a religion of cannibalism.

Note two things.

1. Jesus claimed to be God *incarnated* in human flesh, but not in a grotesque sense—not half-man, half-god. In very simple terms, He was man, fully man; that is, He had the nature of man, being made of the very same substance as all men. However, there was one difference: He was not born of a human father; He was born of God. God very simply *spoke the Word* and a miracle took place, just as He spoke the Word and created the world. There is nothing grotesque about God's speech nor about His willing something to be done and doing it. God did what He always does when He wills something. He simply spoke and the event was set in motion. Very simply stated, Jesus Christ was born *by the Word of God and by human flesh.* He was fully Man, fully God. He came *from God's* Word; He became a Man *by God's Word.* Therefore, all men owe their obedience to Christ. (See note—Jn.6:62 for more discussion.)
2. The cross or the blood of Christ *is offensive and repulsive* just as some people feel it is. It represents the awful shame of sin and the death of Jesus Christ, God's very own Son; therefore, it is bound to be repulsive. But it also repres-

sents salvation and deliverance from sin and its awful guilt. Therefore, the cross is also the most attractive symbol in all the world (see note, *Cross*—Mt.16:21-23).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

The words "take...eat" of Christ are not cannibalism. The words simply mean that a man is to spiritually receive Christ into his life, into his whole being. A man's deliverance from the bondage of sin and death is by *spiritually taking and eating* of Christ's body; that is, the man must spiritually receive, partake, consume, absorb, and assimilate Christ into his life. He must allow Christ to become the very nourishment, the innermost part and energy, the very consumption of his being.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

3 (6:62) **Ascension—Exaltation**: men are offended by the ascension and exaltation of Christ. (See note, *Ascension*—Mk.16:19-20.) Why? If a man accepts the ascension and exaltation of Christ, he has to surrender the control of his life to Christ. He can no longer control his own life and do the things he wishes. Note three things.

1. Christ referred to himself as the Son of Man (see note—Jn.1:51). The counterfeit disciple is unwilling to look at Jesus as the "Son of Man," that is, as the Ideal and Perfect Man, as the Pattern for all men to copy (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.8:20). If a man accepted Christ as the Son of Man, he would have to pattern his life after Christ by doing his very best to live as Christ lived. The man would have to diligently seek to be like Christ (cp. Heb.11:6).
2. God exalted Jesus as Lord and Master. The counterfeit disciple is unwilling to submit himself under the control and dominion of Jesus. He is adamantly opposed to patterning his life after Jesus.
3. The words "where He was before" point to the fact that Jesus is eternal. He was preexistent: God of very God. Therefore, a man is to believe and surrender to Him as Lord.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:22).

4 (6:63-64) **Holy Spirit—Life**: men are offended by the teaching that the Spirit quickens and the flesh profits nothing. Note three significant points.

1. The flesh cannot quicken and make a man alive. The flesh cannot profit a man. Men do not like to accept or think about the *zero value* of the flesh. They do everything they can to keep its youth, attractiveness, and stamina. They use cosmetics, clothing, and activities to appear young, attractive, and physically capable. But before too long, before they ever imagine, the flesh proves unprofitable; it ages, deteriorates, and surrenders to the process of decay. The *seed of corruption* within wins, and man dies. The flesh proves its *zero value*; it profits nothing, not eternally. Once a man dies, his flesh is gone forever, never to return, and there has never been an exception to the fact.

Such a thought, such a teaching—despite its truthfulness—offends men. They love the world and the flesh, its pleasures and feelings; therefore, they want the right to feed it. They want more and more good feelings, getting and keeping all the physical and material pleasures they can. They want the...

- worldly ego
- fleshy image
- human recognition
- institutional praise
- self-centered fame
- benevolent honor
- stimulating pleasures
- earthly wealth

2. Only the Spirit can quicken a man and make him alive, giving him abundant and eternal life. How? By receiving the Word of Christ. The words that Christ spoke were Spirit and life. When a man receives the words of Christ into his heart and life, he begins to live: he actually experiences the Spirit of God entering his life and begins to experience real life.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

3. But note what Jesus said. "There are some of you who believe not." They did not accept His Words; therefore, they did not have the Spirit of God abiding in them nor did they have life. They were only existing, not living abundantly and eternally. They did not have the knowledge and *unswerving assurance* of living forever. They doubted and wondered, ever hoping, but they were not quite sure.

5 (6:65) **Salvation—Draw**: men are offended by the fact that God draws and saves man, that man does not save himself. Christ said : "No man can come unto me, unless it were given him of my Father." Christ was saying:

⇒ No man can come to Him unless God draws and stirs him to come.
⇒ No man really belongs to God who has not come to Him.
⇒ No man is saved unless they have come to Him.
⇒ All men are lost unless they come to Him.

This fact disturbs people greatly, for most people feel they are good enough and have done enough good to be acceptable to God. Few people think they are lost and doomed to be separated from God; therefore, hearing the fact preached offends them. But note the critical point. The only saved person is a person who has been drawn to Christ by God and who has surrendered to God's pull and movement within his heart.

> **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:44).**
>
> **"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:29).**
>
> **"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim.1:9).**
>
> **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (1 Pt.1:2).**

6 (6:66-71) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: there were three responses to the Lord's message.

1. There were disciples or followers who turned back. Note that "*many*...went back, and walked no more with Him." They forsook and deserted the Lord. Why? Very simply, following Christ cost too much. It involved the cross, which meant complete denial of oneself.
   a. Jesus was claiming to be Lord. This meant that a man had to give all he was and had to Christ.
   b. Jesus was claiming to be the very Son of God, to have come down *out of* heaven. Some just could not receive and accept the fact.
   c. Jesus was demanding total allegiance and complete self-denial, and following Him would just cost too much (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).
2. There was the disciple who believed that Jesus was the Lord. Note four facts.
   a. Peter spoke for all the apostles. He was their leader and spokesman.
   b. Peter called Jesus "Lord," and he used the title in its fullest meaning (cp. v.68-69). Jesus was recognized to be the sovereign Lord of the universe, the One to whom all men owe their allegiance.
   c. Peter declared that Jesus' words *were* the words of eternal life. He declared that what Jesus had just proclaimed was true (v.63). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)
   d. Peter proclaimed that he and the apostles both *believed* and *knew* something: Jesus was...
      - "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (the latest manuscripts read this).
      - "the Holy One of God" (the oldest manuscripts read this).
3. There was the disciple who betrayed Jesus. Note these facts.
   a. Judas was a "chosen" man, chosen not only to be saved, but to be a minister of Christ.
   b. Judas was called "a devil," a false accuser (2 Tim.3:3), an adversary, an enemy of Christ.
   c. Judas was a betrayer, a professed follower, but a hypocrite.

	CHAPTER 7 **VIII. THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53** **A. The Response of Jesus' Brothers: Mockery & Unbelief, 7:1-9**	4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5 For neither did his brethren believe in him. 6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. 9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.	b. Their unbelief **3 Jesus' reply** a. It is not time (the day) for His acclaim; but for man's acclaim b. It is time for the world's works to be proclaimed evil c. It is not time for His full revelation, that is, the revelation of His death
1 Jesus was forced to withdraw & minister in Galilee a. The reason: The religionists sought His life b. The Feast of Tabernacles was at hand **2 The brothers' response: Mockery & unbelief** a. Their mockery: Show your works	After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. 2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.		

DIVISION VIII

THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53

A. The Response of Jesus' Brothers: Mockery and Unbelief, 7:1-9

(7:1-53) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus Christ, Response to**: Chapter 7 is a brief pause in the revelation of who Jesus is. Chapter 7 shows the reactions of various groups to the revelations and claims of Jesus.

(7:1-9) **Introduction**: the first reaction or response to Jesus came from his half-brothers. The incident teaches us how to answer mockery, ridicule, sarcasm, and unbelief. We answer such reactions by proclaiming the same three facts that Jesus proclaimed (point 3, v.6-9).

1. Jesus was forced to withdraw and minister in Galilee (v.1-2).
2. The brother's response: mockery and unbelief (v.3-5).
3. Jesus' reply (v.6-9).
   a. It is not time (the day) for His acclaim, but for man's acclaim.
   b. It is time for the world's works to be proclaimed evil.
   c. It is not time for His full revelation, that is, the revelation of His death.

1 (7:1-2) **Ministry—Ministering—Jesus Christ, Opposition**: Jesus was forced to withdraw and minister in Galilee. The reason was tragic: the religionists throughout Judaea and Jerusalem had reacted so violently against Him that they sought to kill Him. The word "sought" is continuous action. They kept on seeking to kill Him.

Just how long Jesus was away from Judaea and Jerusalem is not known. Ideas range from six months to one and a half years. On His last journey into Jerusalem, He was seen attending the Passover (Jn.6:4). In this chapter, Chapter 7, He is seen attending the Feast of Tabernacles (v.10).

Thought 1. Note two instructive lessons.

1) Jesus withdrew from conflict and danger so that He might continue to minister.
2) Galilee was not as prominent as Judaea. In fact, it was an obscure place, considered both insignificant and un-important. But note: God chose for His Son to minister there. This should speak to the hearts of believers. A believer should not feel embarrassed or less important to be placed in an obscure ministry by the Lord.

   Note another fact: when Jesus was forced to withdraw, He did not withdraw from ministry. He did not become idle, sitting still and doing nothing. He ministered wherever He was. Ministering to people and meeting their needs and teaching and preaching the gospel were His life. To live was to minister.

2 (7:3-5) **Jesus Christ, Family of**: the brothers' response was mockery and unbelief. Note several things.

Jesus had four half-brothers whose names were James, Joses, Simon, and Judas. He also had some half-sisters who were not named (Mt.13:55-56). Their attitude toward Jesus was one of extreme concern and embarrassment. His claim to be *the Son of God* embarrassed them immensely and led them to think He was *beside Himself*, that is, mad or insane. On one occasion the rumor of madness caused so much pressure from neighbors and friends that they actually travelled a great distance to find Him and bring Him home (see note—Mk.3:31-32 for more discussion. This is an important note in grasping the background of the brothers' attitude of mockery toward Jesus.)

Jesus, of course, did not heed the urgings of His family to cease making such phenomenal claims. He had to proclaim the truth: He was the Son of God, the very Bread of Life, the only One who could fill and satisfy men, giving them abundant and eternal life.

The embarrassment felt by the family was bound to be a heavy load, making the family extremely self-conscious and stirring some sense of responsibility for Jesus' abnormal behavior. The brothers compensated for their embarrassment by mocking Jesus. Note their mockery: they challenged Him to go up to Jerusalem to the Feast and do His marvelous miracles there. They suggested that He was failing to help and to strengthen the disciples He left there when He withdrew and that if He really wanted to be acclaimed the Messiah, the Son of God, He had to prove Himself in the center of the nation, Jerusalem itself.

The brothers, of course, knew the rumors about the leaders seeking to kill Jesus. It was not likely they really wanted Jesus to go and jeopardize His life, nor did they think He would. The whole scene was one of mockery (v.3-4) and unbelief (v.5). They were tolerating Him through sarcasm, through a half-amused teasing. They entertained themselves by goading Him on and by treating Him with an amused disrespect; and, unfortunately, their disrespect and teasing were open for all to see. Note three points.

1. There was the hurt and ache of Jesus over the family. His heart was bound to be cut to the core by the family's mockery, embarrassment, and unbelief. He was deeply hurt by their rejection.

2. *Jesus' suffering upon earth* included the rejection of His earthly family. He is thereby able to succor everyone, no matter his trial, even the person who stands alone in the world, having been rejected by his own family.

3. The response of Jesus' family, in particular His brothers, was embarrassment, mockery, and unbelief. The unbelief of the brothers was a persistent, continuing attitude (the Greek imperfect tense). To some degree this is understandable in light of...

- Jesus' phenomenal claims.
- Jesus' rejection by His hometown, Nazareth, which the family witnessed. He was probably rejected twice by His former neighbors and city, once with so much hostility that they tried to kill Him (Lk.4:16-30; Mk.6:1-6. Cp. Mt.13:53-58.)
- Jesus' rejection by His neighbors and the leaders of the nation, both religious and civil. The neighbors thought Him insane, and the leaders thought Him demon-possessed (Mk.3:20-21; 3:22-30; 3:31-35. Cp. Mt.12:46-50; Lk.8:19-21.)

Thought 1. Jesus Christ bore every imaginable suffering for men, even the rejection of His own family. It is through His suffering—the very fact that He has borne all our sufferings—that He is able to succor us through any and all trials.

> **"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted [trials], he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:18; cp. Heb.4:15-16).**

3 (7:6-9) **Man, Acclaim—Jesus Christ, Response to**: Jesus' reply to mockery, ridicule, sarcasm, and unbelief was threefold.

1. It was not time (the day) for His acclaim, not time for the world to accept and acknowledge His claims and works, not yet.

a. The day of the Lord's acclaim had not yet come. It was not time for the day...

- when many would proclaim Him the Savior, the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- when many would bow, acknowledging that His claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God, was true.

The day was coming. There was a time appointed by God, a destined time. (See note, *My Hour*—Jn.2:3-5.) But it was not yet.

Note that Jesus had turned the mockery into a teaching situation. He used the very point of the mockery against His claims and works and made the claim again. There would be a time, a day, when He would be acclaimed, but not then.

> **"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:23-24).**
>
> **"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour....And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (Jn.12:27, 32-33).**
>
> **"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (Jn.13:1).**

b. The time for man's acclaim is now. Jesus said to his brothers, "Your time—man's time, the world's time—is now." It was and still is man's day, the day...

- for acceptance and acclaim.
- for reception and recognition.
- for honoring and receiving honor.

It should be noted that some interpret "time" to mean "the opportune time." In this interpretation Jesus was simply saying it was not the best time for Him to attend the feast. His brothers could go anytime, but He could not. This interpretation is based on the word "time" (kairos, which stresses opportune time). It differs from the word usually used for Jesus' "hour" (hora, Jn.2:4). However, *kairos* is a frequently used word in the New Testament, and its meaning cannot be held to opportune time. Three things support the interpretation that kairos means "Jesus' hour" in this passage.

⇒ The contrast Jesus makes between His time and His brothers' time.

⇒ The context of verses 7-8.

⇒ The emphasis given to Jesus' answer. If the reply means only that He was waiting for the opportune time to go to Jerusalem, then the reply seems trivial, almost meaningless; so does the contrast between His time and His brothers' time and the points of verses 7-8.

2. It is time for the world's works to be proclaimed evil. Christ said "It is time for the world's reaction against me, not time for its acceptance." It is time for Christ...

- to point out the sin of the world, not to receive its acclaim.
- to point out the false religion of the world, not to proclaim its hypocritical goodness.
- to point out the depravity of the world, not to camouflage the truth.
- to point out the corruption within the world, not to paint a rosy picture.
- to point out the need of the world, not to praise it.
- to point out the destiny of the world, not to hide its fate.

Because of this, the fact that He proclaimed the truth, the world hated Him and would not acknowledge and acclaim Him. It was time for the world's reaction against Him, not time for its acceptance.

It is time for man's acceptance, time for the men of the world to accept each other. His brothers were part of the world, and the world does not hate its own. The world does not reject and hate, but receives those...

- who love it.
- who serve it.
- who participate in it.
- who approve of its behavior.
- who go along with it.

Therefore, the world receives those who look at Christ and mock, ridicule, criticize, reject, and treat Him sarcastically. The world does not hate, but welcomes, opposition to Jesus Christ.

Thought 1. This is the time and the day when the works of the world must be proclaimed evil. The truth must be preached and proclaimed by the ministers of God. The world cannot be saved unless the evil of the world is acknowledged and corrected. It is the task of God's people to proclaim the truth; however, it must be proclaimed as Jesus proclaimed it: in love, appealing to the desperate needs of man.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" (Jn.15:22).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23; cp. Is.53:6; 64:6).

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn.1:8).

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5).

"As righteousness tendeth to life; so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death" (Pr.11:19).

"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Pr.20:9).

3. It is not time for Jesus' full revelation. Note the words "full come" or "fully come" (peplerotai). His predestined *hour to die* for the world was not to be, not yet. It was to come, but in God's time. And when it came, His claims and works would be validated and proven beyond question. Many would proclaim Him to be both Lord and Savior, the Bread of Life who alone can fill and satisfy the desperate and starving needs of men.

Thought 1. The believer's answer to mockery, ridicule, sarcasm, and unbelief is the same as the answer proclaimed by Jesus.

1) This is not the day for His acclaim, but for man's acclaim.
2) It is time for the world's works to be proclaimed evil.
3) It is not time for His full revelation, that is, for the climax of human history, the day when He shall return in glory and majesty, dominion and power.

"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (Ro.14:11).

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev.15:4).

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations" (Ps.22:27-28).

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Is.45:22-23; cp. Is.66:23).

	B. The Response of the Jews: Seeking, Yet Questioning, 7:10-19	the temple, and taught.	uneducated 1) Jesus went to the temple & taught 2) People questioned His credentials
1 Jesus went to the Feast a. After his brothers had already gone b. Quietly, as in secret	10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.	15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?	
2 The Jews' response: Sought & questioned & murmured about Him a. A good man b. A deceiver	11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, where is he? 12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.	16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. 18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.	**3 Jesus' reply: My teaching is God's teaching** a. Proven by the subjective test (the inward or moral test): Man knows the truth by doing it b. Proven by the objective test (the outward or observation test): Does man speak for his own glory or for God's glory?
c. A man not significant enough to defend	13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.	19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?	c. Proven by the personal test: Are you keeping the law?
d. A man unaccredited—so capable, yet	14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into		

DIVISION VIII

THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53

B. The Response of the Jews: Seeking, Yet Questioning, 7:10-19

(7:10-19) **Introduction**: the second reaction or response to Jesus came from the Jewish crowds, including both religionists and pilgrims. This passage gives the answer to four false beliefs about Jesus, the belief that He was…

- only a *good man*.
- a deceiver.
- a man not important enough to defend.
- a man unaccredited.

1. Jesus went to the Feast (v.10).
2. The Jews' response: sought and questioned and murmured about Him (v.11-15).
3. Jesus' reply: My teaching is God's teaching (v.16-19).
   a. Proven by the subjective test (the inward or moral test): Man knows the truth by doing it.
   b. Proven by the objective test (the outward or observation test): Does man speak for his own glory or for God's glory?
   c. Proven by the personal test: Are you keeping the law?

1 (7:10) **Jesus Christ, Faithfulness to Jewish Feast**: Jesus finally went up to Jerusalem to attend the Feast, but He did not go up with His brothers. They had left sometime before, probably in a large caravan. The caravans of the day were huge expeditions (cp. Lk.2:43-44); therefore, He went quietly, almost in secret, so as not to attract too much attention. He was going to step forward to teach publicly, but He needed to be inconspicuous until that moment came (v.14). If He had travelled to Jerusalem publicly, the people might have escorted Him into the city, proclaiming Him King and causing His arrest before His "hour" (Jn.7:6). The Triumphal Entry would have taken place too soon.

2 (7:11-15) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the Jews' response was that of seeking Him and of questioning and murmuring about Him. The term "Jews" in this instance probably refers to all Jews, religionists and pilgrims. Everyone wanted to find Him: the Jewish authorities wanted to entrap and discredit Him before the people, for they wished to have Him arrested and sentenced to death. The common people wanted to find Him so they could hear His teaching and see His miracles for themselves.

The Jewish crowds are to be commended for having sought Christ, for He is to be sought. Every man should seek Christ until He is found.

⇒ But the motives of the religionists were evil. They were not seeking Jesus to worship and learn of Him, but to harm Him. They wanted to discredit Him, lest they lose the loyalty of the people and their own security and position.

⇒ But the motives of the common people were corrupt. They were not seeking Jesus as Savior and Lord, the One to whom they owed their allegiance. They were seeking Him out of curiosity, to see Him perform spectacular miracles (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:23).

The response of the Jewish crowds was that of murmuring and questioning. It was not a discontented murmuring, but that of whispering and buzzing about, excitedly so. People were quietly asking and discussing their opinions about Him in soft voices and off to the side, in the corners and away from strangers, lest they arouse the suspicion that they were followers of Jesus and endanger their own lives.

1. Some thought He was a good man: a man to be supported, listened to, and heeded. By *good* they meant at least the following: a man who was...
   - loving and caring
   - giving and unselfish
   - true and honest
   - just and moral
   - believing and worshipful

But note the inadequacy and weakness of this belief. It sees Jesus only as a man, a good man, yes; but still only as a man. It does not believe Jesus is the *Son of Man*. (See note—Jn.1:51.)

2. Some thought Jesus was the exact opposite: a deceiver, a man who was deliberately deceiving and leading the people away from the true religion. By *deceiving* they meant that He was...
   - misleading, deluding, beguiling, actually leading the people away from God.
   - boasting of Himself, His own ideas and position.
   - revelling in the admiration, adulation, and flattery of the people.
   - trying to be novel and creative, to be recognized as a man of new ideas.
   - trying to attract attention and secure a following.

In reality, they said He was...
- not of God, but of Beelzebub (the devil) (Mt.12:24; Mk.3:22; Lk.11:15).
- a drunkard and a glutton (Mt.11:19; Lk.7:34).
- an associate of sinners (Mt.9:11; Mk.2:16; Lk.5:30; 15:2).
- a criminal and a law-breaker (Mt.12:1-8; 12:10; 15:1-20; 16:1-12).

Now note: if all this were true, if Jesus were a deceiver, then He was the most evil and deceptive man the world has ever seen.

3. Some thought Jesus was a man not significant enough to defend. Even those who felt Jesus was a good man cowered in fear rather than speak up for Jesus. They feared the religious authorities. They felt Jesus was not worth the bother, the cost, the risk of jeopardizing their own safety.

4. Some thought Jesus was a man unaccredited and without proper credentials. About the middle of the Feast, Jesus ended His seclusion and hiding. He went into the temple and began teaching. The people were astonished; they marvelled at His knowledge of the "letters." "Letters" would mean both the Bible of the Old Testament and the commentaries or Scribal Law expounding the Scriptures. He had never been a student of their school or of a Rabbi, yet He knew the Scriptures well. Their question was asked in contempt: "How does this man know so much? Who is He claiming to be? What right does He have to teach? He has never learned or studied in our schools, under our teachers. He is a *mere carpenter*, uneducated, and unlearned. What right does He have to set Himself up as a great teacher, a person to be heard? He is not accredited nor ordained by our schools and leaders."

> **Thought 1.** How often people are rejected, despite their call and gifts, simply because they are not accredited by the right schools or leaders or do not have the *proper* education.

3 (7:16-19) **Jesus Christ, Claims—Knowledge, of God**: Jesus' reply was threefold. He answered all four charges, the charges that He was...
- only a good man.
- a deceiver.
- a man not significant enough to defend.
- a man unaccredited.

Jesus made the phenomenal claim: "My doctrine [teaching] is not mine, but God's." Note...
- He did not claim to be the Source of His message.
- He claimed to be "sent" by God, to be the Representative, the Ambassador of God. He claimed to have been in the most intimate relationship with God: in His presence, communion, and fellowship. (See note—Jn.3:34.)

> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).**
>
> **"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
>
> **"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).**

- He claimed that His message and teaching were God's. He was only the Messenger of God.

> **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).**

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).

Jesus said a person can actually test His claim. There are three tests that prove His claim.

1. There is the subjective test, the inward or moral test. How can a person know if Jesus' claim is true? He can know by doing God's will. If a person will do what God says, that person *will know* the truth. Jesus was saying...
   - that God's teaching, God's Word, is not for storing up head knowledge, but for experiencing real life.
   - that the person who really knows God is not the person who has some thoughts about God, but the person who does and lives as God wills, the person who is holy even as God is holy.
   - that the only person who can know God is the person who thinks and lives as God lives. A person who does not live as God lives does not *know* God; he only knows *about* God.
   - that the only way to know God is to "*believe* that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb.11:6).

In summary, there is a way to know if Jesus' claim is true. A person can know by...
- believing and seeking to know God, believing that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
- living and doing God's will, by being holy even as He is holy (1 Pt.1:15-16).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:2).

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pt.1:15-16).

2. There is the objective test, the outward or observation test. Does Christ speak for His own glory or for God's glory? A person can look at Christ and observe and see the truth.
   ⇒ A man who is *sent by another person* and ends up speaking for himself is not a true representative. He is seeking his own glory.
   ⇒ A man who is *sent by another person* and speaks the message of that person *is* true, for he is doing what he should do: representing the person who sent him.

Note three very significant things.

a. Jesus did not seek to glorify Himself, but God. Jesus sought to stir men to glorify God in their lives. Such an effort is the constant subject of Jesus' preaching and teaching. He claimed to be empty of personal ambition and glory.

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn.14:13).

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn.17:4).

b. Jesus was not just claiming to tell the truth; He was claiming to be *the truth*.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

c. Jesus claimed that there was no unrighteousness in Him.

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (Jn.8:46).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:26).

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:14).

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:19).

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pt.2:22).

3. There is the personal test. A person can use the law to tell if Christ is true. A man can measure himself by the law and clearly see that he does not keep it. He breaks the law; therefore, he stands in need of God's forgiveness. This was exactly what Christ was preaching and teaching. He cried out that God loved the world and had sent His Son to save the world.

Note what Jesus said: "You are the recipients of the law. God has been very gracious to you in giving the law. But being a recipient is not enough—you must keep the law. However, you do not keep the law. You go about opposing and standing against me, not surrendering to God's Son. You oppose me, even seek to kill me, God's Son."

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal.3:10).

"And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Gal.3:12).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

	C. The Response of the People: A Charge of Insanity, Yet Still Questioning, 7:20-31	of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?	**response**
		26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?	a. Their response was questioning: Is this not He? 1) Their reasoning: Could He be the Messiah?
1 The pilgrims' response a. Their response: Jesus was possessed by a demon, that is, insane	20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?	27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.	2) Their conclusion: Unbelief—they knew His earthly origin
b. Jesus' reply: Doing good proves a man	21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.	28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.	b. Jesus' reply: A pivotal claim 1) He is a man 2) He also came from God
1) Circumcision is doing good: Meets a religious & a ceremonial need of man	22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.	29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.	3) He knows God: Is from God—God sent Him
2) Healing is doing good: Meets a personal & a bodily need of man	23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?	30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.	c. The local people's reaction[DSI] 1) Some disbelieve & reject
3) A principle: Judge not superficially, think & consider	24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.	31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?	2) Some believe
2 The local residents'	25 Then said some of them		

DIVISION VIII

THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53

C. The Response of the People: A Charge of Insanity, Yet Still Questioning, 7:20-31

(7:20-31) **Introduction**: the third reaction or response to Jesus came from all the people—the pilgrims and the local residents of Jerusalem. The charges against Jesus ranged all the way from being demon-possessed to being a mere man. Jesus' answer to all charges against Him was incisive.

1. The pilgrims' response (v.20-24).
2. The local residents' response (v.25-31).

1 (7:20-24) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the pilgrims' response was a charge that Jesus was demon-possessed and insane.

1. The charge was made primarily by the pilgrims, not by the local residents of Jerusalem. The local residents are covered in the next passage (v.25-31). The pilgrims were the people who did not know Jesus very well. They had come from all over the world; therefore, they did not know as much about Jesus, which made it easier to charge Him with being demon-possessed and mad or insane. He was opposing...

- the religious establishment.
- the religious leaders.
- the religion that had proven itself for generations.
- the religion that contributed so much to society and the nation.
- the religion that was founded by the forefathers, the most godly leaders of history.

Only an evil man or a man filled with an evil spirit would have opposed such a religion; therefore, Jesus must have been crazed. His mind must have been deranged, running wild with the imagination that people were out to get Him. He must have been controlled by an evil spirit. The pilgrims thought their religious leaders could do little if any evil. They thought their religious leaders would never...

- harm anyone.
- be so unjust and immoral.
- be so undisciplined and out of control.
- react against anyone.
- be so corruptible.
- do such an unholy thing.

Thought 1. Some people think religious leaders can do no wrong. However, religion and religious leaders can be wrong just as any establishment or anyone else can be wrong. Everyone can fail and fall, come short and sin, be

misled and become corruptible. Christ came...

- to point out this misconception.
- to correct this misconception.
- to forgive this misconception.
- to pass judgment upon those who would not repent or receive God's forgiveness and be corrected.

Thought 2. A man's choice, his decision, must be made for Jesus Christ and not for religion and religious leaders. Christ is the Truth, not religion and its leaders. Religion and religious leaders are to follow Christ just as all other men are to follow Christ. Christ is the Lord and Master, not religion and its leaders.

2. Jesus answered the pilgrims by appealing to the great work He had just done. He had healed the crippled man by the pool of Bethsaida. The man had been bedridden for thirty-eight years, and the people had marvelled at the power of Jesus (Jn.5:1f). But there was a problem. Jesus had healed the man on the Sabbath, which was considered work, and working on the Sabbath was strictly forbidden. It was a serious offense in the minds of the Jews, for it taught the people to break the law. And this the civil and religious leaders could not allow, for it was their religion that had held the nation together (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16 for more discussion).

The point is this. Jesus said that He was not evil; He was not demon-possessed and mad. Doing good proves whether a man is full of evil or full of good. His work, healing the crippled man, was a good work not an evil work. His healing did as much good as the religious leaders who circumcised on the Sabbath day. Note three points.

a. The religious leaders criticized Jesus for healing the crippled man on the Sabbath, and it was for this work and other so called law-breaking deeds that they were opposing Him, some even plotting to kill Him. But the pilgrims did not know this, not yet.

b. Jesus wanted all men, even the religionists, to see the truth. He was not a law-breaker, not an evil man. He was not out to destroy men and nations. He was the Son of God who had come to save men and nations and to correct and set religion straight.

c. Jesus appealed to the people to judge rightly, that is, by facts, not by appearance.

⇒ When they circumcised a man on the Sabbath, they were not doing evil, but good. They were meeting a man's religious and ceremonial need. Therefore, they were correct in circumcising on the Sabbath, for God commands circumcision on the eighth day, and sometimes the eighth day after a child's birth was bound to fall on the Sabbath (Lev.12:3).

⇒ When He healed a man on the Sabbath, He was not doing evil, but good. He was meeting a personal and bodily need of a man, a need much more desperate than a religious and ceremonial need.

Jesus told the people to judge not according to appearance, but to look at what He did; and to look realistically, honestly, and objectively. If a person did, he would see that Jesus was not full of evil but full of good and righteousness. He would see that Jesus was the Son of God.

"The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam.16:7).

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Mt.23:27).

"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:24-25).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Dt.16:20).

2 (7:25-31) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Origin—Response—God, Ignorance of**: the local people's response was that of reasoning and drawing a tragic conclusion.

They questioned among themselves: is this the One who is so opposed and feared? Is He the One whom they seek to kill? They also reasoned: He speaks so openly and boldly, and He is not stopped. Is He indeed the Messiah? But the local residents came to a tragic conclusion: Jesus is not the Messiah. Why? Because they knew His origin. They knew all about His family and rearing; therefore, they concluded that He was a mere man, a carpenter from Nazareth. In their minds there was absolutely nothing unusual about His origin; therefore, He could not possibly be of God. He could not be the promised Messiah.

Thought 1. Some men always have and always will question, reason, and draw the wrong conclusion.

⇒ Some will question: is this He, the One promised by God, the One so needed by the world?

⇒ Some will reason: this is the very Christ, the Messiah. He is bound to be, for He continues on. He is still proclaimed, forcibly so, despite being so threatened and persecuted with the intention of being wiped out.

⇒ Some will conclude: this could not be the Son of God. It is impossible for a man to be born of God, to literally come from God. A man is a man, just flesh and blood like all other men. His origin has to be that of a man and a woman. Note: unbelief prevails when the mind is set only upon the earth and its physical law. If God is God, He must be allowed to act supernaturally, above natural law. This was the problem with the people in Jesus' day, and it is the problem with so many of every generation.

Jesus' reply to those who questioned and disbelieved Him is a critical point. His answer centered around His origin. Note that He was gripped with great emotion in answering this point. He cried (ekrazen) and shouted three things.

1. He *is* a man, and men do know where He came from. He was born of Mary and did come from Nazareth, but that is not all. There is much, much more.
2. He has come *from God*. God sent Him. Note exactly what Jesus claimed.
   a. "I am not come of myself": His mission and message were not His own. He did not dream it up, plan it or plot it. He was not out for self glory or to build a movement and a following. What He did was not of Himself.
   b. "He that sent me is true." A real Person sent Jesus, and note: the Person is not only real, He is true. He is a Person who is the very embodiment of truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:6.) What Jesus was claiming and doing was exactly what He had been sent and commissioned to claim and to do.
   c. "You do not know Him." They did not know that Person who is truth. Jesus was saying, of course, that they did not know God. If they knew God, really knew Him, they would recognize and know that Jesus' mission and works were of God. They would know that only God's perfect love and power could speak and do as Jesus did.

> **"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (Jn.15:21).**
>
> **"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).**
>
> **"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).**
>
> **"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jer.8:7).**
>
> **"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD" (Jer.9:3).**

3. "I know Him [God]." Jesus told how He knew God.
   a. He knew God because He was from God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31 for verses of Scripture). He actually came from God's presence, from being face to face with Him.
   b. He knew God because He was sent by God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34). While face to face with God, God commissioned Him and sent Him forth to *proclaim* and *live* the truth before men. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.14:6.)

> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).**
>
> **"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).**
>
> **"I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
>
> **"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(7:30-31) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the reaction of the local residents was twofold.

1. Some still did not believe and some even became sworn enemies. They tried to stop Jesus, but they failed, for God stopped them. He overrode their opposition and plots. Jesus' "hour" had not yet come, so they were not allowed to stop Him (see note, "*My Hour*"—Jn.2:3-5).
2. Some believed in Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

> **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**

	D. The Response of the Rulers & Authorities: A Charge of Being a Rabble-Rouser, 7:32-36	34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.	b. He foretold man's destiny: Men shall seek to find Him—but cannot come where He is
1 The rulers' response a. They considered Him a threat, a rabble-rouser b. They sought to arrest Him	32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.	35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles:	**3 The reaction of the rulers & authorities: They questioned His reply**
2 Jesus' reply a. He foretold His destiny: His death, resurrection, & ascension	33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.	36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?	

DIVISION VIII

THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53

D. The Response of the Rulers & Authorities: A Charge of Being a Rabble-Rouser, 7:32-36

(7:32-36) **Introduction**: the fourth reaction or response to Jesus is that of the authorities, both religious and civil. They paint a clear picture of men in every generation who reject and oppose Jesus. What Jesus says is both striking and tragic for all unbelievers.

1. The rulers' response (v.32).
2. Jesus' reply (v.33-34).
   a. He foretold His destiny: His death, resurrection, and ascension.
   b. He foretold man's destiny: men shall seek to find Him—but cannot come where He is.
3. The reaction of the rulers and authorities: they questioned His reply (v.35-36).

1 (7:32) **Jesus Christ, Response—Religionists**: the response of the rulers, both religious and civil. Note several facts.

1. The religionists or the Pharisees took the lead in opposing Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Pharisees*—Acts 23:8; DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Religionists*—Jn.5:16. This last note discusses why the religionists opposed Jesus so vehemently.) They apparently approached the chief priests and persuaded them that Jesus was a threat.
2. The chief priests were primarily leaders among the Sadducees who held most of the high offices of Jewish government under Roman rule (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Sadducees*—Acts 23:8). When Rome became dissatisfied with a chief priest, he was removed and another one was placed in authority. The removal from office was a common occurence, so there were quite a few chief priests surviving. In the eyes of the people, they were still honored despite being removed. The people blamed Rome for their removal, not the chief priests.
3. In the four gospels, when the Pharisees, chief priests, and Scribes are mentioned as standing together against Jesus, it means that the ruling body of the Jewish nation has taken action. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sanhedrin*—Mt.26:59.) In the present situation, the Sanhedrin had apparently met and dispatched the palace or temple police to arrest Jesus. From what follows it seems that they were told to watch for an appropriate moment lest they cause a riot among His supporters.
4. Note what disturbed the religionists so much. It was the murmuring of the people, in particular the fact that so many were "believing on Him" (v.31). He was a threat to their security and position, esteem and authority, profession and livelihood. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16 for more discussion.) They wanted nothing to do with Him; they wanted things to be left alone. They wanted to get rid of Him as soon as possible.

Thought 1. A man (leader) often murmurs against and opposes Jesus because Jesus is a threat to his way of life. Because the man is unwilling to change his life, Jesus is a threat to him and his security. Wanting absolutely nothing to do with Jesus, he tries to dispose of Him and His influence the best way he can.

> **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).**
>
> **"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).**
>
> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Tit.2:12).**
>
> **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).**
>
> **"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Ro.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh,**

and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev.3:17).

"They are inclosed in their own fat: with their mouth they speak proudly" (Ps.17:10).

"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Ezk.16:49).

2 (7:33-34) **Jesus Christ, Death; Ascension; Exaltation**: Jesus' reply was puzzling and tragic both to the unbeliever of His day and to the unbeliever of today.

1. Jesus foretold His destiny.
   a. He foretold His death: "Yet a little while am I with you."

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you" (Jn.13:33).

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I" (Jn.14:28).

"But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?" (Jn.16:5).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

   b. He foretold His resurrection and ascension: "Then I go unto Him that sent me" (cp. Jn.8:14; 13:3; 14:2-3; 16:5, 10, 17).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go" (Jn.8:14).

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went [was going] to God" (Jn.13:3).

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).

"Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more" (Jn.16:10).

"Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?" (Jn.16:17).

What did the death and resurrection have to do with those who opposed Jesus? Why did Jesus predict His destiny in answering those who wanted nothing to do with Him?

   a. He was saying that those who opposed Him could get rid of Him. They could reject and have nothing to do with Him. They did not have to worry about getting rid of Him; they would be allowed to do that. He would go away.
   b. He was saying, however, that He would not cease to be; He would not be annihilated and cease to exist. His life would not be extinguished. He would be killed because men would try to stop Him from living as a man on earth. But He would arise and return to His Father who sent Him. He would experience glory and give great hope to all those who have believed and do believe in Him (see note—Mk.16:19-20).

2. Jesus foretold man's destiny. Jesus predicted a tragic future for those who opposed Him and wanted nothing to do with Him. He said that the day is coming when...
   - they shall seek Him,
   - but they shall not find Him;
   - where He is they will not be allowed to come.

What Jesus meant is *just what He said.*

   a. The man who rejects Christ will face the day when he will seek Christ.
      ⇒ In this life, God's Spirit does not always strive with man (Gen.6:3; cp. Pr.29:1). When a man is in church or anywhere else and feels pulled to make a decision and puts the decision off for an hour or two (a half day or a day at most), the pull fades and eventually dies completely. God's Spirit does not continue to strive with him. Most of us have experienced such movements and killed the Spirit's striving within us.

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me" (Ps.51:11).

⇒ In the next life, at the day of judgment, the unbeliever will seek Christ.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast our devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" (Mt.7:21-22).

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us" (Mt.25:10-11).

b. However, the great tragedy is that the unbeliever will not find Christ. It will be too late (cp. Mt.25:31-46). The unbeliever has never known Christ nor what it is to walk in the Lord's kingdom on earth; therefore, he will not know Christ or His kingdom in that day. As Christ and heaven are alien and unknown to the unbeliever today, so will Christ and heaven be alien and unknown to the unbeliever in that day. Unbelievers will not be allowed to come where He is, that is, live in God's presence, not eternally.

Note: "I" and "you" are a climactic contrast. Jesus said "Where *I* am, there *you* cannot come" (v.36). "Where I am" means two things.

⇒ It means the rest and life of Christ, which is love, joy, and peace. (See note, *Rest*—Jn.4:16-18.)

⇒ It means the state of eternal life (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24.)

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).

"When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Lk.13:25-28).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" (1 Cor.6:9).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27).

3 (7:35-36) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the reaction of the rulers and authorities. Very simply, they were *puzzled*, questioning what Jesus meant.

1. The dispersed (diasporan) refers to the Jews who were scattered all over the world. It seems that the rulers thought Jesus was going to leave Israel and go to some foreign nation, preaching to the Jews there.

2. Those who opposed Jesus were puzzled by His death and resurrection and ascension. It was difficult for them to grasp its meaning and to believe in Him. In fact, it was offensive to them. This was exactly what Jesus had said (see note—Jn.6:62).

"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 Jn.2:11).

	E. The Great Claim of Jesus and Divided Opinions About Him, 7:37-53		
		among the people because of him.	
		44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.	d. Some: Would take & do away with Him
		45 Then came the officers to	**4 The rulers' response**
1 The Feast day	37 In the last day, that great	the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them,	a. Wished to remove Him
2 The claims of Jesus	day of the feast, Jesus stood	Why have ye not brought	1) The officers were
a. He is the source of life[DS1]	and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me,	him?	sent to arrest Jesus, v.32
	and drink.	46 The officers answered,	2) The officers' response:
b. He is the source of abundant life	38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out	Never man spake like this man.	He is a great Teacher
	of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.	47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?	b. Claimed He was a deceiver: Charged the people with being mistaken & accursed
c. He is the source of the Holy Spirit[DS2]	39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)	48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?	
		49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.	
3 The people's divided response	40 Many of the people	50 Nicodemus saith unto	c. Rejected Him
a. Many: The prophet[DS3]	therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.	them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)	1) Nicodemus spoke up for Him[DS5]
b. Others: The Christ	41 Others said, This is the	51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?	
c. Some: Questioned His birthplace & misinterpreted Scripture[DS4]	Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?	52 They answered and said	2) They rejected Nicodemus' questions, misinterpreting Scripture
	42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh out of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?	unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.	
	43 So there was a division	53 And every man went unto his own house.	d. Went to their own houses: Lived as always

DIVISION VIII

THE RESPONSES TO THE REVELATION OF JESUS, 7:1-53

E. The Great Claim of Jesus and Divided Opinions About Him, 7:37-53

(7:37-53) **Introduction**: this is a picture of the great claim of Jesus and the divided opinions about Him. It is a picture that should cause every man to search his own response to Jesus.

1. The Feast day (v.37).
2. The claims of Jesus (v.37-39).
3. The people's divided response (v.40-44).
4. The rulers' response (v.45-53).

1 (7:37) **Feast of Tabernacles**: the Feast of Tabernacles was the most popular feast among the Jews. For that reason it was simply known as *The Feast* (1 Ki.8:20). It was also called *The Feast of Ingathering* (Ex.23:16) and *The Feast of the Lord* (Lev.23:39). The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated for seven days. Each Jewish family built a small stucco or tent-like structure in their yard or upon some other property they owned or secured for the occasion. Then they moved out of their home into the structure for the seven-day period. The Feast celebrated two significant events. Historically, it celebrated the day when Israel wandered about in the wilderness as strangers and pilgrims without a homeland. The purpose for moving into the stucco or tent-like structure was to keep before their minds the wilderness wanderings of their forefathers (Lev.23:40-43). Secondly, the Feast was to be a period of thanksgiving for the completion of the harvest season and for the goodness of God in all of life (Ex.23:16; Dt.16:13, 16). The people were to give thanks for all that God had given them: all the fruit of the land that enriched life and made life possible.

The ceremony of the festival was most impressive and gives a dramatic picture of Christ's claims (Jn.7:37-39). On each of the seven days, the people came to the temple and brought some fruit as an offering and a few palm and willow branches. The branches were used to form a roof over the altar. Then the priest took a golden pitcher and led the people in a processional down to the pool of Siloam where he filled the pitcher with water. During this march the people played the flute and sang the Hillel, which was Psalms 113-118.

It was on the return march that the significant drama took place.

⇒ As the pitcher of water passed through the Water Gate, the people repeated in unison: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Is.12:3).

⇒ When the pitcher reached the altar, the water was poured out over the altar as an offering to God. While this was being done, the people waved palm branches and recited the words "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity" (Ps.118:25).

The idea of the processional was a dramatic way to thank God for rain, to offer prayer to God for more rain, and for a fruitful season in the coming year. It was a dramatic way for the people to acknowledge their need and dependence upon God for the rains, the water that gave them the fruit of the ground and the bounty of life. The last day of the Feast was dramatic in particular, for the people repeated the processional seven times. Note a significant point: Scripture says the Feast of Tabernacles will be celebrated and fulfilled in the end time when our Lord returns. The Feast will apparently symbolize our joy, liberty, and victory through the wilderness experience of life and the glorious provision of God: the glorious provision of living eternally and worshipping and serving God throughout the universe (Zech.14:16).

2 (7:37-39) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: the claims of Jesus. It was on "the last day, that great day of the feast," the day when the people marched in the processional seven times, that Jesus made His phenomenal claim. Some imagine Jesus shouting His claim just as the people finished saying, "Send now prosperity" (Ps.118:25).

Imagine the scene: Jesus did two unusual things. He "stood" (a teacher always sat in that day), and He "cried out" (ekrazen) shouting loudly. Both actions would startle and shock the people to attention. Picture thousands of voices praying to God for the living rains in the coming season, reciting: "Send now prosperity," and then piercing the air comes the thundering cry:

> **"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (Jn.7:37-38).**

Jesus made three phenomenal claims.

1. Jesus Christ is the source of life: He is the One who can quench the real thirst of man's being, who can meet the desperate need of man for prosperity, the real fruit and bounty of life.
   a. Men do thirst. They thirst for physical water and they thirst for spiritual life (see note—Jn.4:13-14 for a discussion of this point).
   b. Jesus Christ claims to be the source, that is, the Water that can quench man's thirst and give the fruit and bounty man so desperately needs in his life. He claims that He can do what water does (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.7:37).
      ⇒ He can cleanse and purify.

      > **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7; cp. 1 Jn.1:9).**

      ⇒ He can refresh.

      > **"[He] is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing" (Is.28:12).**
      >
      > **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**

      ⇒ He can revitalize and energize.

      > **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).**

2. Jesus Christ is the source of abundant life. Rivers of *living water* can flow out from a person. An abundance of life can be experienced (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10).

> **"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Mt.5:6).**
>
> **"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jn.4:14).**
>
> **"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat" (Rev.7:16).**
>
> **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev.22:17).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**

   a. The death of Jesus Christ (His having been smitten for the sins of the world) is the source of the living water. Out of His death (because He died) He was able to arise, and by arising He was able to conquer sin and death and to bring forth eternal life in all of its abundance. Note: the Word of God to Moses was a picture of the living water that was to come from Christ after He was smitten.

   > **"Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink" (Ex.17:6; cp. Num.20:11).**

b. Living water comes only through "believing on Christ." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24.)

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (Jn.6:35).

3. Jesus Christ is the source of the Holy Spirit. Rivers of living water refer to the Holy Spirit. This is a crucial verse, for it is the only place "living waters" is defined. When Jesus spoke of giving "living water," He meant He would give the Holy Spirit to a person. The presence of the Holy Spirit, of course, meant the experience of abundant and eternal life.

Note: it is only the person who believes in Christ who receives the Holy Spirit. Belief in Him is essential. Christ is the Giver of the Spirit. (See note—Jn.4:13-14 for more discussion.)

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(7:37) **Jesus Christ—Living Water**: water does at least three things. It cleanses or purifies; it refreshes; and it revitalizes or energizes.

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(7:39) **Holy Spirit**: what does the statement mean, "the Holy Spirit was not yet given"? It does not mean the Spirit was not active in the Old Testament. He was very active (Gen.1:2; 6:3; Job 26:13; 33:4; Ps.51:11; 139:7; Ezk.3:24, 27; Hag.2:5). It seems to mean that the Holy Spirit was not *fully present* until after the death and glorification of Christ. He was not present...

- in all His fulness.
- in the lives of believers all the time.
- in equipping believers with permanent spiritual gifts.

These three things certainly happened after the glorification of Christ.

⇒ He entered the world in all His fulness at Pentecost. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4 for more discussion.)
⇒ He entered the lives of believers at conversion, and their bodies became "the temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor.6:19).
⇒ He equips believers with spiritual gifts that are permanent (1 Cor.12:7f).

3 (7:40-44) **Jesus Christ, Response to; Opinions of**: the people's response was very divided.

1. Some said He was the Prophet (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20).
2. Some said He was the Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20).
3. Some questioned if He could be the Messiah. They knew that He was from Galilee, and they knew the true Messiah was to come out of Bethlehem, the city of David. Therefore, they saw no possible way He could be the Messiah.

Thought 1. Note what happened immediately upon the heels of the Lord's dramatic claim. People began to argue over Him, arguing if He were the real Messiah. What men need is to accept the fact: He is the Messiah, the Christ. There is too much evidence to deny it, too much evidence...

- within the human soul that senses the truth of God.
- within the lives of so many who bear clear testimony to His love and forgiveness, presence and assurance.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).

"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:24-25).

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" (Jn.12:37).

Thought 2. Many do question the *Lord's origin* and continue in unbelief because of it. When they look at Jesus, they see a great man, but only a man. They see and believe that He was flesh and blood, but not God incarnate in human flesh. They do not believe Jesus is the Son of God—a great prophet, yes; but the Messiah, the very Son of God, no.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:10-11).

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).

4. Some would take and do away with Him. They wanted nothing to do with Him. He was a threat to their peace and security and to their desire to live as they wished. (See note, pt.4—Jn.7:32 for more discussion and thought.)

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Lk.21:34).

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn.2:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(7:40) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Dt.18:15.

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(7:42) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Mic.5:2.

4 (7:45-53) **Jesus Christ, Response**: the rulers' response was fourfold. Their response should be carefully noted, for it speaks volumes to rulers and leaders of every generation.

1. The leaders wished to be rid of Jesus. They opposed Him and wanted nothing to do with Him (see note, pts.3, 4—Jn.7:32 for more discussion and thought).

Note the temple police were greatly impressed with the Lord's teaching. To them He was a great teacher.

2. The leaders claimed that He was a deceiver and that the people were mistaken and cursed because they followed Him. (See note, pt.2—-Jn.7:11-15.)

3. The leaders rejected Him, strongly so. Nicodemus spoke up for Christ, charging the leaders with breaking the law themselves and suggesting that they all hear Christ and observe His works closely (cp. *Nicodemus*, Jn.3:1f). The leaders used Scripture as the basis for rejecting Christ. They said that no Scripture pointed to a prophet's coming out of Galilee. They were wrong of course, wrong on two counts.

⇒ Jonah came from Galilee.

⇒ God is able to raise up prophets from anywhere He chooses.

4. The leaders went to their own houses and lived just as they had always chosen. God does not force any man to subject himself to His Son. Every man has the freedom to live as He wishes, either for God or for self. The leaders chose to live for self.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(7:50) **Nicodemus**: see Jn.3:1-15.

	CHAPTER 8	accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.	d. Jesus ignored them as long as possible
	IX. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41	7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.	**3 Man's dark nature: All men are sinful—guilty of serious sin** a. The counter question by Jesus: Think—if without sin, then condemn
	A. Man's Dark Sinfulness & God's Great Forgiveness, 8:1-11	8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.	
1 A picture of Jesus' life a. His life of devotion b. His life of worship c. His life of mission & teaching	Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.	9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.	b. The result: All men are convicted 1) The oldest 2) The last
2 Man's dark guilt a. A woman (& some man) were guilty of adultery b. Some witnesses who were offended were guilty of being vindictive & seeking revenge c. The religionists & the public were guilty 1) A self-righteous, critical spirit 2) A hypocritical attitude	2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. 3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, 4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? 6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to	10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? 11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.	**4 Conclusion: The great revelation—Jesus alone has the right to condemn & forgive** a. He gives a second chance b. He wishes to forgive c. He challenges d. He warns

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

A. Man's Dark Sinfulness and God's Great Forgiveness, 8:1-11

(8:1-9:41) **DIVISION OVERVIEW: Jesus Christ, Revelation of—Man, Enslaved by Sin**: in Chapter 8 Christ reveals Himself to be the Light of life. Man is seen gripped by sin (illustrated by the woman taken in adultery and by hypocritical religionists). Man is pictured as being critical, condemnatory, self-righteous, and adulterous—every single person is sinful. In the woman, man is seen as adulterous and guilty—living a life of darkness, without purpose and meaning and significance. In the religionists, man is seen as deceitful, critical, condemnatory, selfish, self-righteous, and loaded with guilt. Not a single religionist is seen to be free from the darkness of serious sin. Jesus reveals Himself to be the Light of the World, the One who brings liberty, forgiveness, purpose, meaning, and significance to the life of man.

(8:1-11) **Introduction**: this event is a most striking picture of "Man's Dark Sinfulness and God's Great Forgiveness."

1. A picture of Jesus' life (v.1-2).
2. Man's dark guilt (v.3-6).
3. Man's dark nature: all men are sinful—guilty of serious sin (v.7-9).
4. Conclusion: the great revelation—Jesus alone has the right to condemn and forgive (v.10-11).

1 (8:1-2) **Christian Believer—World—Jesus Christ, Devotional Life**: a picture of Jesus' life. There is a real contrast of lives here. The contrast is that of Jesus' quiet and worshipful life contrasted with the turbulent and judgmental lives of the religionists. Jesus is drawn within the turbulence to calm, settle, and leaven it. A picture can be drawn of the Christian life as quiet and worshipful contrasted with a turbulent world.

Note the secret to Jesus' calm and peace: He got alone with God. He often went off into the mount of Olives to be alone with God. (See note—Lk.21:37.) It was a favorite spot of His, a place where He could be alone with God and His disciples, a place of quietness where God could meet with Him face to face, strengthening and encouraging Him (Mt.26:30, 36f). (See outline and notes—Lk.21:37-38 for more discussion of this point.)

Note also that Jesus began His teaching early in the morning. The words "came" and "taught" are continuous action in the Greek. The people *kept coming* to Him, and He *kept teaching* them. His very mission in life was that of worshipping God and teaching and ministering to people. By this He demonstrated how all men should walk through life: worshipping God, teaching and ministering to people. Every man needs to be taught, and every man needs the ministry of others during the trials of life.

2 (8:3-6) **Guilty—Sin—Man, Depravity**: man's dark guilt. Man's guilt and sin are pictured in all the parties involved.

1. There was the guilt of the woman and some unknown man. They were both guilty of the serious sin of adultery, a sin that affects so many lives. Under Jewish law it was considered so serious that the parties were to be stoned to death (Lev.20:10; Dt.22:13-24). Note how the sin speaks to the sin of every person.

⇒ The sin was a work of darkness. All sin is, and most sin is actually done under the cover of darkness. An attempt is made to hide it from wife, husband, mother, father, employer, classmate.

⇒ The man and woman thought what we all often think—that their sin would never be discovered, that no one would ever find out. But they overlooked two things that we all ignore: in the vast majority of cases, sin has been discovered; and sin, the very act of it, is always seen by God.

⇒ The sin took place at the time of the feast, where the atmosphere was party-like and where men and women were brought together by drinking and dancing and the indulgence of the crowd (cp. Jn.7:37f). Such an atmosphere corrupts even those with the best intentions and the highest morals.

2. There was the guilt of some witnesses, some people who were offended by the woman in particular. Jewish law required two witnesses to convict a person. It is most unlikely that the woman and her male companion were seen by the religionists. They would not have been in such a *defiled atmosphere*. The Pharisees and Scribes were too strict in their rules and regulations. Some commentators do think, however, that the religionists had some scoundrels set a trap for the woman in order to drag her before Jesus to entrap Him. This seems most unlikely. Plotting a sin of the flesh does not fit in with the nature of the Pharisees and Scribes. Their sins were more of the spirit, much deeper, but less visible and less condemnatory to the public.

The point is this: the witnesses who caught the woman in the act of adultery were *great sinners*.

a. They were vindictive and revengeful. They wanted to strike out, to get back at her. She was *publicly exposed*. She should have been held in custody in some private place until judgment was passed, but she was unmercifully dragged before the public to expose her sin and to shame and punish her. Why? Apparently, she had hurt her husband or some loved one so much that he struck out at her. Public exposure was his way to strike back at her.

b. The man who committed adultery with her was not exposed. Why?

⇒ He could have escaped, fled before they grabbed him.

⇒ He could have been feared or bought off his accusers.

⇒ He could have been released because, as is the case in so many societies, misbehavior (sin) by men was more acceptable than by women.

3. There was the guilt of the religionists and the public. When the accusers dragged the woman to the religionists, people all along the way joined in, as the case so often is. The religionists saw a chance to test Jesus, so they took the woman before Him, hoping to discredit Him.

⇒ If Jesus said the woman was not guilty, He would be breaking Jewish law and be leaving Himself open to the charge of being too lenient with sin.

⇒ If Jesus said the woman was guilty and should be killed, He would be breaking Roman law which did not consider adultery a sin worthy of death. He would also be criticized as lacking mercy and love, compassion and forgiveness.

Note several things about the dark nature of man seen in these religionists and in the crowd who joined in the public exposure.

a. There was a sinful spirit among all these involved, a spirit...

- of self-righteousness that lacked forgiveness
- of criticism that lacked love
- of judging that lacked compassion
- of censoring that lacked understanding
- of condemning that lacked sympathy
- of punishing that lacked restoration
- of savagery that lacked curing
- of destroying that lacked the second chance

b. There was hypocrisy. They felt and claimed that they were religious, better than the woman, free from any sin serious enough to be exposed. They even used Scripture to condemn *her* sin and *to support* their right to condemn her.

c. There was complete failure to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mt.5:43; 19:19; 22:39; Mk.12:31; Lk.10:27; Ro.13:9; Gal.5:14; Jas.2:8):

⇒ a complete failure to do what we all need sometime, to be embraced and pulled out of the sin and hurt gripping us.

⇒ a complete failure to hush—be quiet, and say nothing, except to the one caught in sin—and to set about a ministry of restoration and reconciliation to God and man.

4. There was Jesus' ignoring sinful man as long as He could. "He stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground," saying nothing. He was silent for a long time. We are not told why Jesus stooped in silence or what He wrote on the ground. Various commentators say it was...

- to allow Him to think through the situation.
- to force the accusers to repeat the charges (v.7). By so doing, they and the public would begin to see and sense their lack of compassion.
- to write Scripture or some of the sins of those standing around, hoping to convict them (cp. Job 13:26).

Note this: Jesus did ignore them in all their sinful, critical, self-righteous, hypocritical spirit; but He ignored them only for a time. Jesus will not ignore nor allow sin to go on forever. He will arise, face it, and judge it.

3 (8:7-9) **Man, Depravity—Judging Others**: man's dark nature. All men are sinful and guilty of serious sin.

1. The woman was guilty of a very serious sin. The law said she was to be condemned to death. Her accusers and the people were right, legally justified in their charge. If they were to be stopped from killing her, and even more, if they were to be corrected and rebuked, something phenomenal would have to happen. It did, and note what it was:

⇒ "He that is without sin...let him first cast a stone" (v.7).

No man is without sin. Every one of the men standing there knew it, and every one of them was convicted within his conscience. They all left, leaving Jesus and the woman alone.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Ro.3:10; cp. v.9-18; 3:23).

2. Jesus said that stones could be cast at the sinner. But He placed a limitation on casting stones. "He that is without sin, let him *first* cast a stone." (Note: this means that only Christ can judge, for no person is without sin.)

Casting stones is not based on how much Scripture a person knows, nor on how great a person's calling and gifts are, nor on the position a person has. It is based upon moral goodness and perfection, and *no man* has achieved that.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Mt.7:3-5; cp. Ro.14:4, 13; 1 Cor.4:5; Jas.4:12).

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Ro.3:9-12).

4 (8:10-11) **Salvation—Jesus Christ, Savior—Forgiveness**: the great revelation. Jesus alone has the right to condemn and forgive. The picture of the woman is the picture of every person. When it comes to sin and judgment, every person stands alone before Christ—stands naked and stripped of all righteousness, for no person possesses righteousness. There are no accusers, not among men. No man can condemn the woman nor anyone else. The only righteousness and the only perfection, the only One who is not guilty of sin, is Christ and Christ alone. He alone is worthy to stand in judgment. However, note the most glorious news in all of human history.

1. Jesus did not condemn but gave a *second chance*.

"And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Lk.17:4).

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Mt.18:21-22).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

2. Jesus wished to forgive and did forgive: "Neither do I condemn thee."

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Ro.8:34).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).

3. Jesus challenged, but warned: "Go, and sin no more." Stop your sinning—make a clean break—do it no more. The warning is clear: repentance is essential for forgiveness.

"Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee" (Jn.5:14).

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Lk.24:47).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" (Ro.6:12).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" (1 Cor.15:34).

	B. Man's Need: The Light of the World, 8:12-20	16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.	a. Man judges by appearance b. Jesus judges not by appearance, but by God's standards
1 Jesus made a great claim & promise a. The claim: The Light of the world[DS1] b. The promise: "Follow me &...."[DS2] c. The objection: By the Pharisees	12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. 13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.	17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.	**4 Proof 3: The law's testimony** a. Jesus met the legal requirements b. Jesus had two witnesses: Himself & God
2 Proof 1: Jesus' great sense & knowledge of His origin & destiny a. He knew His origin & destiny b. Men could not know	14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.	19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.	**5 Proof 4: The Father's presence within** a. Jesus was mocked b. The Father was in Him
3 Proof 2: Man's incompetence to judge	15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.	20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.	**6 Conclusion: The tragedy—He was rejected in the temple**

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

B. Man's Need: The Light of the World, 8:12-20

(8:12-20) **Introduction**: man has great need. He is not always aware of it, but the need is still there. Man is in darkness.

⇒ He cannot see into the future nor into the next world.
⇒ He cannot see God, who He is and what He is like.
⇒ He cannot see the real meaning, significance, and purpose in life.
⇒ He cannot grasp perfect knowledge nor assurance of eternal life.

Therefore, man's great need is to see "the Light of the world."

1. Jesus made a great claim and promise (v.12-13).
2. Proof 1: Jesus' great sense and knowledge of His origin and destiny (v.14).
3. Proof 2: man's incompetence to judge (v.15-16).
4. Proof 3: the law's testimony (v.17-18).
5. Proof 4: the Father's presence within (v.19).
6. Conclusion: the tragedy—Jesus was rejected in the temple (v.20).

1 (8:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: Jesus made a great claim and promise.

1. The great claim was, "I am the Light of the world" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12 for discussion. Also see note—Mt.5:14.) Note that He made the great claim of deity: "I Am." The Lord's claim to deity was emphatic. The claim was the very first thing He said in this passage (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20).
2. The great promise was twofold: "He that followeth me...
   - shall not walk in darkness." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:12 for discussion.)
   - shall have the light of life."

Note two critical points.

a. A man does not possess light, not within himself, not by nature. Men are in darkness by nature.
b. A man is delivered "out of darkness" by following Jesus Christ. Note the word "following" is continuous action. A man must continue to follow in order to receive light.

> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:14-15).**

3. Jesus used the term "*light of life*." A man exists in darkness until He follows Christ. The meaning, purpose, and significance of life cannot be seen and known apart from following Christ. It is Christ who throws light upon life, revealing what life really is.
4. The religionists (Pharisees) objected to the claim of Jesus. They knew exactly what He was claiming: that He was the Messsiah and that He alone could give light to the world. In their minds only God could give light to the world. Note their charge against Him: He alone was bearing witness to His claim. He had no other witnesses; therefore, His claim was false. (See note—Jn.5:31 for more discussion of the witnesses required to prove a man's testimony. Jesus gave five witnesses in Jn.5:31-39.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:12) **Light**: Jesus is said to be the *Light of men* (Jn.1:4) and the *Light of the world* (Jn.8:12; 9:5; 12:46). It is possible for the Light, Jesus Himself, to be *in men* (Jn.11:10; cp. Col.1:27) and for men to become children of Light (see notes—Jn.12:34-36).

Apparently, Jesus used the word *light* often. John uses the word about twenty-one times. What is meant by calling Jesus the Light?

1. Jesus, the Light, is light by nature. Light is what He is within Himself, within His being, His nature, His essence, His character. Scripture says...
   - that "God is Light" (1 Jn.1:5);
   - that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (Col.1:15);
   - therefore, "Jesus is Light." He is "the Light of the world."
2. Jesus, the Light, tells us that He is holy, righteous, and pure. Light is the symbol of purity and holiness. Light means the absence of darkness and blindness; it has no spots of darkness or blackness, nor of sin and shame.
3. Jesus, the Light, reveals. His light shows clearly the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things. His light shines in, spots, opens up, identifies, illuminates, and shows things as they really are. The light of Jesus Christ shows the truth about the world and man and God. The light of Jesus Christ reveals that He loves and cares for man and wants man to love and care for Him.
4. Jesus, the Light, guides. His light allows a man to walk out of darkness. Man no longer has to grope, grasp, and stumble about trying to find his way through life. The path of life can now be clearly seen.
5. Jesus, the Light, does away with darkness and with chaos. His light routs, wipes out, strips away, and erases the darkness. The empty chaos of creation was routed by the light given by God (Gen.1:3). Jesus Christ is the Light that can save man from chaos (Jn.14:1, 17; 12:46; 16:33).

Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Light of the world at the great Feast of Tabernacles (Jn.7:2). The very first ceremony of the Feast holds great significance for Jesus' claim. It was called "The Illumination of the Temple" and was held in the Court of the Women. The center of the Court was surrounded by large sections of stadium-like seats. In the open space of the Court sat four huge candelabra. When darkness fell the candelabra were lit, and the elders danced and led the people in singing psalms before the Lord all night. The brilliance and glow from the burning flames of the huge candelabra were said to be so bright that the light could be seen throughout the whole city. It was against this background that Jesus cried out, "I am the Light of the world."

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:12) **Darkness** (skotos, skotia): the word is used in Scripture to describe both the state and the works of man. Darkness is very real in Scripture.

1. The darkness refers to the world of the natural man who does not know Jesus Christ (Jn.8:12). The natural man walks in ignorance...
   - of Jesus Christ.
   - of God as revealed by Jesus Christ.
   - of the real purpose and destiny of life as shown by Jesus Christ.

The natural man stumbles and gropes about in this world. He knows nothing other than the things of this world as he sees them. His only hope is the hope of living a long life before death overtakes him. He walks in darkness, ignorant of real life now and hereafter (cp. Jn.12:35, 46).

2. The darkness symbolizes unpreparedness and unwatchfulness. It symbolizes the time when evil occurs (1 Th.5:4-8).
3. The darkness is loved by men. Sinful men do their evil deeds under the cover of darkness. Men therefore hate the light because the light uncovers their evil behavior (Jn.3:19-20).
4. The darkness is hostile to light (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn.1:5).

2 (8:14) **Jesus Christ, Deity; Witness of God—Spiritual World**: the first proof of Jesus' claim is His great knowledge. He knew His origin and destiny. He declared, "I am the Light of the world," and He declared that His witness was enough. He said, "My record is true" (alethes).

⇒ It is not false.
⇒ It is not a lie.
⇒ It is not a deceptive claim.
⇒ It is not the claim of an ego-maniac setting Himself up as a *god*.
⇒ It is not the claim of a man who is out to shatter men's dreams.
⇒ It is not the claim of a man who is set on destroying other men.

The witness of Jesus Christ was true, and His witness was sufficient evidence for a very strong reason. Jesus knew His origin and destiny, where He had come from and where He was going. He was "*out of*" heaven, "*out of*" the spiritual dimension of being, and He was to return to heaven.

Man could not tell where Jesus had come from nor where He was going. Why? For a very simple reason: man cannot penetrate nor see the spiritual world. Physical eyes are blind to the world of the Spirit (cp. Jn.1:18). If there is to be communication with the spiritual dimension, the spiritual world must come into this world, into the physical dimension. This is exactly what has happened; this is just what Jesus was saying. He had come from heaven, from the spiritual dimension of being. He had been an eyewitness of heaven. He had been in the very presence of God Himself, and God had sent Him from heaven into this world to declare the glorious message of salvation:

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11; cp. Jn.3:32).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go" (Jn.8:14).

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).

3 (8:15-16) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Origin, From God—Oneness with the Father—Spiritual Dimension**: the second proof of Jesus' claim is man's incompetence. Again, this is because of the difference between the two worlds, the difference between the physical and spiritual worlds or dimensions of being.

1. Men judge after the flesh, that is, by appearance. Men judge by what they see and know. The only evidence they have is what they see in their world, the world of the physical. However, if men are to judge Jesus' claim, they cannot do it on the basis of physical evidence. Why? Because Jesus is not of this world. Men have to judge Him by faith. They either accept His testimony or reject it.

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (Jn.7:24).

2. But note: Jesus' judgment was true. He judged not after the flesh—not by appearance—but by God's presence.

This was a phenomenal claim. Jesus was saying that He was not alone. He did not speak nor act alone. The Father was *with Him* and the Father *sent Him*; therefore, what He claimed and did was of the Father. Note two points.

a. Jesus said that what He claimed was "true" (alethes)...
   - it was not false
   - it was not a lie
   - it was not a deceptive claim

b. Jesus called God "Father" and referred to His mission: "the Father that *sent* me." He had a Father-Son relationship with God. He knew God in a very personal and intimate way as "Father." He *had come* from the presence and the household of His Father, that is, from heaven or from the spiritual world and dimension of being. Therefore, He *alone* could know all the facts. He had come, being *sent* of the Father to proclaim the glorious message of salvation: "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11; cp. Jn.17:22).

4 (8:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Law, Witnesses to Christ**: the third proof of Jesus' claim is the law's testimony. Jesus appealed to the law of man. The law required two witnesses to validate a claim (Dt.19:15). Jesus met the demand of the law, for He was one witness, and "the Father that sent" Him was the second witness.

Now note two clear facts that man should see.

1. Jesus' witness was true. It is perfectly clear that He spoke and acted only for God. Everything He said and did was to glorify God and to lead men to God: to worship and praise and to honor and serve God. It is also clear that He spoke and acted only for men. Everything He said and did was to save men, to awaken them and to show them compassion and mercy, meeting their desperate needs.

Very simply, everything Jesus said and did bore witness that His claim was true, that He was *of God* and *sent from God* to be "the Light of the world."

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34; cp. Jn.7:29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

2. God's witness was true. It is perfectly clear that God acted in and through Jesus. The life, the words, and the works of Jesus demonstrated God's presence and power. The presence and power of God was in and upon Christ "without measure" (Jn.3:34). There is no other sensible explanation. "The Father that sent Him" bore clear, indisputable witness that He is "the Light of the world."

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt.3:17).

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Mt.17:5).

"There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true" (Jn.5:32).

"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (Jn.5:37).

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son" (1 Jn.5:9-10).

5 (8:19) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Spiritual World**: the fourth proof of Jesus' claim was the Father's presence *within Him*. The religionists mocked Jesus. They told Him to present His Father: "Go get Him and bring Him, so He can bear witness of your claims." Note how they proved Jesus' words: they judged by the flesh, by sight and appearance. They wanted physical evidence. (Of course they had physical evidence in Christ Himself and in the working of God's power through Him, but obstinate unbelief blinded them.)

Jesus answered three things to *mocking unbelief*.

1. The unbeliever *does not know Him*. He was Man standing before them, and they could see and know Him as Man, but He was also the Son of God. If they rejected His claim and refused to accept Him as Lord, they naturally did not know Him. The only way to know Jesus is to follow Him as Lord, as "the Light of the world." (Note: no person knows any other person until he spends time with that individual—getting to know him, associating with him, and learning all about him.)

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (Jn.4:10).

"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes" (Jn.9:30).

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jn.14:9).

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

2. The unbeliever *does not know God*. "No man has seen God at any time" (Jn.1:18). The only conceivable way a man can ever know God is for God to *reveal* Himself: God must come from the heavenly world, the spiritual dimension of being, and enter this world, revealing the truth about Himself to man. But note: *if God does come* and a man does not accept and believe Him, then that man will never get to know God.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (Jn.1:18).

"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape" (Jn.5:37).

"[Jesus Christ] who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" (Col.1:15).

"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Tim.1:17).

"Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim.6:16).

"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (Jn.15:21).

"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).

"For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer.4:22).

"Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord" (Jer.8:7).

"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD" (Jer.9:3).

3. God is in Christ. If a man knows Christ, He knows the Father *also*. This is a phenomenal claim. Christ said that He was the revelation of God; He was "God incarnate" in human flesh.

a. He was the "express image of the invisible God" (Col.1:16). Therefore, the only way to know God is to know Christ. (See note—Jn.14:6.)

"[The gospel] which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth" (Col.1:6).

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

b. He is the One who instructs men in the truth of God. (See note—Jn.3:32-34 for verses of Scripture.)

6 (8:20) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the great tragedy was that Jesus was rejected in the temple. The religionists wanted nothing to do with Him. They rejected and opposed Him, desiring to get rid of Him. And note: it was in the temple where He was rejected, yet they could not destroy Him. "His hour" had not come. God protected Him.

Thought 1. How often this scene of unbelief among religionists is repeated in the church. Down through the centuries many religionists have wanted nothing to do with Christ, choosing self over Him.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

	C. Man's Futile Search for Messiah: Search for Utopia & Light, 8:21-24		Jesus' Messiahship
1 Man's search[DS1] a. Man seeks Messiah b. Man fails & dies in sin c. Man's end: Separated from the Messiah d. Man mocks the idea of	21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. 22 Then said the Jews, Will	he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.	**2 Man's futility & failure** a. Reason 1: Man has a different origin & being than Christ[DS2] b. Reason 2: Man sins & dies c. Reason 3: Man does not believe

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

C. Man's Futile Search for Messiah: Search for Utopia and Light, 8:21-24

(8:21-24) **Introduction**: this discussion of Christ is brief, but it is earthshaking. It is the message that desperately needs to be proclaimed to the world. Man's search for an earthly deliverer (Messiah), that is, for utopia and for light is futile.

1. There is man's search (v.21-22).
2. There is man's futility and failure (v.23-24).

1 (8:21-22) **Messiah—Seek—Utopia—Heaven—Deliverer—Sin—Death—Judgment**: there is man's search. Jesus announced, "I go my way." He meant He was leaving the world, dying and returning to the Father. *Then* He announced the terrible fate of man, a fate so terrible it is *the tragedy of tragedies*. Man's fate is fourfold.

1. Man seeks for a great Deliverer upon earth. He seeks for the Messiah, that is, for someone who can lead him to utopia and light and heaven. And man's search is tragic, because the great Deliverer (Messiah) has already come and brought the presence of utopia to man (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:21 for discussion).
2. Man fails to find the Messiah: he dies in his sin. In the Greek the word "sins" (hamartiai) is singular, "sin." Note two things.
   a. Man's sin is singular; that is, his great and terrible sin is the sin of unbelief. So long as he continues to disbelieve, he is in a *state of unbelief* or a *position of unbelief*.
   b. Man dies because of unbelief; he dies because he is in a *state of unbelief*. When he dies, he dies "in his sin"; that is, he goes right on into the next world still "in sin," in the *state*, and *position,* and *condition* of an unbeliever. (See note—Ro.5:12-21.)

> **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Ro.6:16).**
>
> **"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death" (Ro.6:21).**
>
> **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).**
>
> **"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:6).**
>
> **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).**
>
> **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal.3:13).**
>
> **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).**
>
> **"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8.)**

3. Man's tragic end is separation from where Christ is. Note exactly what Christ says, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." Wherever Christ is, the unbeliever cannot go. Since Christ is...
   - the Light of the world, the unbeliever cannot enter the Light.
   - the Son of God, the unbeliever cannot enter the presence of God.
   - the Lord of heaven, the unbeliever cannot enter heaven.

Unbelieving man is separated forever from the presence of God and Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27).

> **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.5:20).**
>
> **"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Mt.25:10-12).**

"Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mk.10:15).

"Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Lk.13:26-28).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind" (1 Cor.6:9).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph.5:5).

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev.21:27).

"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Rev.22:15).

4. Man mocks the idea of Jesus' Messiahship. He still thinks in terms of the physical world and the dimension of sight only. The Jews understood prefectly that Jesus was referring to death. They mocked Him: "You say you are going to kill yourself. We do not care to follow you."

Thought 1. Men do not care to follow Christ in His death. They are unwilling to take up the cross and follow Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). They want the world and the things it has to offer, so they continue to seek for an earthly deliverer (Messiah) and his utopia and heaven.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:21) **Utopia—Messiah—Heaven**: utopia would be the ideal world, a world of perfection, provision, possessions, comfort, protection, peace, and security. Utopia would be four things: freedom from all negative circumstances, freedom from sin and its bondages, freedom from death, and freedom from hell. (See note—Ro.10:6-7.) Man uses all the scientific technology and human wisdom available to relieve and escape the reality of all these and their results. He looks everywhere for an escape except the one place where it is found: in Jesus Christ, God's Son.

2 (8:23-24) **Man, Failure**: there is man's futility and failure. There are three reasons why man fails to find the true Messiah and utopia.

1. Man fails because he has a different origin and being than Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:23 for discussion.)

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Ro.5:12).

"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:44).

"The first man [Adam] is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly" (1 Cor.15:47-48).

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away" (1 Pt.1:24).

"Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish" (Ps.49:12).

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again" (Ps.78:39).

"What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" (Ps.89:48).

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Ps.103:14).

"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccl.3:20).

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Is.2:22).

"The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field" (Is.40:6).

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Is.64:6).

2. Man fails because he sins and dies. The word "sins" here is plural (hamartiais); that is, it refers to the *acts of sin*. Man dies because he sin*s* (Rev.21:8).

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor.6:9-10).

3. Man fails because he does not believe *that Jesus is God*, the great "*I Am*" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *I Am*—Jn.6:20; DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24).

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(8:23) **Jesus—Incarnation**: Jesus was born from above or from heaven; that is, He was born of God, as well as of Mary. Therefore, Jesus is not only Man, but He is also God. He is the God-Man. Think of it this way. A man is born of the earth, from beneath: he is born of his father and his mother. Both are of this earth, of human flesh only. Therefore, a man is only a man; he is only human flesh and blood just like his mother and father.

However, this is not true with Jesus. Jesus is Man, but He is also God. He is Man through the flesh of His mother, and He is the eternal Son of God by the miraculous act of the Holy Spirit through Mary. God incarnated His Son in human flesh and sent Him into the world through Mary (cp. Jn.8:12-59, esp. 14, 23, 42, 57-58. See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.1:16.)

This means something critical. The only messiah and utopia that man can find is of this world, of the physical dimension. Therefore, man's messiah and utopia fail; they waste away, deteriorate, decay, and die. But not Christ and His utopia. He is "from heaven," from the spiritual world and eternal dimension. Therefore, He and His utopia last forever. (See notes, *Corruption*—Mt.6:19-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:17; DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Pt.1:4.)

1 Man asks a very basic question a. Who is Jesus? b. Jesus' reply: He is just who He claims to be **2 Man does not grasp that Jesus is God's Spokesman & Judge—the One who brought the message of the true God**	**D. Man's Tragic Failure to Understand the Light, 8:25-30** 25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. 26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. 27 They understood not that	he spake to them of the Father. 28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. 30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.	**3 Man does not grasp that Jesus is the Son of Man—the One who was to be lifted up** **4 Man does not grasp that Jesus is the great "I Am"—the Son of God Himself** **5 Man does not grasp that Jesus was the One who God never left alone** a. God sent—was with b. Jesus pleased God always **6 Conclusion: Many believed**

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

D. Man's Tragic Failure to Understand the Light, 8:25-30

(8:25-30) **Introduction**: man misunderstands Jesus and His claim to be the Light of the world.

1. Man asks a very basic question (v.25).
2. Man does not grasp that Jesus is God's Spokesman and Judge—the One who brought the message of the true God (v.26-27).
3. Man does not grasp that Jesus is the Son of Man—the One who was to be lifted up (v.28).
4. Man does not grasp that Jesus is the great "I Am"—the Son of God Himself (v.28).
5. Man does not grasp that Jesus is the One who God has never left alone (v.29-30).
6. Conclusion: many believed (v.30).

1 (8:25) **Man, Question of**: man asks a very basic question. Jesus had just made a phenomenal claim: "I am the Light of the world" (v.12). His claim and His explanation of the claim shocked man. The reason is clear, for Jesus had declared...

- "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness" (v.12).
- "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (v.16).
- "Ye neither know me, nor my Father" (v.19).
- "I am from above; ye are of this world" (v.23).
- "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (v.24).

Men of every generation blurt out, just as the men of His generation did: "Who art thou?" Jesus proclaimed the wonderful truth...

- "I am just who I claim to be."
- "I am who I have claimed to be from the very beginning."
- "I am all that I have claimed to be."

Note: the Greek text of Jesus' words in this verse is most difficult. His words are translated various ways. A glance at various translations and commentaries will give other possible meanings.

2 (8:26-27) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Spokesman for God**: man does not grasp that Jesus is God's Spokesman and Judge. Jesus was the One who brought the message of God to the world. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus claimed to be God's Spokesman to the world: "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him [God]."
   a. What Jesus spoke of were "those things" which He had *heard of God*. His message, His words were given Him by God.

> **"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
> **"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:16-17).**
> **"I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (Jn.8:26).**
> **"As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).**
> **"I speak that which I have seen with my Father" (Jn.8:38).**
> **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn.12:49-50).**

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

b. Jesus was "sent" by God to speak the words of God. He was on earth for the very special mission of proclaiming the message of God. Jesus came from the very presence of God, from an intimate relationship with Him. It was God Himself who appointed and sent Jesus into the world. Note that God's message is "true." It is not false or evil, not a lie or a deception. Men can trust and depend upon it.

Note also that Jesus was sent to the *whole world*. This means at least two things: His message was for the whole world, and His message was the only message for the world.

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

2. Jesus claimed to be the Judge of the world. As the Spokesman of God, He had the duty not only "to say many things" but "to judge many things." His function as Spokesman included judgment.

a. His first mission to earth was to proclaim the message of salvation.

"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Ro.2:16).

b. His second mission to earth will be to judge men.

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn.5:22).

"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick [living] and dead" (Acts 10:42).

Note: man did not understand, and he still does not understand that Jesus is God's Spokesman and Judge.

3 (8:28) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: man does not grasp that Jesus is the Son of Man. He is the One who was to be lifted up. Note that Jesus claimed to be the Son of Man. (See note—Jn.1:51.) The point of His claim is that the Son of Man will be lifted up. This is a definite reference to the cross and exaltation of Jesus. It is as the Son of Man, as the Perfect and Ideal Man, that Jesus was able to die for all men (see notes—Jn.1:51; Jn.12:31-33 for discussion of this point).

4 (8:28) **Jesus Christ, Deity—I Am**: man does not grasp that Jesus is the great "I Am," the Son of God Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1 —Jn.6:20). Note that it was His being lifted up—the cross and the resurrection and the ascension—that was to convince men that He is the great "I Am."

1. The cross awakens men to the glorious love and salvation of God.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

2. The resurrection declares Jesus to be the Son of God with power.

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

3. The ascension allowed the Holy Spirit to replace Christ on earth. It brought about the *pouring out* of the Spirit and His convicting power.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they

believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (Jn.16:7-11).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (Jn.7:37-39).

4. The cross proves that Jesus …
   - is the great "*I Am*": deity, God Himself incarnate in human flesh. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20; notes—8:12-13; 8:54-59.)
   - is *One with God*: does not act alone—does nothing of Himself. (See note—Jn..8:15-16 for discussion and verses of Scripture.)
   - is *the Spokesman of God*: speaks only as His Father taught Him. (See note—Jn.3:32-34 for discussion and verses of Scripture.)

5 (8:29) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: man does not grasp that Jesus was the One who God never left alone. This is critical. Jesus claimed three things.

1. He claimed that His Father had sent Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34 for discussion and verses of Scripture.)
2. He claimed that His Father was with Him and had never left Him alone. The idea and claim was that His Father had never abandoned Him; therefore, what Jesus said and did was always the message of God to men.

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:9-11).

3. He claimed that He had not failed. He always did the things God said, He obeyed God perfectly and completely, never sinning. Men could trust and depend upon Him.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:10).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:8-9).

"For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore" (Heb.7:28).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

6 (8:30) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the result of Jesus' words was that many believed (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24). They became convinced that Jesus was all He claimed to be:

⇒ the Light of the world.
⇒ the Spokesman and Judge of God.
⇒ the Son of Man.
⇒ the "I Am," the Son of God Himself.
⇒ the One who God never left alone.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

	E. Man's Freedom from Sin Is Conditional, 8:31-32
1 **The conditions: Belief & abiding**	31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
2 **The results** a. Will know the truth[DSI] b. Will be made free	32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

E. Man's Freedom from Sin Is Conditional, 8:31-32

(8:31-32) **Introduction**: man is enslaved by sin and all the consequences of it. He cannot keep from sinning; therefore, he bears the consequences of sin: guilt, shame, hurt, pain, sorrow, suffering, destruction, devastation, brokenness, death, and judgment. Man needs to be freed from sin, set loose and delivered from its enslaving tentacles. He can be freed, but his freedom from sin is conditional.

1. The conditions: belief and abiding (v.31).
2. The results (v.32).
   a. He will know the truth.
   b. He will be made free.

1 (8:31) **Salvation—Discipleship—Belief—Abiding—The Word**: there are two conditions for being delivered from sin, two conditions for salvation and discipleship.

1. The first condition is belief: "Many believed on Christ" (v.30). As the gospel was proclaimed, they listened. They did not slumber or sleep, nor allow their minds to wander. They allowed no distraction whatsoever. They heard and "believed on Christ"; therefore, their hearts were stirred. As a result they sensed...
   - a need, a lack, an emptiness.
   - a hunger, a thirst, a desire.
   - a darkness, a sin, a pollution.
   - a guilt, a shame, an ugliness.
   - an hope, a tug, a pull.

Their hearts reached out for Jesus. They experienced the *beginning* and the *infancy* of faith. They were as lambs or as "newborn babes" (cp. Jn.3:3; 1 Pt.2:2-3).

The point is this: the *very first* condition of deliverance and salvation is belief. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Belief*—Jn.2:24.)

> **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:15-16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (Jn.11:24).**
>
> **"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).**
>
> **"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).**
>
> **"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).**
>
> **"And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39).**
>
> **"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).**
>
> **"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).**

2. However, there is a second condition—a condition that completes the experience of deliverance and salvation. It is that of *continuing* or *abiding* (meinete) in the Lord's Word. The idea is that of *dwelling*, just as a person dwells at home. The Word of the Lord is the believer's dwelling place. He *continues* and *abides* in God's Word. Very simply, what Jesus was saying is this:

   ⇒ A person who really begins to believe will "continue" in the Lord's Word. He will continue both to study and to do the Word (2 Tim.2:15).

⇒ A person who does not really believe will not "continue" in the Lord's Word.
⇒ The proof and the evidence that a person "really believes" is that he does "continue" *and abide and dwell* in the Lord's Word.
⇒ The proof and the evidence that a person has made only a false or a superficial profession is that he does not "continue" in the Lord's Word.

> **"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt.24:13).**
> **"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (Jn.15:4-6).**
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).**
> **"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).**
> **"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).**
> **"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).**
> **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).**

(See note, *Abiding*—Jn.6:56 for more discussion.)

2 (8:32) **Salvation, Results**: there are two results of being delivered from sin, two results of salvation and discipleship.

1. The first result is that the true believer will know the truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:32. Cp. DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:6 for discussion.)
2. The second result is that the true believer will be made free. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:32; notes—2 Cor.3:17-18; Eph.2:8, pt.4$_8$ for discussion.)

Thought 1. The truth of Christ is the answer to setting man and his world free, free from all the...

- prejudice and hate
- division and isolation
- hatred and bitterness
- hostility and war
- assault and killing
- crime and injustice
- enslavements and abuses
- emptiness and loneliness
- fear and death
- selfishness and hoarding
- hunger and sickness

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:32) **Truth**: moral truth, saving truth, working truth, living truth. It is not simply something to be *known*; it is something to be *done* (Jn.8:31). It is the knowledge and the experience of true reality as opposed to false reality. It is truth in "the inward parts" (cp. Ps.51:6; Eph.5:9). It is diametrically opposed to sham and hypocrisy. It permits no compromise with evil. It even abstains from the appearance of evil (1 Th.5:22). It is a regard for truth in every respect: believing it, reverencing it, speaking it, acting it, hoping in it, and rejoicing in it. Such truthful behavior frees a person from all the bondages and impediments of life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:6.)

> **"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:16-17).**
> **"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:31-32).**
> **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Ph.3:10).**
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowlege of God" (Col.1:10).**
> **"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth" (Hos.6:3).**

God's Word is said to be the Truth (Jn.17:17), and Jesus Christ Himself claimed to be the Truth (Jn.14:6). To distinguish between the two, God's Word is sometimes said to be the *Written Truth*, and Jesus Christ is sometimes said to be the *Living Truth*.

1. The truth sets men free from the shadow of doubt and despair. Man no longer has to grasp and grope about to know the truth, whether it be the truth of God or of his own world. Jesus Christ has revealed the truth: the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things.

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world....And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:9, 14).

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor.3:17).

2. The truth sets men free from the bondages of sin. Man no longer has to grasp after the power to overcome; nor does he have to struggle against the weight of guilt. The search for deliverance and for the power to conquer, to overcome, to attain, and to live is now over. It is all found in Jesus Christ. (Cp. Ro.6:1f. See note—Ro.8:28-39.)

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.7:23-25).

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace....For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Ro.8:6, 15).

3. The truth sets men free from the bondage of death. Man no longer has to be subjected to the fear of death. Jesus Christ—by His death and resurrection—has now conquered death (Heb.2:14-15). In His death and resurrection man now has the most glorious of hopes: he can now live eternally.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:24-29).

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Ro.8:2).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

4. The truth sets men free from the bondage of judgment and hell. The darkness of an unknown future and the apprehension of an impending judgment constantly faces man. At best, man can only hope for annihilation, and he shudders at the thought. At worst, he can expect torture by the gods that be, and he trembles at the possibility. But Jesus Christ has revealed the truth. He Himself has borne the judgment and the punishment of judgment for man.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly....But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Ro.5:6, 8-9).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

5. The truth sets men free to be saved to the uttermost. Existence, love, joy, peace, satisfaction, pleasure, hope—nothing has to be incomplete any longer. No good thing ever again has to be denied man. Jesus Christ, the Truth, is able to save man to the uttermost—completely, perfectly, finally, and eternally. All a person has to do is to come to Christ for salvation, for Christ lives forever to intercede for every man.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:9-10).

	F. Man's Enslavement by Sin, 8:33-40	37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.	**3 Proof 2: Man opposes & makes no room in his heart for Jesus' Word**
1 Man's denial a. He claims a godly heritage b. He denies that he is enslaved to sin	33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?	38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.	**4 Proof 3: Man follows the wrong father, the devil**[DS1]
2 Proof 1: Man commits sin a. He is the servant of sin b. He is warned 1) A servant is not free within a household 2) The Son can make him free	34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.	39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.	**5 Proof 4: Man fails to do the works of Abraham** a. Abraham did not seek to kill the messengers of truth b. Abraham believed the truth

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

F. Man's Enslavement by Sin, 8:33-40

(8:33-40) **Introduction**: man is enslaved by sin. He denies it; nevertheless, he is. Personal experience, greed, lust, selfish behavior, and world history bear clear evidence. Any honest person can clearly see the evidence.

1. Man's denial (v.33).
2. Proof 1: man commits sin (v.34-36).
3. Proof 2: man opposes and makes no room in his heart for Jesus' Word (v.37).
4. Proof 3: man follows the wrong father, the devil (v.38).
5. Proof 4: man fails to do the works of Abraham (v.39-40).

1 (8:33) **Man, State of—Sin, Enslavement to**: man denies he is enslaved. The Jews misunderstood Jesus. They thought He was referring to being conquered and enslaved by a foreign nation. They denied such. They had, of course, been conquered by many nations and were in fact being ruled by the Romans at that very time. What they meant by not ever being enslaved is that they had never surrendered their will to any ruler. They had always given their allegiance to God, not to men, no matter how powerful the men were.

Note two things.

1. Jesus meant something entirely different. Jesus meant that the Jews and all other men were enslaved by sin. They could not help sinning no matter how much they tried not to sin.

2. Man denies being enslaved by sin. He claims a godly heritage and believes it frees him and makes him acceptable to God. The Jews claimed they were *the seed* or the children of Abraham, the children of one of the godliest men who ever lived. They felt, therefore, that his godliness and the godliness of those who followed him made their nation and its people very special to God. They felt they were acceptable to God no matter how they lived. They believed that every true Jew was covered by the godliness of their forefathers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22).

Most men believe the same thing. They deny being so enslaved by sin that they are unacceptable to God. Men believe that God will accept them, that they have enough *good heritage* to receive God's approval. They feel they have not done enough bad to be enslaved to sin nor to be be rejected by God. Their heritage—their parents, their family, their friends, their good works, something in their lives—is good enough to keep them from being enslaved and doomed.

> **"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Lk.3:8).**
>
> **"Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples" (Jn.9:28).**
>
> **"And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness" (Ro.2:19).**
>
> **"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4).**
>
> **"I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me" (Job 33:9).**
>
> **"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (Pr.20:6).**
>
> **"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Pr.20:9).**
>
> **"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Pr.21:2).**
>
> **"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Pr.30:12).**

[2] (8:34-36) **Sin, Enslavement to**: the first proof that man is enslaved by sin is undeniable—man commits sin. The word "committeth" (poion) is continuous action. Man continues to commit sin. It is his habit, his practice to sin. He cannot keep from sinning; therefore, he is a slave to sin. The word "servant" (doulos) means slave or bond-slave (see note—Ro.1:1). The bond-slave was purchased and bound to the person who bought him. The idea is that man is *bought* by sin. When a man sins, he is giving himself over to sin. He becomes enslaved to sin; he is a sinner forever: in a *condition*, a *state*, a *being of sin*. Very simply, he is unable to keep from sinning, no matter how hard he tries.

Jesus warned man. A slave is not a permanent member of a family, but the Son is. The slave has no rights and no claims to privileges within the family. He is a slave and can be rejected and cast out of the house anytime, but not the Son. The Son is always the Son. It is He that has all the rights and privileges to the house. However, there is a way the slave can become a member of the house. The Son can free the slave and ask the Father to adopt him, and if the Son makes the slave free, the slave is free indeed.

Note that Jesus claims four significant things.

a. He, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16; cp. v.17-18).**
>
> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).**
>
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**

b. Man is in slavery to sin.

> **"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn.8:34).**
>
> **"I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:23).**
>
> **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).**
>
> **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Ro.6:16).**
>
> **"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Ro.7:14).**
>
> **"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Ro.7:23).**
>
> **"And that they [all men] may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Tim.2:26).**
>
> **"While they [false teachers] promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (2 Pt.2:19).**

c. He, Jesus Christ, can free man.

> **"And ye shall know the truth [Jesus Christ], and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:32; cp. Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Ro.6:18).**
>
> **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Ro.8:2).**
>
> **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal.5:1).**
>
> **"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor.3:17).**

d. Man can be adopted.

> **"But as many as received him [Jesus Christ], to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:12).**
>
> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Ro.8:14).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).**

3 (8:37) **Sin, Enslavement to**: the second proof that man is enslaved by sin is that he opposes and makes no room in his heart for Jesus' Word.

1. Man rejects and opposes Christ. Man rejects the claims of Christ upon his life; he refuses to deny himself and take up the cross as demanded by Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23). He does not want the claims of Christ to control his life; he wants to do his own thing and to live as he pleases. Therefore, he rejects Christ and goes about fulfilling his own desires, securing or taking whatever he wants. He ridicules and speaks against Christ and those who follow Christ whenever possible. Very simply, man wants little if anything to do with Christ; he wants Christ to have little if any say-so in his life.
2. Man makes no room in his heart for Jesus' Word (see note, pt.2—Jn.8:31 for discussion).

> **"Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye" (Mk.7:13).**
>
> **"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).**
>
> **"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).**
>
> **"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim.6:3-5).**
>
> **"Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee" (Ps.50:17).**
>
> **"They have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel" (Is.5:24).**
>
> **"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jer.6:10).**
>
> **"Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts" (Zech.7:12).**

4 (8:38) **Unbelievers—Satan**: the third proof that man is enslaved by sin is that he follows the wrong father, the devil (cp. v.44). There is a strong contrast here between the Father of Christ and the father of man, the devil. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9.)

1. What Christ speaks is what He has seen *with* His Father. The word "with" (para) means "by the side of." What Christ saw came from the very side of the Father. Christ was from the very presence of God, so what He spoke was God's Word. His message was the Word of God Himself. What was His message?
   - ⇒ Man must "believe on Him" (v.31).
   - ⇒ Man must "continue in His Word" (v.31).
   - ⇒ Man is "enslaved by sin" (v.34).
   - ⇒ Man can be freed and adopted as a child of God's by the eternal Son (v.35-36).
2. What man does is what he sees and hears with his father. Christ identifies the father of man as the devil (v.44). Man, walking in sin, is by the very side of the devil (by the side of the devil's place, domain, rule, and reign). So much of what man does is, therefore, of the devil. What are the deeds of the devil that man does? Both man and his father (the devil)...
   - lust (cp. 1 Jn.2:15-16; Ro.12:1-2; 2 Cor.6:17-18).
   - murder (cp. Mt.5:21-22).
   - abide not in the truth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:32.)
   - believe, live, and speak a lie. Man lives and talks about a life that is a lie, that is not permanent and lasting nor sure and secure.

No man is free of these deeds of the devil. Man is enslaved by sin, desperately needing to be set free. (Just think! If men were freed of these devilish deeds, what a different world this would be!)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:38) **Unbelievers**: all men who practice unrighteousness are men who have not been born of God. They are said to be children of Satan (1 Jn.3:8-10).

> **"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one" (Mt.13:38).**
>
> **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is liar, and the father of it" (Jn.8:44).**
>
> **"And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).**
>
> **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air [the devil], the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).**

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jn.3:10).

5 (8:39-40) **Sin, Enslavement to—Man, Depravity**: the fourth proof that man is enslaved by sin is that he fails to do the works of Abraham. What is said now is crucial.

1. The Jews cried out, " 'Abraham is our Father.' Our father was a good man, a man of great goodness. And our people have done *enough good* through the years for us to claim God as our Father. Our father is certainly God, not someone else."

Note that few men would ever say the devil is their father. To most people such an idea is preposterous, even repulsive. It arouses emotions ranging from mild amusement to anger. There is the feeling that too much good is done upon earth for the devil to be called the father of the world or of man.

2. Jesus replied, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Two works in particular are mentioned.

   a. Abraham did not attempt to kill the messengers of truth: "This did not Abraham." He did not oppose the messengers of the truth, but received and accepted the truth whenever a messenger crossed his path. However, many of the people were set on getting rid of Jesus.

   b. Abraham believed God and the truth of God (see outlines and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ro.4:1-25).

The point Jesus was making is this: a man cannot claim the goodness of others for himself. If a man is a child of Abraham's faith, that is, of God...

- he will do the works of Abraham (believe and diligently seek God, continuing in the truth). (See note—Jn.8:31.)
- he will not do the works of the devil (cp. Jn.8:44).

Thought 1. The true child of God is a person who does the works of the Lord.

1) He hears and receives the truth.

> **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (Jn.1:14).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).**
>
> **"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1 Jn.3:10-11).**

2) He does not try to kill and eliminate the greatest truth God has given to this earth, the truth of His own Son.

> **"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1 Jn.3:10-11).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**
>
> **"And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus" (Lk.6:11).**
>
> **"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).**
>
> **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jn.7:7).**
>
> **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (Jn.15:18).**
>
> **"But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause" (Jn.15:25).**
>
> **"When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him" (Jn.19:6).**

	G. Man's Depravity—Illegitimate Birth, 8:41-47	devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.	**his works that his father is the devil** a. Satan & man lust[DSI] b. Satan & man murder c. Satan & man do not abide in the truth d. Satan & man lie
1 The fact stated a. Man denies b. Man claims God is his Father	41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.	45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.	**4 Proof 3: Christ is sinless—He is of God** a. Men still do not believe b. The reason: Man is not of God—man is sinful
2 Proof 1: Man does not love Christ a. Christ came from God b. Christ was sent by God	42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.	46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?	1) He does not hear God's words 2) Because he is not of God
c. Man does not understand the words & claims of Christ	43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.	47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.	
3 Proof 2: Man shows by	44 Ye are of your father the		

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

G. Man's Depravity—Illegitimate Birth, 8:41-47

(8:41-47) **Introduction**: this passage shatters man's concept of himself. Nevertheless, it is a passage that must be studied very carefully, for it is one of the shocking truths revealed by Christ. Man's destiny hangs upon what He revealed.

Man is a sinner and short of God's glory. Man sins because he is depraved, that is, born illegitimately. Depravity means that a man *is always short* of God's glory, and is *always coming short* of God, and is *always failing* to measure up to God. Very simply, man *is not holy* as God is holy; man *is not perfect* as God is perfect. Why? Because man is born with an illegitimate, sinful, and depraved nature. Man is born with a nature that sins, ages, deteriorates, dies, and decays—a nature that is imperfect and as radically different from God's perfect nature as it can be. (See outline and notes—1 Jn.3:4-9 for more discussion.)

1. The fact stated (v.41).
2. Proof 1: man does not love Christ. (v.42-43).
3. Proof 2: man shows by his works that his father is the devil (v.44).
4. Proof 3: Christ is sinless—He is of God (v.45-47).

1 (8:41) **Man, Depravity—Profession, False**: the fact is stated most emphatically. Man sins by doing the deeds of and following after a father other than God.

⇒ Sin is not of God.
⇒ Evil deeds are not of the Father in heaven.
⇒ Therefore, they must be of another father.

A man who sins and does evil is following another father, an illegitimate father. Sinful man...

- reveals a depraved nature, a nature that cannot keep from sinning no matter how hard it tries. (See notes—Ro.3:9-20; 3:9.)
- reveals a nature of some father who stands diametrically opposed to the Father in heaven.

Note: sin and evil are due to the nature of a spiritual father (the devil). Man sins because he is in the family likeness of that father (by nature). However, man denies the fact. The Pharisees, the strongest religionists who have ever lived (representing all mankind), knew exactly what Jesus was saying. They knew that Jesus was speaking spiritually and that He was charging them...

- with being sinful and depraved, always coming short.
- with following some father other than the Father of heaven.

The Jewish religionists (as most men) denied that they had an idolatrous father. In their minds God was their Father and they were children of God, and there was no question about it. They claimed that...

- they believed in and professed the God of the Bible.
- they worshipped the true God.
- they followed the true God.
- they did enough good to be accepted by God.
- they had not done enough evil deeds to be rejected by God.
- they had done the best they could to please God.
- they had enough righteousness to be acceptable to God.
- they had enough godly heritage (parents, family, friends, works) to be accepted by God.

Thought 1. The tragic fact is this: the vast majority of people make the very same claim, refusing to accept the truth. However, their claim is a false profession. What Christ was doing was trying to get men to see the truth. Men desperately need to turn away from their evil deeds to God, to genuinely believe and diligently seek God (Heb.11:6).

> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).**
>
> **"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 Jn.3:1).**

2 (8:42-43) **Man, Depravity**: the first proof of man's depravity is that man does not love Jesus. Picture the scene. God sent His Son into the world and man...

- does not recognize Him.
- does not recognize His words.
- does not recognize His works.

If man were of God, that is, of the same spiritual world and dimension as Jesus, he would recognize Jesus and recognize His words and works. It would be impossible not to recognize Him. This is what Jesus was saying. He "proceedeth forth and came from God," that is, from the spiritual world and dimension of heaven itself. Any man who is of God is bound to recognize Him. Any man who is truly of God will love and welcome Him, not reject and oppose Him. The man who wants nothing to do with Jesus is not of the family of God; he is not a child of God. He is a child of some father other than the Father of Jesus.

Note another fact: no man could possibly be of God...

- who does not understand the speech (teaching) of Christ.
- who does not hear the word of Christ (open his heart to it).

A man who has the same Father as Jesus Christ will understand His teaching, and hear His Word and open his heart to *what* Christ teaches. When a man shuts his heart to the teaching of Christ, that man shows that he has a father other than Christ's Father.

> **"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).**
>
> **"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).**
>
> **"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:7-10).**
>
> **"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (Jn.16:27).**
>
> **"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).**
>
> **"Grace be with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).**

Note the word "cannot." It is strong. They *could have understood and heard* His Word, but they *would not*; that is, they refused His Word, for it repelled them. They rejected it, deliberately willed to turn from it.

> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Ro.3:11).**
>
> **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).**

3 (8:44) **Man, Depravity**: the second proof of man's depravity is that man shows that his father is the devil. It is *man's works* that reveal his true father. Man objects and denies this fact rather strongly, sometimes angrily. Many think the idea is repulsive and horrible, a terrible thing to say. And it is. This is just what Jesus wants man to recognize. The fact has to be faced; it has to be felt so repulsive and horrible that a man will do something about it. It is shocking for some persons to hear that Jesus even said such a thing.

The point is this: man's sinful behavior and evil works prove that his father is not the Father of Jesus. Sinful behavior and evil deeds are not of the Father in heaven; they are of the father in hell. The sins and evil mentioned by Jesus show this.

1. Satan and men "lust" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, Lust—Jn.8:44; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jas.4:1-3; note—4:2 for discussion).
2. Satan and men murder. Satan is a murderer in three senses.
   a. He was behind the first murder: Cain's killing his brother Abel (Gen.4:8).
   b. He was behind the sin of Adam, which brought death to the whole human race. He is the murderer, the one who caused the death of men.

> **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Ro.5:12)**

   c. He is behind the murder of human life and behind the loss of man's experiencing real life here on earth. The devil destroys life and all abundant living when he can: all love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, discipline.

> **"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside" (Mt.13:19).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**
>
> **"Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:9-11).**

Jesus was saying that one thing is certain: God is not the father of murder—the devil is. They who commit murder are children of the devil. But note the real meaning of murder revealed by Jesus (see note 2—Mt.5:22 for discussion). Murder is...

- anger
- bitterness
- enmity
- an uncontrolled spirit
- desiring a person's ruin
- striking out at a person
- slandering, maligning, speaking ill about a person and destroying a person's image (who is created in God's image)
- envying & killing a person's happiness

3. Satan and men abide not in the truth. Both reject the truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:32).

> **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (Jn.8:44).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

4. Satan and men lie and deceive. It is their nature to lie and to protect and to look after themselves. This is the meaning of the phrase, "he speaketh of his own"; that is, he is at ease and comfortable in lying. It is man's nature to lie; he lies out of his own being. This hurts the pride of man, but it is his nature...
   - to look after himself even if he has to lie (cheat, steal, manuever, whatever) to get.
   - to protect himself by misleading, deceiving, and twisting the truth.

> **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:3-4).**
>
> **"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor.11:13-15).**

Note: anything that is not true is false—whether a lie, thoughts, ideas, words, or acts. Lying is of the devil and exposes a person to be a child of the devil. A person is certainly not of God if he is lying. His father is not the Father of Jesus.

> **"No lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:21-23).**

Note also that Jesus is telling man the truth, but man refuses to accept it (v.45). It is tough to accept the truth that one follows and actually behaves as a child of the devil. However, man must accept the truth if he is to change and see his world changed and become a child of God's, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:44) **Lusts** (epithumia): a strong desire, a yearning passion for. The word is used in a good sense three different times in Scripture (Lk.22:15; Ph.1:23; 1 Th.2:17). A man is to turn his strong desires toward righteousness and godliness; however, a man has to struggle to turn away from the desire to *please* himself. Man's natural tendency is the desire or lust to satisfy self before others, in particular when survival and comfort are at stake.

1. The very nature of man is lust, the lust of the flesh and of the mind (Eph.2:2-3). Sinful and evil lust show that men are *by nature*...
   - the children of wrath.
   - the children of disobedience.
   - the children of the spirit who is the prince and power of the air, that is, the devil.

> **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph.2:2).**

2. The very nature of man and of the world is lust, a tendency both *to be* and *to get*.

> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:15-17. Cp. Ro.13:14; Gal.5:16, 24; Col.3:5; 1 Th.4:5; 1 Tim.6:9; 2 Tim.3:6; 4:3; Tit.2:12; 3:3; 1 Pt.1:14; 2:11; 3:3; 4:2; 2 Pt.2:1, 8, 10, 18; Jude 18; Rev.18:14.)**

What a man discovers is that his cravings are never satisfied; they have to be controlled. There is something within man's innermost being that craves for more and more; and as more and more is taken, the lust does not diminish, it grows. It craves for still more and more. Man's cravings are never satisfied; his only answer is to control them (see note, *Lust*—Jas.4:2 for a discussion of the Spirit of God's control. Cp. Gal.5:22-23.)

4 (8:45-47) **Jesus Christ, Without Sin**: the third proof of man's depravity is the sinlessness of Jesus. Jesus made the most staggering claim: no man could prove Him to be a sinner. No person could prove a single sin in Him. He was sinless and perfect. He was in the closest imaginable relationship with God, of the very same nature as God: sinless, holy, righteous, pure—perfectly so. Jesus claimed to be the Perfect Man.

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:26).**
>
> **"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pt.2:22).**
>
> **"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (1 Jn.3:5).**

Note the all important question: Since He was sinless, why do men not believe Him? He was telling the truth. Therefore, men should believe Him. Jesus answered His own question.

⇒ He that is "of God" hears God's Words.

⇒ He that is "not of God" does not hear God's Words. The person who is not of God does not hear and believe because he is not a child of God. He is a child of the father of lies, the devil.

> **"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Mt.13:15).**
>
> **"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:4).**
>
> **"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear" (Zech.7:11).**

1 A harsh insult—Jesus is a Samaritan & devil-possessed a. Jesus' strong denial b. Jesus' purpose: To honor God c. Jesus' honor is God's concern **2 The great revelation: Man can escape death**[DS1] a. The condition: "If...." b. The reaction to Jesus' promise: A charge that He was devil-possessed 1) The charge: All godly men have died 2) The question: Who do you claim to be?	**H. Man's Escape from Death, 8:48-59** 48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? 49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?	54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. 59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.	**3 The great authority of Jesus to promise deliverance from death** a. He was honored by God 1) The God often professed by men 2) The God unknown by so many men b. He personally knew God, obeyed His Word c. He was the One that Abraham hoped for & actually saw 1) The Messiah 2) The Jews misinterpreted Jesus' claim d. He was the great "I Am"[DS2] 1) He was before Abraham 2) The reaction against Him: Rejection

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

H. Man's Escape from Death, 8:48-59

(8:48-59) **Introduction**: this is an astonishing claim—a person does not have to die (v.51). We can all escape death.

1. A harsh insult—Jesus is a Samaritan and devil-possessed (v.48-50).
2. The great revelation: a person can escape death (v.51-53).
3. The great authority of Jesus to promise deliverance from death (v.54-59).

1 (8:48-50) **Jesus Christ, Charges Against—Purpose**: the religionists cast a harsh insult against Jesus. They called Him a Samaritan and accused Him of being demon-possessed.

⇒ Being a Samaritan was a charge that He was full of heresy, not worshipping the true God, but following and building up the false religion of the Samaritans (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:5. The Jews despised the Samaritans.)

⇒ Being devil-possessed was a charge that He was full of an evil spirit, a spirit that was out to destroy man and the true religion of God and its people (see notes—Jn.7:20-24; 7:32; DEEPER STUDY # 4—Mt.12:24).

Jesus answered the charges, but said absolutely nothing about their racial slur. (A racial slur was not worthy of comment by Him.) But He strongly denied their charge that He was demon-possessed. He knew exactly what He was saying and doing. He was not insane. He was perfectly conscious of His actions. Note that Jesus made three claims.

1. Jesus claimed that His very purpose was to honor God. There was not an evil spirit within Him setting out to destroy man and the worship of God. Contrariwise, His very purpose was *to honor God* and to turn men to God. Note: He called God "My Father."
2. Jesus claimed that man was the one who did evil to God. While Jesus honored God, man (in particular false religionists) tried to dishonor Jesus. In dishonoring Jesus, they were dishonoring God. It was the love of God that had sent Him into the world to offer salvation (v.31-32). The real demon-possession or spirit of evil was seen in those who dishonored Him while He offered God's salvation to men.
3. Jesus did not seek His own glory; contrariwise, He sought to glorify God by leading men to God. However...
   - there was One who sought the glory of Jesus, that is, God Himself.
   - God will judge those who truly glorified Christ. He will reveal what Christ did to glorify God and what religionists did to dishonor God. One (Christ) shall be proven and accepted, and the other (religionists) disproven and condemned.

2 (8:51-53) **Jesus Christ, Deliverer from Death**: there is the great revelation and promise—a person can escape death. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Jn.8:51 for discussion.)

Note the reaction to Jesus' phenomenal claim: man thought Jesus must be under a demon's spell, that he was mad and insane. He was bound to be demon-possessed, for every one knows that man dies. Even the godliest men such as Abraham

and the prophets died. Who did Jesus think He was? Did He think He was greater than Abraham and the prophets? Who was He claiming to be?

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(8:51) **Death—Deliverance—Jesus Christ, Deliverance from Death**: this is one of the great promises of Scripture. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (v.51).

1. Note the eye-catching words "verily, verily." What is said is of critical importance: "Listen—listen."
2. Note how the sentence really stresses the glorious truth.
   ⇒ The word "death" is emphatic in the Greek: it begins the sentence. "Death in no wise will he ever see."
   ⇒ There is a double negative used (ou me): "Death *in no wise*, and *by no means* will he ever see."
3. Note the phrases "see death" (theorese thanaton) and "taste death" (geusetai thanatou, v.52). The meaning is that a genuine follower of Christ will...
   - never experience death nor see death.
   - never know death nor partake of death.
   - never face the condemnation of death.
   - never experience the terror, the hurt, the pain, and the suffering of death; never experience the anguish of being separated from God and from the glory, beauty, perfection, and life of heaven.

In a flash, quicker than lightning or the blinking of an eye, the follower of Christ passes from this world into the next. He never ceases to experience life and never loses consciousness. One moment he is in this world, the next moment he is in the presence of God Himself.

Note the reason why the believer shall never "see death" (v.51) or "taste death" (v.52): it is because Jesus came "by the grace of God [to] taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

4. Note: there is a condition for escaping death: "If a man keep my saying" (logon, word). A person must keep the Word of Christ to escape death. The word "keep" (terese) means to watch over, to keep, to obey with diligence. It means to fix and set one's heart upon the Word of Christ and keep it with all diligence. If a man is persistent in obeying Christ, he will never see death. (See note—Jn.8:31 for discussion and verses of Scripture. See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Death*—Heb.9:27.)
5. Note the glorious truth of this claim.

Man Does...	*But the Follower of Christ...*
• pass through physical death	• never sees death
• have his body decay	• never tastes death
• face the judgment of God	• lives now and forever

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed" (Jn.6:27).

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:27-28).

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:26).

"As thou hast given him [Jesus Christ] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:2-3).

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (1 Jn.2:25).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

3 (8:54-59) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Oneness with God**: there is the great authority of Jesus to make such a glorious promise. He made four unique claims.

1. Jesus claimed that He was honored by God. He was not out to honor Himself. If He sought His own honor, His honor would amount to nothing. When a man is seen honoring and praising himself, it is considered false honor. Self-honor is discounted and considered distasteful and usually turns people away. It certainly does not attract people.

However, there is One who does honor Christ: His Father honors Him.

"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt.3:17).

"There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true" (Jn.5:32).

"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not" (Jn.5:37-38).

"I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me" (Jn.8:18).

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself:

he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:9-12).

Now, note a phenomenal claim. Who is Jesus' Father? "He is your God" (v.54).

a. He is the God who men so often profess as *their God*.

b. But He is the God who men do not really know. Men may say they know Him, professing...

- God to be the creator and sustainer of all.
- to worship and follow Him.
- to be looked after and cared for by Him.

But such claims are only imaginations, only ideas in man's mind. Jesus said that man does not really know God, not the only true and living God—not really—not personally.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk.6:46).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:18).

2. Jesus claimed that He personally knew God and obeyed God's Word. He had a unique and very special knowledge of God. Jesus knew God as no one else had ever known Him.

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whosoever the Son will reveal him" (Mt.11:27).

"I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn.8:23).

"Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:55).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:25).

Note that Jesus refused to lie. Most men lie when they claim to know God, but He would not lie like they did (v.55). He knew God and He would not lower nor retract His claim although He knew it would mean His death. Note also that Jesus kept God's Word. This meant that He had to tell the truth. He did know God personally, and He must proclaim the glorious Word of God to men. He had to do what God said. He had to keep God's Word and fulfill God's purpose so that men might be saved. (Note that Jesus was claiming to be sinless, to keep God's Word perfectly.)

"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31).

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Ro.5:19).

3. Jesus claimed that He was the One that Abraham hoped for and actually saw. Abraham held a unique position in the Jewish nation, for he was the founder of the nation. He was the man whom God had challenged to be a witness to the other nations of the world—a witness to the only true and living God. Therefore, God had appeared to Abraham and challenged him to leave his home, his friends, his employment, and his country. If Abraham would follow God unquestionably, God made one great promise: Abraham would become the father of a new nation and of a great host of people, and God would cause all nations to be blessed by his seed (Gen.13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8, 15-19; 22:15-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 35:9-12). (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.4:22.)

Scripture says that Abraham did as God requested. He went out not knowing where he went (Heb.11:8). He completely and unquestionably trusted God and took God at His word. The point is this: Abraham rejoiced to see the Messiah's day, the day when the promised Seed was sent into the world.

a. When Abraham was on earth he saw the Messiah's day by faith. He was hopeful and he rejoiced as much as any Old Testament saint.

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them" (Heb.11:13).

b. When Jesus was born, Abraham was alive in heaven, living in the very presence of God Himself (see note, pt.3—Mt.22:31-32). He saw the Messiah's coming to earth and rejoiced with all of heaven. Salvation, the vindication of faith, was now to be secured by the Son of God Himself.

Note that the Jews misinterpreted Jesus' words. Men usually do. They saw Jesus as a mere man, a man who lived upon earth only for a few years. How could He possibly see Abraham, a man who had died hundreds and hundreds of years before?

> **"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).**
>
> **"[Unbelievers] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**

4. Jesus claimed that He was the great "I Am." (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *I Am*—Jn.6:20 for discussion.) This was the climactic claim—the claim...

- to be preexistent, always existing, to have been living when Abraham was born (Greek aorist tense, "came into being").
- to be above and beyond time.
- to be eternal.

The point is striking. Jesus was there when Abraham was born. He is God Himself, the great "I Am" standing upon earth and in a human body. Why? Note the question is not *how*. God can do anything, even stand upon earth in a human body if He wills. Therefore, the question is never *how*, but *why*. Why would God come to earth as a Man? The answer is clearly stated: to bring the message of God to the world, the glorious gospel (Jn.8:31-32).

However, note the reaction of men to God's presence. They rejected and opposed Him and tried to get rid of Him. They wanted nothing to do with Him, lest His claims lay hold of their lives and they be forced to change the way they lived.

> **"And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus" (Lk.6:11).**
>
> **"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).**
>
> **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (Jn.7:7).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(8:58) **Jesus Christ, Deity—"I Am"**: see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20.

	CHAPTER 9 **I. Man's Eyes Opened (Part 1): The Mission of Jesus,[DSI] 9:1-7**		
1 Jesus passed by a. He saw a man blind from birth b. He was asked a question about suffering & sin c. He replied that this man's suffering was not due to sin but to show forth the works of God	And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. 2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.	4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay, 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.	**2 Jesus came to work the works of God** **3 Jesus came to be the Light of the world** **4 Jesus came to give sight to men** a. Jesus' act: He made contact b. Man's act: He had to obey to receive his sight

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

I. Man's Eyes Opened (Part I): The Mission of Jesus, 9:1-7

(9:1-7) **Introduction**: man is spiritually blind, and his eyes need to be opened. The mission of Jesus is to open the eyes of man.

1. Jesus passed by (v.1-3).
2. Jesus came to work the works of God (v.4).
3. Jesus came to be the Light of the world (v.5).
4. Jesus came to give sight to men (v.6-7).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(9:1-41) **Spiritual Sight**: this passage is a continuation of the subject *Man's Sinfulness*. Jesus took a man's physical blindness and demonstrated the stages of spiritual insight and sight (Jn.9:8-41). It should be noted that *spiritual insight* has to do with seeing Jesus and Jesus alone. Jesus is the very theme of God's revelation. He alone is the perfect revelation of God, and a man's spiritual eyes can be opened to see God only through Him. Apart from Jesus, no man will ever see God.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

1 (9:1-3) **Suffering**: Jesus passed by (just where is not stated). As He passed by, He saw a man who had been blind since birth. There was something about the man that attracted both Jesus and the disciples.

⇒ Jesus "saw" him, which indicated interest, care, concern, compassion.

⇒ The disciples apparently felt the same interest and concern for the man, for they began to wonder why he had been doomed to suffer so terribly throughout his life.

It was a common belief that a man suffered because of sin, either his own sin or his parents' sin. The disciples were attracted to the man and wondered about him. Was he suffering because of some great sin committed by his parents or because God had foreseen that the man would be a great sinner before he was born?

The question is often asked: How can a man who is not yet born be punished for sin he has not yet committed? Apparently, Jewish belief was that a person's sin was foreseen; therefore, the person was "born in sins" and thereby punished [cp. v.34]). Note two points.

1. Jesus said that the man's suffering was not due to sin but that he suffered so that the works of God could be demonstrated in his life. Man suffers...

So that God can...
- have an opportunity to work
- show his compassion
- prove His power
- demonstrate that He does care & look after men
- lead unbelievers to trust Him

So that man can...
- give God an opportunity to show what He can do in a life
- learn to trust God more and more
- demonstrate a special strength & endurance
- set forth a dynamic example of God's care & power to a lost world
- better learn & know that he lives in a sinful, corruptible world and desperately needs deliverance

Thought 1. The sufferer has a very special opportunity to show forth the works of God in his life. He can allow the Spirit of God to be demonstrated in a much more powerful way than a healthy person. The sufferer can show that the grace and power of God are sufficient much more than a healthy person can. Very often a person suffers

not because of sin but because God desires a unique opportunity to show forth His works. (See outline and notes—Lk.13:1-9. Also see notes—Lk.5:18-20; Jas.5:14-15 for more discussion.)

2. Jesus carried the discussion beyond the man's blindness. The disciples were perplexed over this man's situation, wondering and asking questions about the problem of suffering and sin. How could a man such as this be punished from birth? Jesus picked up the question, moving it to His worldwide mission as the Light of the world (v.5). He dealt with the problem of suffering and sin throughout the whole world. His very mission upon earth was to work the works of God.

2 (9:4) **Jesus Christ, Mission—God, Works of**: Jesus came to work the works of God. Note four points.

1. Note the words "sent me." God sent Jesus. Jesus had come into the world on God's mission. He was *of God*, from God's very presence, from the closest possible relationship with God (see notes—Jn.3:32-34; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34 for verses of Scripture).
2. Note that Jesus came to do the works of God. It was God's works that had to be done. Four works are stressed in this passage.
   a. There is the work of seeking man. God seeks man. Jesus took the initiative with this man, reaching out to help him. It was not the man who reached out for help. In fact, the man was blind; he did not even know that help was available. If Jesus had not reached out for him, he would have remained blind and been in darkness forever.

      "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

   b. There is the work of caring for man. God cares that man is blind.

      "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).
      "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Pt.5:7).

   c. There is the work of loving and having compassion. God loves and has compassion for man in his blindness and darkness.

      "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15-16).
      "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

   d. There is the work of delivering from darkness and giving sight.

      "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).

3. Note the urgency of the mission. This is stressed by two things.
   a. The word "must" (dei) means compulsion and necessity. There are no questions, no suggestions, no urgings about the matter. The works of God *must* be done.
   b. The time for work is limited. Christ and His followers do not have forever to do the work. It has to be done now or the opportunity will be lost. Only so much time has been given. Whatever is to be done must be done today, while there is still some daylight left. Night is coming, the time when no man can work. Time will end and the opportunity will be gone forever.

      "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).
      "But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not" (1 Cor.7:29-30).
      "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).
      "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).
      "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).

4. Note: the better texts read "us" or "we" (emas) instead of "I" (eme, v.4): "It is necessary for us to work" or "We must work the works of God." If this is accurate, then a wonderful truth is stated. Jesus ties us to His mission from the Father. We, too, are in the world to do the works of God. Our very purpose for being on earth is to proclaim and show forth the works of God.

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).
"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).
"Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor.9:16).

3 (9:5) **Jesus Christ, Light**: Jesus came to be the Light of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12 for discussion). If man wishes to be delivered from darkness, he must come to Christ. Christ is the only One who gives sight to man and His world.

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor.4:6).**
>
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**

4 (9:6-7) **Spiritual Sight**: Jesus came to demonstrate the power to give sight. Note that Jesus did not just speak the *word of healing* to the man. His Word alone was the method He often used in healing, but this was not the case with this man. He did much more, and by His act He demonstrated two things to the world:

⇒ He will do everything He can to deliver a man from darkness and give him sight.

⇒ He has the power to deliver man and to give him sight.

The man's faith needed to be aroused and stirred. Jesus used two things to awaken the man's faith.

1. He used a point of contact, the touch of His hands upon the man's eyes. Note that He used clay made moist by spittle. People of that day believed spittle had some curing qualities, and perhaps Jesus used spittle because of this. The man's faith would certainly be helped by thinking of its healing qualities. However, Jesus would not want the man thinking that it was spittle that cured him. The man must know beyond question that Jesus was the One who healed him. So at most, the spittle would be used to stir the thoughts of healing in the man's mind.
2. Jesus sent the man to wash in the pool of Siloam. Note the parenthesis "which is by interpretation, *Sent*" (v.7). Jesus was using the pool as a symbol of the Messiah who was sent by God to give sight to the world. The blind man, by obeying Jesus and going to the pool, would receive his sight. His obedience would demonstrate to the blind of the world that they, too, could receive their sight by coming to Jesus and obeying Him.

The man washed and "came seeing." He received his sight because He did exactly what Jesus said.

> **Thought 1.** Man's eyes can be opened; and he can be delivered from the darkness of sin and shame, death and corruption, hell and destruction by coming to Jesus Christ and by obeying Him.
>
> > **"Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" (Acts 27:25).**
> >
> > **"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness" (Ro.4:20-22).**
> >
> > **"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Ps.31:19).**
> >
> > **"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps.37:5).**
> >
> > **"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Is.50:10).**

J. Man's Eyes Opened (Part II): The Stages of Spiritual Sight, 9:8-41

1 Stage 1: Seeing Jesus as a man

a. The man's neighbors were amazed, & they questioned the man's deliverance

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?
9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.
10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

b. The man's testimony: A man called Jesus gave me sight

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.
12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

2 Stage 2: Seeing Jesus as a Helper or a Healer

a. The problem: The Sabbath law was broken

b. The Pharisees questioned how the man could now see

c. The man testified: Jesus healed me

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.
14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.
15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

3 Stage 3: Seeing Jesus as a prophet

a. The Pharisees were divided

b. The Pharisees questioned the man again

c. The man's testimony: Jesus is a prophet

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.
17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

4 Stage 4: Seeing Jesus as the Savior

a. The Pharisees' unbelief

b. The Pharisees called & questioned the man's parents

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.
19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

c. The parents' testimony

1) They identified their son

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

2) They denied being eyewitnesses

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

3) They feared prejudgment & excommunication: Feared being banished from the synagogue

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.
23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

d. The Pharisees' demand that Jesus be denied

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

e. The man's testimony

1) I was blind, but now I see (Jesus saved me & gave me sight)

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.
26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

2) The clear evidence

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?
28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.
29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.
30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.
31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.
32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.
33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.
34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

5 Stage 5: Seeing Jesus as being "of God"

a. The Pharisees' case

1) Accused the man of being Jesus' disciple

2) Questioned the origin of Jesus

b. The man's testimony

1) A marvelous thing

2) God does not hear sinners, but worshippers

3) My experience: Proves Jesus is "of God"

c. The Pharisees' denial of the man's experience & proof: They cast him out

35 Jesus heard that they

6 Stage 6: Seeing Jesus as

the Son of God a. Jesus sought the man who had been cast out b. Jesus invited him to believe c. The man requested to know the Son of God d. Jesus identified Himself as The Son of God, cp. v.35 e. The man believed **7 Conclusion: The lesson**	had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? 36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? 37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. 38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. 39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. 40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? 41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.	**of Jesus' revelation** a. His mission: To bring judgment b. The religionists' expectation: To be exempt from judgment

DIVISION IX

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE LIGHT OF LIFE, 8:1-9:41

J. Man's Eyes Opened (Part II): The Stages of Spiritual Sight, 9:8-41

(9:8-41) **Introduction**: the blind man had been delivered from darkness and given sight by the compassion of the Lord Jesus. In this passage the delivered man is confronted by his neighbors (v.8-12), by the Pharisees (v.13-34), and by Jesus (v.35-41).

The scene flows rapidly, and the man's growing knowledge of Jesus is easily seen and grasped. The outline should be adequate in carrying one through this passage. Therefore, the footnotes will not discuss each point; but rather concentrate on Jesus as seen by the man, that is, on the six stages of spiritual sight.

1. Stage 1: seeing Jesus as a man (v.8-12).
2. Stage 2: seeing Jesus as a Helper or a Healer (v.13-15).
3. Stage 3: seeing Jesus as a prophet (v.16-17).
4. Stage 4: seeing Jesus as the Savior (v.18-27).
5. Stage 5: seeing Jesus as being "of God" (v.28-34).
6. Stage 6: seeing Jesus as the Son of God (v.35-38).
7. The conclusion: the lesson of Jesus' revelation (v.39-41).

1 (9:8-12) **Spiritual Sight—Salvation—Jesus Christ, Misconceptions of**: the first stage of spiritual sight is *seeing Jesus as a man* (v.11). Note: all the healed man knew was that "a man that is called Jesus" had commanded him to do certain things, and he did them and received his sight.

Note what happened to the blind man.

⇒ He was confronted by Jesus.
⇒ He was commanded to do some things.
⇒ He obeyed the commands of Jesus.
⇒ He was delivered from darkness and given sight.

The blind man was blessed by Jesus despite an inadequate understanding of Christ. But note the crucial point: his heart was right toward Jesus. It was tender and willing to do what Jesus said.

The first stage in a man's spiritual journey is to *learn about Jesus*. A man must learn about Jesus before he can ever *learn of Jesus*, before he can ever come to know Jesus personally. But once a man has learned *about* Jesus, it is imperative that he move on and come to know Jesus personally. The blind man could have stopped at any stage and failed in his spiritual journey.

> **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:28-29).**

Thought 1. There are many men like the blind man. They know *about Jesus*, but they do not *know Jesus*, not personally. They know His name, but little else. They have little understanding of His...

- teaching and claims
- presence and strength
- love and care
- power and promises

2 (9:13-15) **Spiritual Sight—Salvation—Jesus Christ, Misconceptions of**: the second stage of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as a Helper or a Healer (v.15). The delivered man was brought before the religionists (by whom we are not told) because the Sabbath law had been broken. This was a serious offense to the Jews (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16).

Note the man's answer to the religionists' question. He said that "He [the man, Jesus] put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see." He still saw Jesus only as a man, but as a man who had done a great thing by helping him and healing him. He saw Jesus as a great *Helper* and a great *Healer*. Note: this is a confession; the man was giving an answer to some questioners. He was confessing Jesus to be the great *Helper* and *Healer*.

Thought 1. Many confess Jesus just as the man confessed Him. They confess that He is a *great man*, a great...

- Teacher
- Moralist
- Martyr
- Healer
- Preacher
- Helper
- Law Giver
- Example

But note the critical point. This concept still comes far short of the truth. The delivered man did not yet know Jesus personally. He had not reached the stage of belief, of true salvation and worship (cp. v.35-38).

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Lk.4:22).

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Lk.4:32).

"What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?" (Jn.7:36).

3 (9:16-17) **Spiritual Sight—Prophet—Jesus Christ, Misconceptions of**: the third stage of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as a prophet (v.17). The man really progressed in his view of Jesus at this point. The people saw a prophet as the highest office a man could hold, the most authoritative voice among the people.

A prophet was a man chosen by God...

- to walk close to God.
- to represent God among the people.
- to proclaim the message of God (cp. Amos 3:7).
- to demonstrate the power of God.
- to help people by demonstrating God before them and by guiding and warning and ministering to them.

But again, Jesus was still seen only as a man, a godly man yes, but only a man. Such a concept was still short. The blind man's concept was still inadequate. He had not yet reached the stage of belief and worship (v.35-38).

"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (Mt.16:13-14).

"And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee" (Mt.21:10-11).

"But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet" (Mt.21:46).

4 (9:18-27) **Spiritual Sight—Testimony**: the fourth stage of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as the Savior (v.25). The man now confessed the immortal words, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (v.25).

The man underwent the most severe questioning and attack imaginable. He should have been gripped with fear and quaking in his shoes, but instead he was giving one of the strongest confessions possible—his own personal experience with Jesus. He was blind, but now he could see. He saw the hand of God...

- in his own life
- in the touch of Jesus
- in the feelings within his heart
- in the beauty of nature

Note that he was confessing his personal experience: he was blind, but now he could see. He could not answer the theological question: Is Jesus a mere man as all other men, or is He of God? But he could answer one thing: his own personal experience.

The point is this: he had progressed in his view of Jesus. He saw that Jesus may be more than a mere man like other men, but he could not say for sure. Just like a child, he did not know the theological terms nor how to express the nature of Jesus, but he did know one thing: Jesus had delivered and saved him from blindness. Jesus was his Savior and Deliverer from blindness to sight.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim.1:15).

5 (9:28-34) **Spiritual Sight—Jesus Christ, Deity**: the fifth stage of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as being "of God" (v.32-33). This was the man's final answer to those who questioned his confession of Jesus. He confessed that Jesus was "*of God.*" He reasoned that...

- helping and delivering a blind man was God's will.
- Jesus delivered him. God heard Jesus' prayer for him and empowered Jesus to heal him.
- Jesus was bound to be "*of God.*"

The man knew that the works of Jesus were proof that He was from God. Therefore, Jesus was not a liar and a deceiver; Jesus was not an evil man. He was bound to be who He claimed to be; He was bound to be "of God." (See note—Jn.7:25-31.)

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:28-29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

6 (9:35-38) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Spiritual Sight**: the sixth stage of spiritual sight is seeing Jesus as the Son of God. Note two points.

1. Jesus was the One who did the seeking. He sought the man who had been cast out.

Thought 1. Anyone can cast a person out—a business, a church, a family, neighbors, friends. But Jesus seeks the person who is cast out and rejected. He always does, no matter who the person is or what the person has done.

2. The climactic stage of spiritual sight is clearly demonstrated by the man's experience.
   a. It is seeing Jesus as the Son of God (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34).

> **"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Mt.14:33).**
> **"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk.1:1).**
> **"And I [John the Baptist] saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (Jn.1:34).**
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:16-18).**
> **"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).**
> **"She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27).**
> **"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb.10:29).**
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

   b. It is believing Jesus to be the Son of God and worshipping Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Belief*—Jn.2:24).

> **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:15-16).**
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**

7 (9:39-41) **Conclusion**: the lesson of Jesus' revelation. Note two significant points.

1. Jesus stated that His mission upon earth was to bring judgment. Jesus judges man—all generations of men.
   a. He judges the man who knows he is spiritually blind and wants to see. He takes the man who is spiritually blind and gives him sight—if that man really desires to see.

> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
> **"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).**
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**

   b. He judges the man who claims to have spiritual sight apart from Him. The man who says he sees spiritually and claims to know God apart from Christ is judged to be blind. (Cp. Jn.14:6-9.)

> **"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).**
> **"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:5).**
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**

2. The religionists expected exemption from judgment. They were opposing Jesus, so they expected Him to say they were blind, but He shocked them. He said that blindness was an excuse. If they had been blind, they would have been excused; for they would have been acting in ignorance, not knowing what they were doing. (Cp. Ro.5:13.) But they...
   - knew the law of God.
   - knew about spiritual things.
   - claimed to see.
   - did not recognize God's Son.

They were, therefore, guilty and were judged "blind" and were to be condemned.

> **"But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you" (Mt.11:22).**
> **"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).**
> **"For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (Ro.2:11-12).**

	CHAPTER 10	3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.	b. Is known by the porter (God) c. Knows sheep by name d. Leads & shepherds the sheep
	X. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SHEPHERD OF LIFE, 10:1-42	4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.	**4 The sheep** a. Know the shepherd's voice b. Follow the shepherd who goes before them c. Flee from strange voices
	A. The Shepherd and His Sheep: False vs. True Teachers, 10:1-6	5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.	
1 The sheepfold **2 The false shepherd** a. Enters the wrong way b. Is a thief & robber: Seizes by false entry & force **3 The true shepherd** a. Enters the appointed door	Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.	6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.	**5 The parable not understood**

DIVISION X

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SHEPHERD OF LIFE, 10:1-42

A. The Shepherd and His Sheep: False vs. True Teachers, 10:1-6

(10:1-6) **Introduction**: this passage begins the great revelation of Jesus as the Shepherd of Life. Jesus is pictured as the only true Shepherd of the sheep.

1. The sheepfold (v.1).
2. The false shepherd (v.1).
3. The true shepherd (v.2-3).
4. The sheep (v.4-5).
5. The parable not understood (v.6).

1 (10:1) **Sheepfold—Salvation, Position—Security**: the sheepfold. Jesus begins the parable with the solemn "verily, verily." What He had to say was of critical importance.

There is a sheepfold, a place where all the sheep are kept. The sheepfold pictures the place of acceptance by God, or the place of safety and security in God's presence (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Kingdom of God*—Mt.19:23-24). It is the *position* of salvation, of spiritual sight that comes by believing Jesus to be Son of God (Jn.9:36-38). It is the *position* of being accepted by God because a man approaches God "in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ." The sheepfold symbolizes the place where the sheep (believers) are kept. The sheep are kept...

- in the church
- in heaven
- in salvation
- in spiritual sight
- in the place of acceptance
- in the Kingdom of God
- in eternal life
- in spiritual deliverance from darkness
- in the position of faith

Now note: the whole parable has to do with a false shepherd and the true shepherd. Both go after the sheep. The true shepherd is Christ and the false shepherds are those who opposed Christ, the world's religionists—the false teachers—who so blindly stood against His claim to be "the Light of the world" (Jn.8:12; 9:5; cp. 9:40).

2 (10:1) **Shepherds, False—False Teachers**: the false shepherd. Note three points.

1. The sheepfold can be entered. There is a door into the sheepfold—an entrance, a way to get in—and the door is the only *acceptable* way to enter.
2. Some shepherds climb into the sheepfold *from* "some other way" (allachothen). The word *from* is important. It indicates origin. The false shepherd *comes from* and *originates from*...
   - some other direction
   - some other way
   - some other position
   - some other source
   - some other road

Note also the terms thief (kleptes) and robber (leistes). The very same words were used to describe Judas (a thief) and Barabbas (a robber). It is an awful thing for a person to be put into the same class as Judas and Barabbas, two who were as opposite from Christ as any men could be.

The false shepherd is...

- a thief: a seducer and a deceiver, a crafty and dishonest man, a man who will use any means to get into the sheepfold to steal the sheep.
- a robber: a man who will use violence and cruelty and will destroy and devour if necessary to get into the sheepfold.

God has much to say to false shepherds. (Also see outlines and notes—1 Tim.6:3-5; Tit.1:10-16; 2 Pt.2:1-22; Jude 1:3-16.)

"All ye beasts [false shepherds] of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Is.56:9-12).

"Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:1-2; cp. Jer.25:34-38).

"My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace" (Jer.50:6).

"Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Ezk.34:1-6; cp. Ezk.34:7-31).

3 (10:2-3) **Shepherd**: the true shepherd. Note four points.

1. The shepherd who enters the appointed door is the true shepherd (Jesus Christ). He knows where the door is and the way into the sheepfold. Therefore, He uses the door. There is no reason for Him not to use it, no reason for Him to climb in any other way.

⇒ His purpose is not to steal some sheep from the Owner (God) and start a flock of His own. Such a thought is the farthest thing from His mind. His thoughts are focused upon the sheep and the Owner's will.

⇒ His purpose is to be the Shepherd of the Owner (God), to serve Him and to do His will.

Therefore, the Shepherd enters the sheepfold by the door. The door was made for Him and the sheep to enter; therefore, He uses it.

2. The Shepherd is known by the Porter (God or the Holy Spirit). This point is critical. The Holy Spirit (as God) is the One who opens the door into the sheepfold. The One who comes to the door is known by the Porter; He is known to be the Shepherd. The Shepherd therefore...

- is not afraid to face the Porter.
- has been appointed to use the door.
- has the authority and the right to enter.

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

3. The Shepherd knows the sheep; He knows each one by name. This is said to have been a fact among shepherds and their sheep in Jesus' day. Shepherds actually knew each sheep individually, even in large herds. The fact is certainly true with Christ and His sheep. The words "His own" (sidia) mean He calls His own, not as a whole, not as a herd, but as individuals. The Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, knows each of His sheep by name.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor.8:3).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).

"Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine" (Is.43:1).

4. The Shepherd leads and shepherds the sheep. He loves them as His own; therefore He must lead them to the green pastures and still waters. He must see that they are nourished and protected and given the very best care possible. (See note—Mk.6:34 for more discussion, what happens to sheep without a Shepherd.)

a. He feeds the sheep even if He has to gather them in His arms and carry them to the feasting pasture.

"He shall feed the flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Is.40:11).

b. He guides the sheep to the pasture and away from the rough places and precipices.

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the

paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps.23:1-4).

c. He seeks and saves the sheep who get lost.

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" (Mt.18:11-12).

"I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick" (Ezk.34:16).

d. He protects the sheep. He even sacrifices His life for the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb.13:20).

e. He restores the sheep who go astray and returns them to the sheepfold.

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:25).

f. He rewards the sheep for obedience and faithfulness.

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pt.5:4).

g. He shall keep the sheep separate from the goats.

"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Mt.25:32-33).

4 (10:4-5) **Sheep—Disciples—Believers**: the sheep are disciples or believers of the Lord. Note three points.

1. The sheep know the Shepherd's voice. They know both His sound and His words.
   ⇒ The sound of His voice is not uncertain and unclear, not weak and frail, not quivering and indecisive. It is clear, strong, sure, and decisive.
   ⇒ The words of His voice are words of care and tenderness, of warning and safety, of truth and security.

Thought 1. Believers trust the voice, the Word of Christ, because they know His voice.

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Th.2:13).

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:1-3).

2. The sheep follow the Shepherd. Note He goes before them to lead the way. He does not drive them like cattle. He leads in order to pick out the safe and secure way to the pasture. He leads to show the sheep that the road is clear and safe. The sheep know this, so they follow the Shepherd, knowing they are perfectly safe and secure following the path He has laid out before them. (Cp. Jn.14:6.)

a. They follow Him because He saves them and gives them life.

"I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).
"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:27-28).
"And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people" (Zech.9:16).

b. They follow Him because they are the sheep of His pasture.

"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps.100:3).

c. They follow Him because they wish to give Him praise forever.

"But I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob" (Ps.75:9).

d. They follow Him because they are sheep in the midst of wolves.

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29).

e. They follow Him because He assures them and delivers them from fear.

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Lk.12:32).

f. They follow Him because they have learned that without Him they are scattered and lost.

"I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered" (Mk.14:27; cp. Mt.26:31).

g. They follow Him because He takes care of all their wants.

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps.23:1).

3. The sheep flee from strange voices. Note two things.
   a. They *will not* (ou me) follow a stranger. This is a double negative. They will not, in any case, follow a stranger.
   b. They flee from the strange voice. They do not know a stranger's voice. Its sound and words are different.

Thought 1. The strange voice can be the voice of...
- false religion
- false science
- false psychology
- false philosophy
- humanism
- materialism
- worldiness
- fame

5 (10:6) **Jesus Christ, Rejection—Natural Man**: the parable was not understood. The spiritual truth was beyond the religionists, the false teachers. They could not grasp the truth with their natural minds. They could not see themselves as false shepherds, and they could not see Jesus as the true Shepherd. Natural man rebels against being called *false* and against Christ's being the *only Shepherd* of the sheep.

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).
"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).

	B. The Door of the Sheep: The Only Way to God, 10:7-10	them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.	not hear them **2 Jesus is the only door that leads to salvation** a. "In & out": Security b. "Pasture": Provision
1 Jesus is the only door of the sheep a. All others are thieves & robbers b. Proof: The sheep did	7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear	10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.	**3 Jesus is the only door that leads to abundant life** a. All others come to take and to steal b. Jesus comes to give life[ps]

DIVISION X

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SHEPHERD OF LIFE, 10:1-42

B. The Door of the Sheep: The Only Way to God, 10:7-10

(10:7-10) **Introduction—Jesus—Door**: Jesus claims to be the Door of the sheep. Jesus is probably referring to the door of a community sheepfold or a community pasture which housed all the flocks of an area. There is, however, another descriptive picture of Jesus as the door. When the sheep were kept out in the hill country overnight, they were kept in ravines surrounded by several rocky walls. Naturally, the opening into these ravines had no door at all. The shepherd himself literally became the door, for during the night he would simply lie across the opening. The sheep could get out only by going over him, and the enemies of the sheep could get in to the sheep only by going through him. Access in or out was only through the shepherd.

1. Jesus is the only door of the sheep (v.7-8).
2. Jesus is the only door that leads to salvation (v.9).
3. Jesus is the only door that leads to abundant life (v.10).

1 (10:7-8) **Salvation—Door—Mediator**: Jesus is the *only* Door of the sheep. Note the words "verily, verily"; they stress the critical importance of what Jesus was about to say. By "door" Jesus meant He is the way or entrance into the sheepfold. Jesus Christ is the way...

- into God's presence
- into God's acceptance
- into salvation
- into the true church
- into heaven
- into the Kingdom of God
- into eternal life

Therefore, if a man wishes to enter where God is, he must enter the Door of Christ. A man enters God's sheepfold only through the Door of Christ, for Christ is the *only* Door into God's presence.

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph.2:18).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).**
>
> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6; cp. Heb.12:24).**
>
> **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament" (Heb.9:15).**
>
> **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).**
>
> **"[Christ] is a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us" (Heb.10:20).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).**

Note: Jesus used the clear claim to deity: "I Am." This gives additional stress to His claim to be the *only Door* to God. Now note two points.

1. All others who claim to be the door are thieves and robbers. There are some who claim to be the door and to have the way to God. They claim to know the right way and to have the newest ideas and the latest truth and knowledge. They claim to have the right teaching, religion, works, maturity, philosophy, psychology, ideas, and novel concepts. They claim to be the door that opens into God's presence. But Jesus says that they are thieves and robbers. They are out to steal the sheep, both their wool (possessions) and their lives (loyalty). They want both their wool and their lives, for if they have both they have the sheep's *permanent loyalty*. (See note, *False Shepherd*—Jn.10:1 for more discussion and verses.)

> **"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife" (Ph.1:15).**
>
> **"For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely" (Jer.6:13).**
>
> **"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:4).**
>
> **"But if the watchman see the sword [enemy] come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezk.33:6).**

"The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us" (Mic.3:11).

2. The proof that Jesus is the only Door and that all others are false doors is the sheep themselves. The sheep do not hear the voices of false *doors*, not if they are the real sheep of the Shepherd. The real sheep of God know the Shepherd's voice and have the ability to discern it. If they hear the voice of a false shepherd, they know that he and his sheepfold are false. His voice and message are not the voice and message of the true door, the Son of God Himself.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn.10:27-28).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God....But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:12, 14).

2 (10:9) **Salvation—Pasture—Nourishment**: Jesus is the only door that leads to salvation. Jesus said that He is the Door that leads to three great things.

1. Jesus is the only door that opens to salvation.

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they" (Acts 15:11).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Ro.5:9).

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Th.5:9).

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb.5:9).

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb.9:28).

2. Jesus is the only door that opens to peace and security. He is the only door that allows the sheep to *go in and out*. This was a common Jewish phrase. If a man could "go in and out" without difficulty or danger, it meant he was *safe and secure*. Jesus brings to the believer safety and security, peace and tranquility.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Th.3:3).

"I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:5).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen.28:15).

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Dt.33:27).

"Behold, he that keepeth Israel [His people] shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Ps.121:4).

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is.41:10).

"And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs [old age] will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Is.46:4).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

3. Jesus is the only door that opens to healthy and lasting nourishment. He is the only door that leads to the true pasture, the pasture that has the living stream flowing through it and the pasture that has the living food in it.

a. His pasture alone can satisfy the soul.

"For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps.107:9).

"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Is.58:11).

b. His pasture alone can restore the soul.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake" (Ps.23:2-3).

c. His pasture alone can give life and give it forever.

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

d. His pasture alone can feed with knowledge and understanding.

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer.3:15).

3 (10:10) **Jesus Christ, the Door**: Jesus is the only door that leads to abundant life. This is a sharp contrast between the thief and Christ.

1. The person who says there is another door is a thief and a robber. The person steals and kills and destroys the sheep. The thief misleads and deceives the sheep, leading them through a door that leads to destruction.

There are some who definitely want the wool and life of the sheep (false and liberal religions and false philosophies). They want the sheep to follow them and their position, so they do all they can to secure the sheep's...

- loyalty
- allegience
- possessions
- time
- effort
- energy
- recognition
- praise
- honor

By leading the sheep away from the *restrictiveness* of Christ, the false teacher becomes a thief—a thief in that he steals the soul of the sheep from God, leading it into a sheepfold that will be destroyed. It causes the sheep never to know the true Shepherd.

2. Jesus came not to steal life, but to give abundant life (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:10 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(10:10) **Jesus Christ, Purpose—Life**: life is one of the great words of the Scriptures. The word "life" (zoe) and the verb "to live" or "to have life" (zen) have a depth of meaning. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)

1. Life is the energy, the force, the power of being.
2. Life is the opposite of perishing. It is deliverance from condemnation and death. It is the stopping or cessation of deterioration, decay, and corruption (Jn.3:16; 5:24, 29; 10:28).
3. Life is eternal (aionios). It is forever. It is the very life of God Himself (Jn.17:3). However, eternal life does not refer just to duration. Living forever would be a curse for some persons. The idea of eternal life is also quality, a certain kind of life, a life that consistently knows love, joy, peace, power, and responsibility (Jn.10:10).
4. Life is satisfaction (Jn.6:35).
5. Life is security and enjoyment (Jn.10:10).
6. Life is found only in God. God is the source and author of life, and it is God who has appointed Jesus Christ to bring life to man. Jesus Christ gives the very life of God Himself (Jn.5:26; 6:27, 40; 10:28; 17:23).
7. Life has now been revealed. It has been unveiled and is clearly seen in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ shows man what life is (Jn.1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Jn.1:2).
8. Life only comes to a man by believing in Jesus Christ. A man outside Jesus Christ only exists. He merely has the existence of an animal. Real life is found only in God. This is to be expected and it is logically true, for God is the creator of life. As the creator of life, He alone knows what life really is and what it is supposed to be (Jn.3:36; 5:24; 6:47). This is the reason He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world: to show men what life is. When a person looks at Jesus Christ, he sees exactly what life is, exactly what it involves (cp. Gal.5:22-23):

⇒ love
⇒ joy
⇒ peace
⇒ longsuffering
⇒ gentleness
⇒ goodness
⇒ faith
⇒ meekness
⇒ temperance or control and power

C. The Good Shepherd: Jesus, the True Savior of the World,[DS1] **10:11-21**

1 The meaning of "Good Shepherd"
- a. A sacrificial life[DS2]
- b. Not a hired or employed shepherd
  - 1) He sees danger—acts cowardly, flees
  - 2) He causes the sheep to be caught—in error
  - 3) He lacks genuine care

2 The proof that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd"
- a. He knows His sheep
- b. He knows His Father—the Owner
- c. He will die for His sheep
- d. He works to enlarge the fold

3 The final proof: The sacrificial death & resurrection of Jesus
- a. The very reason God loves Him so much
- b. His death was the supreme act of obedience
  - 1) Was voluntary
  - 2) Was a command

4 The reaction to Jesus' claim
- a. Some reject: Call Jesus demon-possessed and mad
- b. Some question: Perhaps Jesus is who He claims

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.
12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.
13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.
14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.
15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.
16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.
17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.
19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.
20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?
21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

DIVISION X

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SHEPHERD OF LIFE, 10:1-42

C. The Good Shepherd: Jesus, the True Savior of the World, 10:11-21

(10:11-21) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ claimed to be "the Good Shepherd." He is not a bad or a false shepherd.
1. The meaning of "Good Shepherd" (v.11-13).
2. The proof that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" (v.14-16).
3. The final proof: the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus (v.17-18).
4. The reaction to Jesus' claim (v.19-21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:11-21) **Jesus, The Shepherd—God, the Shepherd**: God foretold that He would send a Shepherd to save and to take care of His people.

> **"Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Is.40:10-11).**
>
> **"Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David [the Messiah]; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd" (Ezk.34:22-23).**
>
> **"I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them" (Ezk.37:23-24).**
>
> **"And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land" (Zech.9:16).**

Jesus' work as the Shepherd is fourfold.
1. Jesus Christ is the *Good Shepherd*. He is called "good" because He risks and sacrifices His life for the sheep (Jn.10:11, 15; cp. Ps.22).
2. Jesus Christ is the *Great Shepherd*. He is called "great" because He arose from the dead and He perfects the sheep (Heb.13:20-21).
3. Jesus Christ is the *Shepherd and Bishop* of our souls. He is called the "shepherd and bishop" because He welcomes those who wandered off and went astray (1 Pt.2:25).
4. Jesus Christ is the *Chief Shepherd*. He is called "chief" because He is to return to earth with great glory to reward the faithful (1 Pt.5:4).

Note: God also is called a Shepherd in Scripture (Gen.48:15; Ps.23:1; 77:20; 80:1; Is.40:11; Ezk.34:11-31).

1 (10:11-13) **Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd—Hireling—False Teachers—Irresponsible Teachers**: the meaning of "Good Shepherd." There are two reasons why Jesus is called the Good Shepherd.

1. Jesus is called the "Good Shepherd" because He gave and sacrificed His life *for the sheep* (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.10:11 for discussion).

2. Jesus is called the "Good Shepherd" because He is not a hired or employed shepherd. Jesus is the Shepherd by birth. He was born to be the Shepherd with all the Shepherd's rights. The sheep are His and He is the sheep's. The hired shepherd was just a man passing through who was temporary help. He was a man hired to look after the sheep until the real shepherd came along. He was not the true, permanent shepherd. He was a false, unfaithful, and irresponsible shepherd. His interest was not a calling, but...

- a job and profession
- money and comfort
- acceptance and recognition
- position and prestige
- authority and esteem

The false, unfaithful, and irresponsible shepherd has little if any sense of responsibility for the sheep. He seeks to benefit self, not the sheep.

⇒ He is a shepherd for what he can get out of it, not to serve and care for the sheep.
⇒ His primary interest is not the sheep but job security: wages and benefits, position and prestige, money and comfort.
⇒ He values himself much more than the sheep.
⇒ He seeks His own things and not the things of others (1 Cor.10:24; Ph.2:3-4).
⇒ He has no *natural* care for the state of the sheep (Ph.2:20).
⇒ He has no interest in seeking the lost sheep, lest his life be threatened "in the wilderness" (cp. Lk.15:4).

Note that Jesus says three significant things about the hired or employed shepherd.

1. The irresponsible shepherd flees when he sees danger (the wolf). He seeks to save himself and to protect his own security and position even if it means forsaking the sheep and leaving them exposed to the danger.

2. The irresponsible shepherd causes the sheep to be caught in the danger and in the error.
   ⇒ Some of the sheep are ravaged and eaten by the dangerous wolf. The wolf is any thing or any power that seeks to destroy the sheep, such as worldliness, false teaching, and carnal men.
   ⇒ The remaining sheep are scattered throughout the wilderness of the world and lost to the Owner (God).

3. The irresponsible shepherd lacks genuine care for the sheep. He is not involved and concerned with the fate and eternal welfare of the sheep. (See note, *False Shepherds*—Jn.10:1 for verses of Scripture.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:11) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the word "for" (huper) is a simple word with profound meaning when used with the death of Christ. It proclaims the most wonderful truth known to man. Note this striking truth: it does *not mean* that Christ died only as an example for us, showing us how we should be willing to die for the truth or for some great cause. What it means is that Christ died *in our place, in our stead, in our room, as our substitute*. This meaning is unquestionably clear. (See note—Eph.5:2; DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Pt.2:21-25 for more discussion.)

1. The idea of sacrifice to the Jewish and pagan mind of that day was the idea of a life given in another's place. It was *a substitutionary sacrifice*.

2. The idea of sacrifice is often in the very context of the words, "Christ gave Himself *for us*" (Eph.5:2).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (Jn.6:51).

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"He prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation" (Jn.11:51).

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (Jn.17:19).

(Cp. Ro.8:32; Gal.1:4; 2:20; Eph.5:2; 1 Tim.2:6; Tit.2:14.)

2 (10:14-16) **Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd**: the proof that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd." There are four proofs.

1. Jesus knows His sheep, and they know Him. There is an intimate knowledge between Jesus and His sheep.
   a. He knows them, their lives, their being, their all. He knows them...
      - by name, individually and personally.
      - in all their joy and blessings.
      - in all their trials and sorrows.
      - in all their wanderings and stumblings.
      - in all their need and lack.

      He keeps His mind upon them, looking after them by His Spirit and caring for them through intercession as well as by companionship. This is proof that He is the "Good Shepherd" of the sheep.

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (Jn.10:3).

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (1 Cor.8:3).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2 Tim.2:19).

b. The sheep know Him, His life, His being, His all. They know Him, believing and trusting...
- His love and care.
- His mind and Word.
- His companionship and leadership.
- His experience and knowledge.
- His destiny and pasture (heaven).

The fact that the sheep know Him so well is clear proof that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" of their lives.

"Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (Jn.4:42).

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (Jn.10:4).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (Jn.17:3).

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:7-8).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

2. Jesus knows the Father, the Owner of the sheep. The question naturally arises, how well does He know Him? One thing is of critical importance. When Jesus claims to know the Father, He does not mean that He knows God in the same sense as other men know Him. Note His exact words:

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father" (Jn.10:15).

How well does God know any man? However well God knows Jesus, that is how well Jesus knows God. That is what Jesus is claiming. God, of course, knows every man perfectly, knows everything there is to know about a person. Therefore, Jesus knows the Father perfectly, just as God knows everything about Him. Jesus and "the Father are one" (v.30). There is a perfect, intimate knowledge and relationship between them.

This is exactly what Jesus was claiming. He was claiming to be *"the Good Shepherd,"* the very One sent by God to be the Good Shepherd of the sheep. The proof is that He knows the Father even (as well) as the Father knows Him.

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Mt.11:27).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:55).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:25).

3. Jesus will die for the sheep. He was the "Good Shepherd," not a bad shepherd; therefore, He would face the enemy of the sheep. He would not flee from His calling and purpose. He would stand and fight the enemy as the Good Shepherd was sent to do. Note two striking facts.

a. Jesus did not say that He would fight and protect the sheep. He said He would die for the sheep—definitely die. He knew that death awaited Him, that His purpose was to die for them.

b. Jesus dropped the imagery of the shepherd in this statement. He no longer said, "the good shepherd giveth His life" (v.11); He now said "*I* lay down my life." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus Christ, Death*—Jn.10:11 for more discussion and verses of Scripture.)

4. Jesus worked to enlarge the fold. Note several facts.

a. The "other sheep" was a reference to worldwide evangelism. It referred to all believers who were not standing there with Him. It included all countries and generations. It foresaw every believer of all time.

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

b. The words "other sheep *I have*" is a close, intimate term. The closest bond and fellowship imaginable, a Spirit-filled and supernatural relationship were to exist between Christ and these future sheep. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Fellowship*—Acts 2:42 for discussion.)

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

d. The future sheep were to become sheep of His by "hearing His voice" (see note—Jn.10:4-5 for discussion).

e. There is to be one flock, not two flocks. Every believer becomes a part of the Good Shepherd's flock. Note: there are not several shepherds and several flocks. There are not even two shepherds and two flocks. There is only one shepherd and one flock, and that is the flock of the Good Shepherd, of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:4-6).

Now note: The very fact that Jesus enlarges the fold is proof that He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Good Shepherd in that He works and labors for both the Owner and the sheep. He works to keep the sheep healthy so that they will reproduce and increase the flock. An enlarged and healthy flock, of course, means a pleased Owner (the Father).

3 (10:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Death—God, Love for Jesus**: the final proof that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" is His sacrificial death and resurrection. A shepherd could do no greater "good" than to give his life for his sheep. A shepherd who died for his sheep was beyond question a good shepherd. But there is something else here as well. The owner was pleased, deeply appreciative that the shepherd gave his life for the flock. The owner *counted* the shepherd to be a "good" shepherd.

Jesus made two revealing points.

1. His sacrificial death was the very reason God loves His Son so much. Of course this does not mean that God does not love His Son just because of who He is. God naturally loves His Son just as any man loves his child. But God loves Jesus *even more*, in a much more special way, because Jesus was willing to pay such a price to bring men to God.

Note that Jesus died so that He might arise from the dead.

a. He took the sin of man upon Himself to free man from sin, (that is, to provide righteousness for man, positionally). (See note—Jn.1:51 for more discussion.)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin" (1 Jn.3:5).

b. He arose from the dead to free man from death (that is, to provide eternal life for man).

"It [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Ro.6:4-5).

2. His death was the supreme act of obedience. It was voluntary; He willingly died. No man took His life; He sacrificed it Himself. The power to take it was His and His alone.

Note the critical point: this "commandment" to die was of God. This gives a higher meaning to the death of Jesus than just meeting man's need. It means that Jesus did not just die because of sin but because He wished to glorify and honor God. He wished above all else to show His love and adoration for God.

This is an aspect of Jesus' death that is often overlooked—an aspect that rises far above the mere meeting of our need. For in giving Himself as an "offering to God," Christ was looking beyond our need to the majestic responsibility of glorifying God. This means that His first purpose was the glory of God. He was concerned primarily with doing the will of God, with obeying God. God had been terribly dishonored by the first man, Adam, and by all those who followed after him. Jesus Christ wished to honor God by showing that at least one man thought more of God's glory than of anything else. Jesus wished to show that God's will meant more than any personal desire or ambition which He might have.

He said: "That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given commandment [to die for man] even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31; cp. Lk.22:42; Jn.5:30). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus Christ, Death*—Jn.10:11 for verses of Scripture.)

4 (10:19-21) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the reaction to Jesus' claim was mixed. Some said that Jesus was demon-possessed and mad (cp. Jn.7:20; 8:48, 52). Others said that He was perhaps the Messiah (cp. Jn.7:12, 40-44).

"The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not" (Jn.5:36-38).

	D. The Great Shepherd's Claims, 10:22-42	for which of those works do ye stone me?	
1 Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication[DS1] a. It was winter b. He was walking in Solomon's porch c. The religionists approached & questioned Him	22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. 24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.	33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. 34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? 35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;	c. The religionists admitted that His works were good d. The religionists understood His claim, but they rejected Him
2 Claim 1: He is the Messiah[DS2] a. Religionists did not believe 1) His clear claim 2) His works are proof 3) Reason: The religionists were not of His sheep b. His sheep believe[DS3] 1) Are receptive 2) Are known 3) Do follow, v.27 4) Are given life 5) Are kept from perishing 6) Are secure 7) Are assured a double security in God Himself	25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.	36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? 37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. 38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. 39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand, 40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.	**4 Claim 3: He is the Son of God** a. Jesus showed man's inconsistency b. Jesus' claim 1) The Father sanctified Him 2) The Father sent Him 3) He is the Son of God **5 Claim 4: God is in Him & He is in God—absolutely** a. His works prove b. He was still rejected
3 Claim 2: He is one with God, that is, He is God Himself a. The religionists reacted b. Jesus questioned their reaction	30 I and my Father are one. 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father;	41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. 42 And many believed on him there.	**6 Conclusion: Jesus retired** a. Jesus went to the area of John the Baptist b. John's crowds began to follow Jesus c. Many believed on Jesus

DIVISION X

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SHEPHERD OF LIFE, 10:1-42

D. The Great Shepherd's Claims, 10:22-42

(10:22-42) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ is the *Great* Shepherd—great because of who He is. Note the phenomenal claims He made.

1. Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication (v.22-24).
2. Claim 1: He is the Messiah (v.25-29).
3. Claim 2: He is one with God, that is, He is God Himself (v.30-33).
4. Claim 3: He is the Son of God (v.34-36).
5. Claim 4: God is in Him and He is in God—absolutely (v.37-39).
6. Conclusion: Jesus retired (v.40-42).

1 (10:22-24) **Jesus Christ, Messiah**: Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:22.) He was walking in Solomon's porch (see note—Mk.11:27). Note how the Jews surrounded and encircled Him, for they were determined to get a straight answer: "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Is Jesus the Messiah or not?

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(10:22) **Feast of Dedication**: this feast was founded to celebrate the freedom of Israel from Syria in 164 B.C. What had happened was terrible. Antiochus Epiphanes, the King of Syria from 175 to 164 B.C., loved Greek society and wanted to turn his part of the world into a model Greek society. William Barclay points out that he ran into trouble when he tried to make the Jews into full-fledged Greeks both in custom and religion. At first he tried peacefully, and some of the Jews adopted Greek ideas; but as history has shown, most Jews were not going to surrender their beliefs. In order to be success-

ful, Antiochus knew that he had to destroy Jewish religion. He attacked Jerusalem, slaughtering 80,000 Jews by the most horrible means imaginable and enslaving another 80,000. He then desecrated the Jewish temple by...

- turning the great altar of the burnt offering into an altar to the Greek god, Zeus.
- sacrificing swine flesh upon the altar.
- setting up a trade of prostitution in the temple chambers.

Such abhorrent acts caused some Jews to go underground and to take up the struggle against Antiochus. Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers soon came to the forefront as the leaders of the revolt against Syria. In 165 B.C. they were successful, and one of their first acts was to cleanse, restore, and rededicate the temple. It was for the purpose of celebrating the rededication of the temple to the worship of God that the *Feast of Dedication* was founded.

The feast has also been called the Festival of Lights. Its Jewish name is Hanukkah, and it is still celebrated today. The Festival lasted eight days and was characterized by the burning of lights. Lights were burned in every Jewish home throughout the city and countryside and in every corner of the temple. Every place throughout the land was lit up to celebrate the great day of deliverance. The lights symbolized the light of freedom that had been newly won for the nation. Note: the feast took place in the winter; its festivities were similar to the feast of tabernacles (2 Macc.1:9; 10:6). This is the only time the feast is mentioned in the gospels. (*The Gospel of John*, Vol.2. "The Daily Study Bible." Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1956, p.81f.

2 (10:25-29) **Jesus Christ, Messiah**: the first claim of Jesus was that He is the Messiah. There is a contrast in these verses (v.24-29), a contrast between the religionists and the Lord's sheep, between not believing and believing.

1. The religionists did not believe (v.25-26).
   a. Jesus had clearly claimed to be the Messiah. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.10:25.) Note His words: "I told you." He had told them time and again.
   b. Jesus' works proved that He was who He claimed to be. (See notes—Jn.5:19; 5:20; 5:36.)
   c. The religionists did not believe Jesus' claims. Why? *Because* they were not His sheep. Note an important fact. Jesus did not say, "Ye are not my sheep *because* ye believe not"; but He said, "Ye believe not *because* ye are not my sheep." He was saying they did not believe because they were not His followers. This is the thread of predestination that John stresses throughout His gospel. (See notes—Jn.6:44-46; 6:37 for discussion.) The religionists did not belong to God. They claimed to be His followers, but their claim was only a verbal profession. Their hearts and lives were far from God; therefore, what Jesus claimed, they rejected. They were not the sheep of Jesus; therefore, they rejected His claims and Words.
2. The sheep of Jesus believe. They believe in the Shepherd. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.10:27-29 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(10:25) **Jesus Christ, Claims—Deity**: Jesus was asked, "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Just in the last few days the people had heard Him proclaim the truth as forcefully as He could. The problem was not His proclaiming the fact in clear language; the problem was the unbelief of the people. They only pretended not to understand. They understood, but they refused to believe. This is, of course, the problem with most men. In unmistakable terms, Jesus proclaims...

- that His teaching is not His, but God's (see note—Jn.7:16-19).

  "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me" (Jn.7:16).

- that He knows God intimately and was sent from God (see notes—Jn.7:25-31; 8:54-59; 10:14-16).

  "But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

- that He is the Source of life and the One who gives the Holy Spirit to men (see note—Jn.7:37-39).

  "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink....This spake He of the Spirit" (Jn.7:37, 39).

- that He is the Light of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12; note—Jn.9:5).

  "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12; cp. 9:5).

- that He is the Revelation of God (see note—Jn.8:19).

  "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

- that He has a different origin from man (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.8:23).

  "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn.8:23).

- that if a man does not believe in Him, that man shall die in his sins (see note—Jn.8:23-24).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

- that He is the Spokesman for God (see note—Jn.8:26).

"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him" (Jn.8:26).

- that He is the Son of Man who was to be lifted up on the cross (see note—Jn.8:28).

"When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:28).

- that God never left Him alone; that He never sinned; that He never failed to please God (see note—Jn.8:29).

"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:29).

- that He came from God (see note—Jn.8:42-43).

"If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

- that He is sinless (see note—Jn.8:45-47. Cp. notes—Jn.8:29; 8:54-59.)

"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (Jn.8:45-46).

- that He is the Savior or Deliverer from death; that a man who keeps His Word shall never see death (see notes—Jn.8:51-53; 8:51).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

- that He is the great "I Am" (see note—Jn.8:54-59).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (Jn.8:58).

- that He is the Son of God (see note—Jn.9:35-38).

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).

- that He is the Door of the sheep (see note—Jn.10:7-10).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (Jn.10:7, 9).

- that He is the Good Shepherd (see note—Jn.10:11-13; DEEPER STUDY # 2—10:11).

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:11, 14).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(10:27-29) **Sheep**: the sheep of the Shepherd believe in the Shepherd. Others may not, but the sheep do. This is what Jesus was saying. Note how He used the traits of sheep to describe His followers (believers).

1. Sheep are *receptive* to the voice of the Shepherd. They know His voice and respond to it. When He calls them, they come and do what He says. Note also that they know the voice of false shepherds. (See note—Jn.10:4-5.)
2. Sheep are *known* by the Shepherd, and this knowledge leads them to trust Him explicitly. The Shepherd responds to the sheep and to their faith and trust in Him. He cares for them deeply, leading and looking after them. He even knows them individually, calling them by name (see note—Jn.10:2-3). The fact that He responds to them with such care and attention gives them even greater faith and trust. They trust their Shepherd without question.
3. Sheep *follow* the shepherd. They obey Him, knowing He goes *before* them in order to remove all obstacles and dangers (see notes—Jn.10:4-5).

4. Sheep are *communal*. Because of space, this fact is not given in the outline above. Note the sheep follow in a group. They form a commune or a fellowship of sheep. They are a body who follow the Shepherd. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Fellowship*—Acts 2:42.)

5. Sheep are given *eternal life*. And note: eternal life includes an abundant life while on this earth, which begins the moment the sheep become a follower of the shepherd (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.10:10).

6. Sheep are *kept from perishing*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perishing*—Jn.3:16.)

7. Sheep are *secure*. No man (no one, Greek) can pluck them out of the Shepherd's hand. The person who is truly in the Shepherd's hand will not be lost. The Shepherd promises this time and again (cp. Jn.6:37-39). Note exactly what Jesus said. The sheep are saved from someone *trying to snatch* them away, and they are saved no matter how great the *attempt* may be. (They are secure, kept from the evil one, even the devil himself.)

8. Sheep possess a *double security* in the Owner, that is, God Himself. They are secure not only because they are in the hands of the Shepherd but because they belong to the Owner. The Owner is God, and God is greater than all. Therefore being the greatest, no one is now able or ever will be able to pluck the sheep out of God's hand. (Cp. Ro.8:38-39.) (Not even the devil.)

3 (10:30-33) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the second claim of Jesus was that He is One with God, that is, He is God Himself. But note: Jesus was not claiming to be the same person as God. He was claiming to have the same *nature* of God, to be One with God...

- in nature
- in essence
- in power
- in substance
- in being
- in glory

This is seen in the word "one." It is neuter, not masculine. It means *thing*, not *person*. Jesus is of the very same thing, of the very same substance as God.

There is no question that this is exactly what Jesus was claiming. His claim was perfectly understood by those standing around Him. The Scripture and outline clearly show this. Note the clear accusation: "For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, *makest thyself God*" (v.33).

> **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God" (Jn.1:1-2).**
>
> **"And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (Jn.12:45).**
>
> **"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father" (Jn.14:7-9).**
>
> **"All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jn.16:15).**
>
> **"Concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Ro.9:5).**
>
> **"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).**
>
> **"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).**
>
> **"In his [Jesus Christ] times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting" (1 Tim.6:15-16).**

4 (10:34-36) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the third claim of Jesus was that He is the Son of God. Those who rejected Jesus had stones in their hands, and they were ready to get rid of Him. Note two things.

1. Jesus showed man's inconsistency. He referred them to their history when they called their rulers or judges "gods." Their ancestors had used the word "gods" to mean that their judges were rulers of men—rulers who had been appointed by God to represent God among men (Ex.22:28; Ps.82:6). Jesus simply asked, if some rulers of Israel were called "gods," why was He being accused of blasphemy for claiming to be the Son of God?

2. Jesus made a threefold claim; however, note a critical point. Jesus was not saying, "Rulers were called gods, so I am to be called a 'god' as they were." He was claiming to be distinct from all other men. He claimed that He was...

- the One "whom the Father hath sanctified." (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sanctify*—1 Pt.1:15-16.)
- the One whom the Father sent into the world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34.)
- the Son of God. (See notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:34.)

How could they reject Him? Their rulers were mere men, yet they were called "gods." He was much, much more—the very One sanctified and sent by God, the very Son of God Himself. How could they accuse Him of blasphemy when they so readily received rulers of the past as "gods" and the rulers were mere men?

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16; cp. v.17-18).**
>
> **"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (Jn.9:35-37).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest**

thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

5 (10:37-39) **Jesus Christ, Deity**: the fourth claim of Jesus was that God is in Him and He is in God. (See note—Jn.14:10.) This is the indwelling presence of each in the other. Jesus is One with the Father, and the Father is One with Him. They are of one Mind and Spirit, one being and nature, one purpose and work.

"In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9).

Note a critical point: it is absolutely essential for a person to know and believe this truth. Jesus was pleading with the unbeliever:

"Though you believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him" (Jn.10:38).

Note that Jesus' works prove the indwelling presence of God in Him and He in God. But they rejected His claim.

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn.17:22).

6 (10:40-42) **Conclusion**: Jesus retired to the area where John had first baptized, and many of John's followers began to follow Jesus. Note that many believed on Jesus. John's faithfulness in the ministry throughout this area reaped great fruit.

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).

	CHAPTER 11	Judaea again.	
	XI. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11	8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?	a. The disciples protested Jesus' return to Jerusalem: Because of the threat to His life
		9 Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.	b. Jesus' reply: There is a duty to work—to do what is right, to grasp the opportunity—regardless of the danger
	A. The Death of Lazarus and Its Purposes, 11:1-16		
1 **Lazarus was sick** a. His home was Bethany	Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.	10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.	
b. His sisters were Mary & Martha	2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)	11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.	6 **Purpose 5: To show Jesus' power over death** a. Jesus called Lazarus "our friend"
c. His sisters sent the news of Lazarus' sickness to Jesus	3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.	12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.	b. Jesus predicted Lazarus would be raised c. The disciples misunderstood
2 **Purpose 1: To glorify God & to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God**	4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.	13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.	d. Jesus said that death is as "sleep"*DSI*
3 **Purpose 2: To show Jesus' great love**	5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.	14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.	
4 **Purpose 3: To show the necessity for waiting upon God in great crises**	6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.	15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.	7 **Purpose 6: To help strengthen the disciples' belief**
5 **Purpose 4: To teach the need to grasp opportunity**	7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into	16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.	8 **Purpose 7: To stir the disciples' courage & loyalty**

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

A. The Death of Lazarus and Its Purposes, 11:1-16

(11:1-16) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life. The death of Lazarus gave Jesus the opportunity to reveal Himself as the resurrection and the life. There were seven purposes for Lazarus' death. (Note: each purpose is also applicable to the death of the believer.)

1. Lazarus was sick (v.1-3).
2. Purpose 1: to glorify God and to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God (v.4).
3. Purpose 2: to show Jesus' great love (v.5).
4. Purpose 3: to show the necessity for *waiting upon God* in great crises (v.6).
5. Purpose 4: to teach the need to grasp opportunity (v.7-10).
6. Purpose 5: to show Jesus' great power over death (v.11-14).
7. Purpose 6: to help strengthen the disciples' belief (v.15).
8. Purpose 7: to stir the disciples' courage and loyalty (v.16).

1 (11:1-3) **Jesus Christ, Family of—Martha**: Lazarus was sick. Jesus had said, "the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58). At this particular time Jesus was being rejected by almost everyone. Apparently He was an unwelcome guest in most homes. He was walking about preaching and proclaiming that He was One with God, the Son of God Himself (see outline and notes—Jn.10:22-42). Just imagine a man making such a claim. He was thought to be "mad" and devil-possessed (Mk.3:20-21; Lk.4:25). His own family was even having difficulty with Him at this time. They were apparently so embarrassed by His claims and the rumors of His insanity that on one occasion they travelled a great distance to bring Him home lest He be harmed. (See outline and notes—Mt.12:46-50.)

However, there was one family who always opened their home to Jesus when He was in and around Jerusalem—the family of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, who were brother and sisters. They lived in Bethany, a suburb about two miles outside Jerusalem. Their closeness to Jesus is the reason the sisters felt so free to interrupt His evangelistic tour with the request to help their sick brother. Jesus' great love for this family should be noted throughout this passage.

2 (11:4) **Sickness—Jesus Christ, Glorified**: the first purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to glorify God and to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God. Lazarus' sickness was not *for* death. He was to die *for* the glory of God and Christ. He was sick, and he was to die so that the works of God could be demonstrated. Lazarus died so that...

God could be glorified...
- By showing His desire for man to have life
- By proving His power to give life
- By showing His approval of Christ by which He proved that He really did love the world enough to send His Son to save the world

Christ could be glorified...
- By having the opportunity to do the work of God
- By demonstrating God's power
- By showing compassion
- By strengthening the faith of believers
- By leading unbelievers to believe

In raising Lazarus from the dead, both Jesus and His Father were glorified as the *Life* of the world. In dealing with the blind man, both were glorified as the *Light* of the world (Jn.9:3, 5). (See note—Jn.9:5 for more discussion.)

"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:23).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).

"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Ps.34:3).

"Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day" (Ps.71:8).

"I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works" (Ps.145:5).

"O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Is.25:1).

3 (11:5) **Jesus Christ, Love for Man**: the second purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to show Jesus' great love. Note: each member of the family is mentioned personally. He loved the family, but He also loved each one individually. This is a fact in the Scripture that needs to be stressed, for each one had a need, and each one needed and received the help of Jesus. Lazarus' death gave Him the opportunity to demonstrate His great love not only for the families of the world but for each individual in the world.

"He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (Jn.10:3).

"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (Jn.13:1).

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (Jn.15:9).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

4 (11:6) **Trial—Waiting Upon God**: the third purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to show the necessity for *waiting upon God* in great crises. Jesus was not waiting two days so that Lazarus would die and He could perform a great miracle. Jesus knew that Lazarus was either already dead or that Lazarus was going to die on the very day the person brought word of Lazarus' illness. We know this because Lazarus had already been buried four days when Jesus arrived in Bethany (v.17, 39). Jewish burial immediately followed death. The four days would be counted from...

- the day of travel by the messengers in bringing word to Jesus (v.3).
- the two days needed for Jesus to complete His ministry (v.6).
- the day or two needed by Jesus to travel to Bethany (v.17). (Remember huge crowds thronged Jesus, which prevented Him from travelling rapidly. It is possible He completed His ministry in one day and took two days for travel to Bethany.)

The point is this: Martha and Mary were learning to wait upon God throughout the whole experience. In facing severe illness or death, there is no answer but to wait upon God. Jesus knows when to act. He knows the exact moment, the best time...

- for us to bear the trial.
- for us to stand.
- for us to be helped.
- for us to learn the most.
- for us to bear testimony of God's power and strength.

Whenever that moment arrives, the Lord arises to meet the need of the believer. What the believer must do is what Martha and Mary had to do: learn to *wait upon God*. The Lord will act at the right moment.

Thought 1. We cannot dictate to God when to act nor how to act. Note two examples.

1) Note Mary, Jesus' own mother. At the marriage feast she wanted Him to go and secure more wine. He rebuked her for interfering with His work, the work of God. He has His own way and time, the very best way and time for meeting the need (cp. Jn.2:3-4).
2) Note Jesus' own brothers. They tried to ridicule Him into going by caravan with them to the feast in Jerusalem. Jesus rebuked them for the same reason He had rebuked Mary. He, the Son of God, knew how to conduct His ministry and when to go about doing it. He knew what was best.

"Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day" (Ps.25:5).

"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD" (Ps.27:14).

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him" (Ps.62:5).

"Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us" (Ps.123:2).

"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee" (Pr.20:22).

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Is.40:31).

"Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (Hos.12:6).

5 (11:7-10) **Opportunity—Service**: the fourth purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to teach the need to grasp opportunity. It had been three days since Jesus had received word of Lazarus' illness. Jesus now said it was time to go into Judaea, for Bethany was in the district of Judaea. The disciples protested, for it was the Judaean leaders who had stood so opposed to Jesus and had threatened to kill Him (Jn.10:31). The disciples could not believe their ears. Why would Jesus jeopardize their lives?

Jesus' answer was forceful, and it stands as a great lesson for all of us. There are only twelve hours in a day. Jesus must walk, that is...

- go and do His work while it is day.
- go and do what is right, regardless of the danger.
- go and do what is right lest the day pass and the opportunity be lost. (Cp. Jn.9:4.)

If Jesus had walked in the dark, failing to work and failing to do what He knew to be right, He would have stumbled. He would have shown that there is no light in Him. The idea is, of course, that there is light in Him. He knew the work to be done and the right thing to do, so He must go into Judaea.

Thought 1. A man must do the same as Jesus. A man has only twelve hours of daylight (approximately).

⇒ He must walk, that is, work and do what is right, grasping the opportunity while it is day.

⇒ If he walks in the night, he will stumble. When the night comes, it is too late to walk. Works cannot be done in the night without stumbling about. The opportunity is lost.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).

Note the term, "the Light of this world." Jesus is "the Light of this world." A person has only twelve hours, only a certain amount of time to see "the Light of the world." Once the night comes, the opportunity is lost.

Note also the statement, "There is no light in him [a man]." Man has no light within. All he can do is walk...

- as he sees
- as other men see
- as the world sees

The problem with such a walk is that no man or any combination of men can see beyond the physical and material world, and the end of the world is fear—the fear and trembling brought about by bondage and death. (Note the fear of the disciples above, v.8.) The end of the world is not life. Life comes only from Jesus, "the Light of this world" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12).

"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).

"In him was life; and the life was the light [Jesus Christ] of men" (Jn.1:4).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

6 (11:11-14) **Death—Jesus Christ, Power**: the fifth purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to show Jesus' great power over death. Jesus stated very plainly what He was going to do. Lazarus was asleep; therefore, He would go and awaken Lazarus out of his sleep. However, the disciples misunderstood what Jesus was saying. *By sleep,* Jesus meant that Lazarus was dead, but the disciples thought He meant that Lazarus was resting in sleep. Note that Jesus gave His meaning of sleep: "Lazarus is dead." Note four significant things.

1. Jesus called Lazarus "our friend." He was dead, but he was still "our friend." This is a hint that Lazarus is still a friend despite being dead, that he is still living, still alive in another world. Note the strong feelings Jesus had for this believer, Lazarus.

Thought 1. Jesus' love reaches out for every believer just as much as it did for Lazarus. Jesus calls every believer His friend. And note the words "*our* friend." Every believer is to be the friend of all other believers. There is to be a sweet fellowship between all believers.

2. Jesus predicted that He would raise Lazarus from the dead. He would "awaken" and resurrect him. This is a picture of the resurrection of believers (cp. v.23-26).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).

3. The disciples misunderstood. Many still do. They misunderstand the meaning of death and the resurrection.
4. Jesus said that death is as "sleep" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.11:13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:13) **Sleep—Death**: death is sometimes spoken of as sleep when referring to believers. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.8:50 for more discussion. Cp. Mt.27:52; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor.15:18, 20, 51; 1 Th.4:13-15; 2 Pt.3:4.)

⇒ Jesus said that Jairus' daughter was asleep (Mt.9:24).
⇒ When Stephen was martyred, he is said to have fallen asleep (Acts 7:60).
⇒ Some of the five hundred witnesses to Jesus' ascension are said to have "fallen asleep" (1 Cor.15:6).
⇒ Believers already in heaven are said to be asleep in Jesus (1 Th.4:13).

Death is called "sleep" in order to picture the idea that the believer is...

- resting in the presence and comfort of God.
- resting from the labor of his service on earth.
- resting and refreshing himself for a greater service for God.

Many within the world picture death as annihilation, as ceasing to exist. Scripture says it is not. Believers continue to exist, resting in the life and comfort of God. The body lays down and, so to speak, sleeps; but not the soul of man.

"To be absent from the body [is] to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8; cp. Ph.1:23).

7 (11:15) **Hope—Resurrection**: the sixth purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to help strengthen the disciples' belief. Jesus said an astonishing thing: He was rejoicing that He was not in Bethany when Lazarus was sick. Why? Jesus joyed over what was to happen. Lazarus was to be raised from the dead, which meant that every thoughtful believer, both then and in succeeding generations, would experience a great leap in faith.

Thought 1. The glorious event of Lazarus' resurrection stirs the heart of sincere seekers, for it pictures the most glorious hope of life possible. Jesus Christ has the power to give life and to raise the dead (Jn.5:24-29; 1 Th.4:13f; 1 Cor.15:1-58). Any follower of Christ who truly experiences the scene of Lazarus' resurrection is bound...

- to take a great leap in faith.
- to have his faith stirred to new heights.
- to see his faith grow progressively.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:30-31).

8 (11:16) **Courage—Loyalty**: the seventh purpose of Lazarus' sickness was to stir the disciples' courage and loyalty. Note that Thomas took the lead here. He showed great courage and loyalty to Christ, a dynamic example for every believer. He demonstrated...

- a deep love for Christ, a love that was ready to die for Him.
- a willingness to stand and to die with his fellow believers in the Lord's work.
- a knowledge that to die for Christ is better than to live without Him.

"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (Jn.16:27).

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

	B. Jesus and Martha: A Growth in Faith, 11:17-27	22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.	b. Her *limited* belief: That His power was less than God's power
1 The scene was Bethany, a suburb of Jerusalem—about two miles away a. Lazarus: Had been in the grave for four days	17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.	23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.	**3 Martha's fundamental faith** a. Jesus' declaration
	18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:	24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.	b. Martha's expression of faith
b. Friends: Comforted the family	19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.	25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:	**4 Martha's declared faith** a. Jesus' great claim
c. Martha: Went to meet Jesus	20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him:	26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?	b. Jesus' promise: Believe 1) He who believes & dies shall live 2) He who lives and believes shall never die; he never perishes
d. Mary: Sat at home	but Mary sat still in the house.	27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.	c. Martha's declaration 1) The Christ 2) The Son of God 3) Sent by God
2 Martha's complaining, limited faith a. Her *complaining* belief	21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.		

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

B. Jesus and Martha: A Growth in Faith, 11:17-27

(11:17-27) **Introduction**: this passage is a dynamic conversation between Jesus and Martha. What happened caused a great growth in Martha's faith. A seeking heart and a study of the conversation will cause any believer's faith to grow significantly.

1. The scene was Bethany, a suburb of Jerusalem about 2 miles away (v.17-20).
2. Martha's complaining, limited faith (v.21-22).
3. Martha's fundamental faith (v.23-24).
4. Martha's declared faith (v.25-27).

1 (11:17-20) **Jesus Christ, Ministry—Compassion**: the scene was Bethany, a suburb of Jerusalem about two miles away. When Jesus arrived, someone told Him that Lazarus had already been buried for four days (see note—Jn.11:6). Jesus did not actually enter the city of Bethany. He apparently stayed on the outskirts of the city. Just why we are not told. Perhaps the multitude following Him was too large to crowd into the city, or perhaps He was simply avoiding those who were so bitterly opposed to Him. There was an enormous number of mourners who had come to comfort the family, and some of these were opposed to Jesus (v.46).

Whatever the reason for remaining on the outskirts of the city, Jesus apparently sent a messenger to tell Martha that He had arrived (cp. v.28). As soon as she heard, she quietly left the house and ran out to meet Him. (Cp. v.28 for what apparently happened with Martha as well as Mary.) Mary, however, remained at home.

Note the striking contrast between Martha and Mary, a contrast that is ever so characteristic. Martha was the woman of action and energy, the one brimming with initiative; therefore, she was the one who went out to meet Jesus. Mary was the contemplative and meditative one; therefore, she remained at home to receive the mourners (cp. Lk.10:38-42).

2 (11:21-22) **Faith**: Martha's complaining, limited faith in Jesus. Martha believed in Jesus. She even believed that Jesus could have healed Lazarus and kept him from dying. But Jesus had not come immediately when He was called; therefore, her brother was dead. Why did Jesus not come when He was called? Why did He not heal Lazarus when she and the family loved Jesus so much and had done so much for Him? Why did He let Lazarus die?

The point is this: Martha did believe in Jesus, but her faith was a complaining faith. She did not believe to the point of *resting* in faith. She did not believe with an *unlimited and resting faith*. She was not entrusting the matter completely into the Lord's hands. She was not yet convinced that what had happened was for the best. She trusted Jesus as her Savior, but she questioned what had happened. She complained and even reproached Jesus.

A complaining, questioning faith is a *limited faith*. It is a faith that questions Jesus' Lordship...

- that questions if Jesus has done what is best.
- that questions if Jesus knows what is best.

It says to Jesus, "If you had been here, if you had acted differently, if you had done this or that, then this trial would not have happened." Note that Martha was convicted immediately for having complained and reproached Jesus. She blurted out:

"But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee" (v.22).

But note even here how her *limited faith* showed itself. She did not say, "Lord, I know that you can do anything you will." She said, "Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." She was still *limiting* Jesus to some level below God. She was not grasping that Jesus Himself was the Resurrection and the Life. She had a complaining, limited faith in Jesus.

"Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Mt.8:26).

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him [Peter], and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased" (Mt.14:31-32).

"When Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" (Mt.16:8-9).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

3 (11:23-24) **Faith—Resurrection**: Martha's fundamental faith. Jesus made a striking declaration, "Thy brother shall rise again." He could have said it no clearer. Lazarus was to arise from the dead.

Martha misunderstood. She thought Jesus meant that Lazarus would arise in the resurrection at the last day.

1. Note that Martha had a *fundamental faith*. She believed in the resurrection, one of the fundamentals of the faith. She believed what Jesus had taught, and He had been drilling the resurrection into His followers (cp. Jn.5:28-29; 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 12:48).

2. Martha's fundamental faith experienced disappointment. The promise of a future resurrection and reunion is not always a comfort. Her loved one was gone. There was now no contact and no relationship with him, not on this earth. Everything about her life was now completely changed. Her household was radically different. She believed in the resurrection and believed in all the fundamentals of the faith, but the resurrection was so far in the future that it was of little comfort to her then.

The point is this: a *fundamental faith* is essential. A person must believe in the fundamentals of the faith, but a fundamental faith is short—it is not all there is to faith and to our life in Christ. It is not a living faith, not a faith that lives in the presence of Christ. And what is so desperately needed by man is what was needed by Martha: a living faith, a faith that is alive and vibrant, dynamic and moving, conscious and acting, communicating and fellowshipping. What is needed is the knowledge that Jesus, the very One who stands before us, *is* "the resurrection and the life."

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim.3:5).

4 (11:25-27) **Jesus Christ, Claim—Faith—Heaven—Death**: Martha's declared faith. Note three points.

1. Jesus' great claim: "I Am the resurrection and the life." Here is a critical fact: Jesus did not say that He *gives* the resurrection and life to man, but He *is* the Resurrection and the Life. Jesus, of course, does give the resurrection and life to believers; but His point is not this fact. His point is far more important. Jesus declared that He is the very being and essence, the very power and energy, of life. Therefore, He can...
   - give and sustain life as He wills.
   - resurrect and restore life as He wills.

This is a phenomenal claim. It means that man—in fact all of life—exists only by the will and power of Jesus. Being the power and energy of life, Jesus is the Source of all life. There is nothing existing apart from His will; therefore, if a dead person wishes to live, only Jesus can give him life. And if a living person does not wish to die, only Jesus can keep him from dying.

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (Jn.5:26).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.5:21).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:12).

2. Jesus' great promise: believe, and two phenomenal things happen.
   a. "He that believeth *in me*, though he die [kan a pothanen], yet shall he live." He lives in the other world: in heaven, in the spiritual dimension of being, in the very presence of God Himself. The believer who has passed from this world is not some place...
      - in a semi-conscious state.
      - in a deep sleep, locked up in a compartment someplace.
      - in space moving about and floating around on a fluffy cloud.

The believer is fully alive: he lives in heaven, in the other world, in the very presence of God Himself. Another world exists just as this world exists. It is not a world that lies out in the future; it is a world that exists now—a spiritual world—a spiritual dimension—a world that the Bible calls heaven. It is the spiritual world and dimension where God and Christ and angels and all those who have gone on before now live.

The point is this: when a person who has *believed in Jesus* dies, he goes to live in heaven, in the spiritual world where God and Christ and the heavenly hosts live. *Hallelujah*! is the only word that can express the hope and joy that fills the soul of the true believer.

> **"And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" (Lk.9:30-31).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk.23:43).**
>
> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24).**
>
> **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).**
>
> **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).**

b. "Whoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The idea is that the believer shall never taste death, that is, never experience death. Quicker than the believer can blink an eye, he passes from this world into the next world. He is transported and transferred into heaven. The believer never loses a single moment of consciousness. One moment he is conscious and living in this world; the next moment he is conscious and present in the next world. There is only one difference. He is immediately made perfect: transformed, made much more conscious and aware, more knowledgeable and alive than ever before. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—2 Tim.4:18 for more discussion. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)

> **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**

c. Note a crucial point. Receiving eternal life is conditional: a person must believe. It is "he that believeth" and "whosoever lives and believes" that lives and never dies. It is as Jesus asked Martha: "Believest thou this?" If a person believes Jesus, he shall never die; he shall live forever.

3. Martha's great declaration. Martha believed, and she confessed and called Jesus "Lord" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24). She declared that she believed three things:

a. That Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah (see note—Jn.1:35-42).

> **"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (Jn.4:25-26).**
>
> **"But I know him [God]: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).**

b. That Jesus is the Son of God (see note—Jn.1:34. Cp. John the Baptist, Jn.1:34; Peter, Mt.16:16; Jesus, Jn.11:41; 26:63f; John the Apostle, Jn.20:31.)

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (Jn.12:45).**

c. That Jesus is the One who was to be sent into the world by God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1-Jn.3:31).

> **"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:29).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).**

Thought 1. Knowing that Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life means three things. It means...

- that Jesus is alive, living right before us in the person of the Holy Spirit. He is both *in us* and *all around us*. Our faith is living and alive and in constant communion and fellowship with Him.
- that our loved one is present with Jesus, no longer imperfect in mind and body, but perfect: more conscious, more aware, more alive than he was on earth. How do we know this? Jesus is alive in heaven, and "to be absent from the body [is] to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).
- that Jesus is alive, so the resurrection of our glorified bodies is assured (1 Cor.15:1-58).

	C. Jesus and Mary: The Real Needs of Man, 11:28-37		
1 Need 1: The glorious message of Christ a. He is the "Master"*DSI* b. The Master "is come" c. The Master calls "for you"	28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.	unto the grave to weep there. 32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.	**4 Need 4: The confession of faith (even if it is limited & weak)** a. The confession: Lord b. The complaining, limited faith
2 Need 2: The right response—arise quickly & come to Christ	29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.	33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,	**5 Need 5: The understanding, feelings, and compassion of Jesus** a. He groans in spirit 1) Over death 2) Over man's pain
	30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.	34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.	b. He asks where the dead person is
3 Need 3: The reaching out of people to help others	31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth	35 Jesus wept. 36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! 37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?	c. He weeps in love: Over death & man's pain **6 Conclusion: The misunderstanding of man—how could Jesus love so much & let this happen?**

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

C. Jesus and Mary: The Real Needs of Man, 11:28-37

(11:28-37) **Introduction**: man has great needs. These are seen in the experience of Mary with Jesus.

1. Need 1: the glorious message of Christ (v.28).
2. Need 2: the right response—arise quickly and come to Christ (v.29-30).
3. Need 3: the reaching out of people to help others (v.31).
4. Need 4: the confession of faith (even if it is limited and weak) (v.32).
5. Need 5: the understanding, feelings, and compassion of Jesus (v.33-36).
6. Conclusion: the misunderstanding of man—how could Jesus love so much and let this happen (v.37)?

1 (11:28) **Jesus Christ, Message**: the first need is for the glorious message of Christ. Martha had made a great confession of faith: "Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:27).

The great confession apparently struck some kind of hope within Martha. Just what she was expecting, perhaps even she did not know, but there was a spark of hope. Her Lord, the Son of God Himself, was now with her. Whatever could be done would be done; whatever help was available would be given. Her faith and trust were in Him. Only one thing was missing: her dear sister, Mary. So she hastened to share the glorious news with her. Note that she shared three things.

1. The Master (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.11:28).
2. The Master "is come." The answer that we so desperately need is now available. The One who can give us the help we need has now come: the Teacher who can teach us how to meet all of our…
   - needs and necessities.
   - troubles and trials.
   - sorrow and hurt.
   - loneliness and emptiness.

> **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk.4:18-19).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb.7:25).**

3. The Master is come "for you." Jesus calls and summons you. He wonders where you are and why you have not come. He wants you now.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:28-29).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Is.55:1).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:28) **Master** (ho didaskalos): means *the Teacher*. The definite article (the) is important. Jesus is not just another teacher like all other teachers. He is *the* Teacher, the teaching Master. This means at least two things.

1. Jesus is the Supreme Teacher, the very best teacher who has ever lived. He is known for being the greatest of teachers. No one even comes close to comparing with Him. He stands alone as *the Teacher*.
2. Jesus is the Master, the Lord, the Teacher of all men. In calling Jesus *the* Teacher, there is the idea of His Lordship and deity. Note that He claims deity Himself: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" (Jn.13:13). His being *the Teacher* is tied closely with His being *the Lord*. In fact, logic alone would tell us that *the Lord* would be *the greatest Teacher* among all men.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

"Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor.12:3).

2 (11:29-30) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the second need is to make the right response to Christ—the response of arising quickly and running to Him.

1. The message of Christ was enough to stir Mary. It is enough to stir action within the heart of any person who honestly seeks the answer to the riddle and trials of life and death.
2. When Mary heard, she responded quickly. The idea is that she jumped up (arose quickly) and ran to meet Jesus. Hope and expectation were stirred in her heart. Note that the message had come to her in a very quiet manner: secretly, in a whisper, without anyone else knowing it (v.28).

Thought 1. No matter how quietly the message is proclaimed, man is to respond by arising quickly and running to meet Jesus.

3. Mary acted on her own and made her own decision.
   - ⇒ She did not consult with friends and neighbors, not even with those who were closest to her. She got up and went to Jesus, leaving both friends and neighbors behind.
   - ⇒ She did not consult with religionists. Religion was important to her. The local religious leaders were even present, visiting and comforting her in her sorrow and sharing the comfort that their religion offered. But it helped her so little. When she heard the message that the Lord *was calling for her*, she went to Him, saying nothing to the religionists.
   - ⇒ She did not consider appearance or decorum. Think about the situation. The house was full of friends and neighbors. Who was going to greet them, receive their sympathies, express appreciation, and handle their presence? None of that mattered to Mary, not now. The Lord was *calling for her*. She must respond and go to Him immediately.
   - ⇒ She did not consider the distance. Jesus had not yet entered town, so Mary had to walk a considerable distance to reach Him. She had to make the decision to break away from those back in the house despite what they might think and feel. She had to march forward and travel to Him in order to respond to His call.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

3 (11:31) **Ministering**: the third need is for people, friends and neighbors, to reach out to help each other. This is a touching picture. When the neighbors and friends saw Mary leave quickly, they thought she was going to the tomb to

mourn over Lazarus. They were with her for one reason: to "comfort" her. Naturally, they followed her, thinking she needed help in bearing up under her loss. Note what happened.

1. They, too, were brought face to face with Jesus. Because they were set on comforting Mary, they were to share in Mary's experience with Christ.
2. They, too, were given the opportunity to trust Christ. In fact, many did "believe on Him" (v.45).

Thought 1. The friends and neighbors set a clear example of helping others. The world needs more and more neighbors such as these. Note the result of sincere help. It does not go unnoticed by Christ. Many are brought to Christ when they help those who already know Christ.

> **"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).**
>
> **"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Ro.15:1).**
>
> **"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).**
>
> **"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body" (Heb.13:3).**
>
> **"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).**

4 (11:32) **Confession**: the fourth need is the confession of faith, even if the faith is limited and weak. As soon as Mary saw Jesus, she fell at His feet in homage and worship and made a confession of faith in Him.

1. She called Him, "Lord" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.11:28; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Ph.2:11).
2. She expresses, however, the same complaining, limited faith that Martha did (see note—Jn.11:21-22 for discussion).

Thought 1. The need of man is to make a genuine confession of faith. Even if one's belief and confession are weak, they will grow as one walks with Jesus day by day.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).**
>
> **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).**
>
> **"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:11).**
>
> **"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).**

5 (11:33-36) **Jesus Christ, Compassion**: the fifth need is the understanding, feelings, and compassion of Jesus. Note three things.

1. Jesus "groaned [enebrimesato] in spirit." The word "groaned" is often interpreted to mean stern reaction, displeasure, or anger (because of its use in other places). Some interpreters feel that Jesus was angry with the friends and neighbors because of their loud wailing and moaning, feeling that they were being hypocritical and insincere in their sorrow. This interpretation is difficult to see.
   - ⇒ Mary was certainly sincere in her sorrow, and Jesus was definitely touched by her need.
   - ⇒ The Jewish friends and neighbors (which were "many," v.19) were sincere in "comforting" her (v.31), and many were open to trusting the Lord (v.45). Jesus was certainly touched by those as well.

In light of the whole scene, it seems best to see Jesus gripped with intense emotion. He was deeply moved...

- by Mary, who was so broken in sorrow.
- by Martha, who was gripped by pain and hurt.
- by those who were really feeling the death of Lazarus and the sorrow of the family.
- by the terrible tragedy of death and the pain it causes.
- by the terrible price He was soon to pay conquering death. (This was certainly glimpsed by Jesus in such a scene as He was now experiencing.)

Jesus does *groan in spirit*: He groans in understanding and feeling and compassion for all who are hurting and suffering. The words "was troubled" (etaraxen heauton) mean agitated, moved deeply, disturbed within. Jesus was actually feeling the misery and pain of all. His spirit was disturbed and agitated, deeply moved by the whole scene of sorrow and death.

2. Jesus asked where the dead (person) was. Note that Jesus knew where the grave was, but He asked where it was for two reasons.
   - ⇒ If He had gone straight to the tomb, there was the possibility of some charging Him and Lazarus with being in collusion and tricking the people.
   - ⇒ He needed to distract the people from their deep wailing and arouse their expectation for something unusual about to happen.

Note also that Jesus demonstrated His concern over the dead. He wishes to know where every dead person is, both those who are *spiritually dead* and those who are *physically dead*. He wants to point man's attention to the fact that all men lie in the grave. All must look to Him if they wish to escape death (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.9:27. Cp. Jn.3:16; 5:24.)

3. "Jesus wept" in love. Why? He wept over death, over man's pain, sorrow, suffering, and fate. Man was never made for sin and death; man was made for righteousness and life. Sin and death...

- deceive and lie
- hurt and maim
- separate and alienate
- misuse and defeat
- destroy and corrupt
- condemn and doom eternally

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again" (Ps.78:39).

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him" (Ps.103:13).

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children" (Ps.103:17).

"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old" (Is.63:9).

6 (11:37) **Man, Misunderstanding—Trials—Evil, Problem of**: the misunderstanding of man. The people asked the same question that is so often asked by men of every generation. How could Jesus love so much and let this happen? The problem, of course, is not Jesus. People just do not understand...

- that the nature of the world is decay and corruption, trial and trouble, suffering and pain, death and hell—all because of selfishness and sin.
- that trials and sickness can be an opportunity for God to do a great work (see note—Jn.11:4).

"He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt.5:45).

"It [the body] is sown in corruption....dishonour....weakness....a natural body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).

	D. Jesus and Lazarus: Power Over Death, 11:38-46	hast heard me.	c. Offered thanksgiving
		42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they	d. Expressed perfect confidence
			e. Bore testimony
1 Jesus confronted the dead	38 Jesus therefore again	may believe that thou hast sent me.	
a. He groaned	groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.	43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud	**4 The great shout of power over death**
b. He was confronted with a believer's objection	39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.	voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.	a. Was by Christ alone b. Was personal: By name c. The result 1) The dead arose 2) The resurrected received Jesus' personal attention[DS2]
2 The great promise of unlimited, resting faith[DS1]	40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?	45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.	**5 Conclusion: The reaction to Jesus' great power** a. Some believed
3 The great prayer of purpose a. Addressed God as "Father"	41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou	46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.	b. Some caused trouble
b. Made a request			

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

D. Jesus and Lazarus: Power Over Death, 11:38-46

(11:38-46) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ confronted death and demonstrated His great power over death. In confronting and conquering the tomb of Lazarus, He demonstrated that the believer's hope is not in vain. The believer will be raised from the dead, resurrected by the great shout of the Lord's power.

1. Jesus confronted the dead (v.38-39).
2. The great promise of unlimited, resting faith (v.40).
3. The great prayer of purpose (v.41-42).
4. The great shout of power over death (v.43-44).
5. Conclusion: the reaction to Jesus' great power (v.45-46).

1 (11:38-39) **Jesus Christ, Compassion—Comfort**: Jesus confronted the dead. Note two striking points.

1. Jesus groaned in Himself. He stood face to face with the grave. Again...
   - He saw the pain of Mary and Martha and their dear friends.
   - He sensed the terrible dread and bondage that death held over His dear friend Lazarus and over the whole human race.
   - He was keenly conscious of His own terrible death that lay only a few days away.

He felt the emotions of both compassion and anger, sympathy and indignation. He groaned from deep within, sensing an intense love for all who suffer and a holy anger and displeasure against death (see note—Jn.11:33-36).

2. Jesus was confronted with an objection *from a believer*. Note two things.
   a. An unbeliever might question if Lazarus were truly dead. Note the emphasis upon the fact that Lazarus *was* truly dead.
      ⇒ Lazarus was in a real tomb, a tomb of the wealthy. Martha's wealth was indicated by her having owned a house large enough to lodge Jesus and His disciples. If by any chance Lazarus had only been mistaken for dead before, he was certainly dead now. It had been four days since he had been placed in an enclosed tomb. Four days without food or water in such circumstances would kill any weak and critically ill person.
      ⇒ There was Martha's shock at Jesus' request. The body would have started to decompose after four days.
   b. It was a believer who objected to Jesus' confronting the situation. There was distrust and uneasiness in Martha's objection. She was not sure that Jesus' action was wise nor for the best. She was uneasy about what Jesus was doing and asking. She did not want the situation disturbed. She was satisfied with things as they were, with Lazarus laid to rest as he was. What she wanted was to be comforted, not disturbed.

Thought 1. Many believers want things left alone, being happy with things as they are. They want only enough of Christ to give them comfort and security and ease. They want little if anything to do with His demands and confrontation with the sin and death of the world (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Mt.13:58).

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him" (Jn.12:37).

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear" (Ro.11:20).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb.3:12-14).

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

2 (11:40) **Trust—Faith**: the great promise of unlimited, resting faith. Jesus challenged Martha to take an enormous leap of faith. He wanted her to conquer her complaining and to set aside her objections (see note—Jn.11:21-22). He wanted her to trust Him, to quit questioning what He did. He wanted her to trust...

- His judgment and will
- His knowledge and understanding
- His Word and instructions

Very simply, He wanted her to *rest* in Him, to place an unlimited, resting faith in Him. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.11:40 for discussion.)

Note what the promise was to Martha (and to all): if she would believe and simply rest in Him, she would "see the glory of God." By glory, Jesus meant His mercy and power, love and care on this earth. However, the promise applies to the next world as well. The person who will step back and let God act as He wills—the person who truly rests in God—will see the glory of God in the next world.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:40) **Faith, Unlimited; Resting**: there is a rest for the believer. It is called *the believer's rest* or *God's rest*. The believer enters *God's rest* by what may be called a *resting faith* or an *unlimited faith*. An unlimited, resting faith is the summit, the highest level or stage of faith. It is the level of faith God desires for every believer. He longs for every child of His to enter the rest of God. A resting (unlimited) faith is a faith that rests in at least four things.

1. A resting faith is a rest of *deliverance and salvation*. It is to rest in God's Word, to know beyond all question...
   - that one is truly saved and delivered from sin and shame, death and hell.
   - that one is freed from the guilt and nagging of conscience.
   - that one has open access into God's presence through prayer.

"To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear" (Is.28:12).

"For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not" (Is.30:15).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt.11:28).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb.4:3).

2. A resting faith is a rest of *service and ministry*. It is not inactivity, not a life that does nothing for God and the world. It is a rest that comes from committing one's life to the call and purpose of Jesus Christ, a rest that is...
   - filled with purpose, meaning, and significance.
   - committed to sharing Christ with a world lost, full of desperate needs.
   - surrendered to God's call for personal involvement and service.
   - filled with God's Spirit and equipped with His gifts for service.
   - pleased with God's call and gifts, with one's lot in life and place of service.
   - complete, fulfilled, satisfied, and unashamed in one's life.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:29).

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:18-20).

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb.4:11).

"Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job 22:21).

3. A resting faith is a rest of *assurance and confidence* in the future. It is a rest of peace about the future. It is...
   - the knowledge that all the enslavements and bondages of this life have been conquered in Christ, even death.
   - the knowledge and experience of God's daily care through all of life; the knowledge that God will take care no matter what may come or fall.
   - the knowledge and very real presence of hope: the hope of eternal life, of heaven, of the *eternal and perfect rest* for the people of God.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Rev.14:13).

"And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve" (Is.14:3).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Is.26:3).

4. A resting faith is a rest of *courage and knowledge*. It is a faith that does not question or complain. It is a faith that truly believes, trusts, and rests in God, that actually...
   - takes God at His Word and does exactly what He says.
   - knows that God's presence and blessing are upon one's life.
   - puts everything into God's hands and launches out as He says.
   - knows that what happens is under God's control.
   - knows that all things, no matter how terrible, will be worked out for good to those who love God (Ro.8:28).
   - experiences God's presence and care day by day.
   - knows victory over all: being filled with all confidence, assurance, hope, and peace.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee" (Ps.116:7).

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps.119:165).

3 (11:41-42) **Prayer, Purpose of; Power of**: the great prayer of purpose. Note the wording of this point: *prayer of purpose*. Every prayer is to be a prayer of purpose. This is Jesus' point. He was praying for a specific purpose, and in so doing He demonstrated the purpose and the power of prayer. When a man truly prays with purpose, he receives the answer to his prayer and witnesses to the power of prayer. Note Jesus' prayer.

1. Jesus addressed God as "Father." Jesus had an intimate and continuous relationship with God: a Father-Son relationship. He knew God as His "Father," and God knew Jesus as His Son (see note—Jn.10:14-16; esp. cp. v.15).

Thought 1. Believers are hereby taught to call upon God as "Father" and to approach God as a child would: intimately and boldly, yet respectfully and reverently.

2. Jesus requested that His Father do something: "Thou hast heard me." What Jesus asked was not stated, but the reader knows from the context that it has to do with...
   - the power to conquer death.
   - the strengthening of believers standing around and watching Him.
   - the stirring of others to believe and trust Him.

3. Jesus offered thanksgiving to the Father, praising the Father for the glorious privilege of prayer and of being heard and having His prayers answered. This is a striking lesson for believers. God is to be praised for prayer, for the open access He allows into His presence and for the glorious fact that He hears and answers us (cp. Jn.16:23-24, 26-27).

4. Jesus expressed a perfect and confident knowledge in God: "I knew that thou hearest me always." There is no hesitancy, doubt, or questioning on Jesus' part. He knew perfectly that God heard His prayers—*always*.

5. Jesus bore testimony through the prayer. He prayed...
   - to show the close personal relationship between Himself and God.

- to stir belief that He was the *Sent One* of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34; 4:31-35).

Note that the above points could be stated as the fivefold purposes for prayer.

1. To honor and worship God as "Father."

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:15-16).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

2. To secure whatever is needed to live righteously and to minister.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk.11:9).

"If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:14).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

3. To praise and thank God.

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.15:6).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).

"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together" (Ps.34:3).

"Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day" (Ps.71:8).

"Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders" (Ps.107:32).

"I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works" (Ps.145:5).

"O LORD, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Is.25:1).

4. To prove and demonstrate one's confidence in God.

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).

5. To bear testimony and proclaim that Jesus is the One sent by God.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

Thought 1. Jesus always prayed with purpose; therefore, He always received the answer to His prayer and bore testimony to the power of prayer. So it is with every true believer. When we pray with purpose, God answers our prayer, and by so doing He proclaims...

- that Christ is the Son of the living God.
- that Christ is the One sent into the world to open the door (secure access) into God's presence.
- that Christ is the One who has the power over death.

4 (11:43-44) **Death, Deliverance from**: the great shout of power. Note three significant points. (Note also how the resurrection of Lazarus pictures the coming resurrection of the believer. Cp. 1 Cor.15:12-58.)

1. The power over death comes from Jesus alone. Few prophets have ever raised a dead person except Jesus. Jesus alone has the power to raise the dead. Note that He simply spoke three words, "Lazarus, come forth"; but He shouted them out with a loud voice. Why?

   a. A shout matched the enormity of the miracle. It stressed the enormous power required to raise the dead.

b. A shout stressed that the power within Jesus is the power of God Himself. With just a shout Jesus can...
- call forth the enormous power of God.
- call forth the greatest amount of power imaginable, the power to raise a person from the dead.

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (Jn.5:26).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

2. The shout of Jesus is personal. Jesus shouted the name of Lazarus. He did not just shout, "Come forth"; He shouted "Lazarus, come forth." Jesus knows every believer by name, and He is personally concerned over the death of everyone. The day is coming when He will shout "Come forth," and only the ones personally known by Him will respond.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out" (Jn.10:3).

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

3. The results of the shout of Jesus were twofold.

a. The person who was dead came forth. The Son of God spoke and called him forth. There was no way he could remain in the grave, no power that could hold him there. He came forth...
- immediately
- obediently
- just as he was
- perfectly
- visibly
- unquestionably

b. The person who was resurrected received the personal attention of Jesus. Note the attention and the thoughtfulness of Jesus: "Loose him, and let him go." The wonder of the miracle did not detract Him from continuing to minister and to help wherever He could. It was not enough to share in the wonder of the miracle. Service to God was, and always will be, the call of our Lord Jesus to every man, even in eternity.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).

"Know ye not that we shall judge [oversee] angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor.6:3).

"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.22:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(11:44) **Grave Clothes**: note there was a napkin wrapped around the face of Lazarus. This is important to note for two reasons.

1. Jesus had a napkin wrapped around His face when He was buried. It was folded either by Him or an angel and laid to the side after His resurrection. The folded napkin was the immediate thing that convinced John of the Lord's resurrection. (See note—Jn.20:7-10.)

2. The napkin showed that the grave clothes of Jesus' day included at least two pieces of clothing. There was a separate cloth or napkin wrapped around the face. It is mentioned two times in the New Testament (Jn.11:44; 20:7. Cp. Lk.19:20; Acts 19:12 for two other uses of the same Greek word, soudarioi.)

5 (11:45-46) **Jesus Christ, Response to**: the reaction to Jesus' great power was divided. Some believed on Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24). Others were gripped with obstinate unbelief and caused trouble. They refused to accept Jesus as the Son of God despite the most powerful evidence. They ignored the evidence and evaded the issue of His demand for belief. Therefore, they lost their opportunity "to see the glory of God" (v.40, 46).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

	E. Jesus and the Religious Leaders: Unbelief & Opposition, 11:47-57	only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.	that Jesus was to die for the world
		53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.	d. The decision was made: Reject Jesus—do away with Him
1 The Sanhedrin's meeting to discuss Jesus[DS1]	47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.	54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.	**4 The response of Jesus to unbelief & opposition**
2 The causes of unbelief & opposition	48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.		a. He withdrew from the rejecters
a. The fear of losing one's recognition, esteem, & following			b. He concentrated on His disciples
b. The fear of losing one's position, influence, & authority			
3 The conclusion of unbelief & opposition	49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,	55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.	**5 The providence of God in moving events despite unbelief & opposition**
a. Suggested by the religious leader himself[DS2]			a. God controlled the time: The Passover
b. The conclusion: To sacrifice Jesus for the people	50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.	56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?	b. God stirred the people's interest: Caused them to seek for Jesus
c. The mystery of the conclusion	51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that	57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he	c. God controlled man's devilish plots: Kept the people from helping & contributing to the evil
1) He was predicting that Jesus was to die for the Jews	Jesus should die for that nation;	should shew it, that they might take him.	
2) He was predicting	52 And not for that nation		

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

E. Jesus and the Religious Leaders: Unbelief and Opposition, 11:47-57

(11:47-57) **Introduction**: this passage gives an excellent lesson on unbelief and opposition to Jesus Christ, a lesson that needs to be studied by every man.

1. The Sandedrin's meeting to discuss Jesus (v.47).
2. The causes of unbelief and opposition (v.47-48).
3. The conclusion of unbelief and opposition (v.49-53).
4. The response of Jesus to unbelief and opposition (v.54).
5. The providence of God in moving events despite unbelief and opposition (v.55-57).

1 (11:47) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Religionists**: the Sanhedrin met to discuss Jesus and to decide what to do about Him. This was an official meeting of the nation's leaders, including religious leaders. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sanhedrin*—Jn.11:47.) These were the very ones who should have been leading the people to God and giving moral and spiritual direction to the nation. Yet, here they were determining what to do about Jesus. The scene was pathetic and ironic.

1. There was Jesus, the Son of God, standing right before them, having come to reveal God to all men everywhere.
2. There were the "many miracles" which Jesus had done to prove that He was truly the Son of God (v.47).
3. There were the leaders, the very ones...
   - who should have been rejoicing and receiving Him.
   - who recognized and acknowledged His "many miracles" and His great teaching—so great that "all" were about to follow Him (v.48).
   - who were taking the lead in rejecting and opposing Him.

Thought 1. The scene is repeated every time a person deliberately rejects and opposes Christ. A person who hears and sees the works of Christ should...

- rejoice and receive Him.
- recognize and acknowledge His work.
- not reject and oppose Him and His salvation.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(11:47) **Sanhedrin**: the ruling body, both the governing council and supreme court of the Jews. It had seventy-one members and was presided over by the High Priest. However, it took a quorum of only twenty-three members to pass the laws of the nation. Its membership was made up of Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes or lawyers, and elders who were lay leaders from among the people. The legal power of the Sanhedrin to pass the death sentence was restricted about twenty years be-

fore the trial of Jesus. However, they did retain the right of excommunication (cp. Jn.9:22). To secure Jesus' death, they were forced by law to appeal to the Romans for the death sentence.

2 (11:47-48) **Unbelief, Cause of—Fear—Selfishness—Worldliness**: the cause of unbelief and opposition. The basic reason for unbelief and opposition is *selfish fear*. Self-centered fear, the fear of losing something, causes man to reject and oppose others. Three things in particular caused the leaders to fear Jesus.

1. There was the fear of losing their esteem, recognition, and following. If the leaders lost the "people," they would have lost the same as any man who loses his circle of attention (friends, fellow-workers, neighbors, whomever):
   - acceptance
   - loyalty
   - prestige
   - image
   - recognition
   - following
   - esteem
   - friends
2. There was the fear of losing their place, position, influence, and authority. If they lost their place, they would have again lost what every man loses, his...
   - job
   - livelihood
   - comfort
   - power
   - profession
   - security
   - authority
   - wealth
3. There was the fear of losing their nation. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Religionists*—Mt.12:10 for discussion.)

Thought 1. It is a man's selfishness that causes him to cling both to himself and to his possessions. Man wants...
- to control all he is and has.
- to do his own thing as he wills and desires.
- to have no interference in his life and desires, or as little as possible.

> **"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful" (Mk.4:19).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15).**
>
> **"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:9-10).**
>
> **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves" (2 Tim.3:1-2).**
>
> **"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 Jn.3:17).**
>
> **"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself" (Hos.10:1).**
>
> **"From the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness" (Jer.6:13).**
>
> **"And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zech.7:6).**

When Jesus comes along demanding that a man change by denying himself and giving all he is and has to meet the desperate needs of a lost and starving world—man rejects and opposes Jesus. Man is unwilling to deny himself, unwilling to live a life that is totally sacrificial (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23. See notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23 for more discussion, in particular dealing with possessions.)

> **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Lk.9:23-25).**
>
> **"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Lk.12:33-34).**

3 (11:49-53) **Unbelief—Jesus Christ, Death—Rejection**: the conclusion of unbelief and opposition. Note four points.

1. The decision to oppose Jesus was made by the High Priest himself, Caiaphas, the highest religious leader in the nation. The very person who should have been leading the others to Jesus was suggesting that everyone reject and oppose Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.11:49 for more discussion).

Thought 1. How tragic it is...
- that religious positions sometimes become political.
- that men reject Christ for the things of this world.
- that men exchange eternity for a few short years.

> **"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Is.56:10-11).**

"Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock" (Ezk.34:2-3).

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pt.2:1).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (2 Jn.7).

2. The conclusion suggested by the High Priest was that Jesus should be sacrificed for the people. The people were following Jesus in such numbers that the leaders feared two things.

⇒ The Romans might conclude that Jesus was arousing the people to riot. The Romans would, therefore, move in and disperse the people, taking away even what little liberty they had as a conquered nation.

⇒ The Romans might blame them, the present leadership, and remove them from power.

The thought proposed was that it was better for Jesus to die than for the people to perish. Jesus should be sacrificed and killed in order to save the people.

3. The mystery of the conclusion was astounding. Note that the High Priest was being used as a spokesman by God: "This spake he not of himself." He was predicting the death of Jesus Christ. He proclaimed that Jesus should die *for* the people and be sacrificed in order to save the people. Note two facts.

a. The idea of *substitution* was the suggestion: that "Jesus should die *for* that nation" (v.51).

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Ro.5:6).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Gal.1:4).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

b. Jesus Christ was to die to save both Jew and Gentile, all "the children of God that were scattered abroad" (cp. Acts 2:5; 10:2; 17:4).

"In whom [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace....That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph.1:7, 10).

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one [Jew and Gentile], and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).

4. The decision was made and Jesus was rejected. They wanted nothing to do with Him. Note the words "from that day forth." The idea is that from that very moment on, they were set on doing away with Him.

Thought 1. How tragic the decision...

- to reject Christ
- to have nothing to do with Him
- to push Him off to the side, out of the way, as unimportant
- to do away with Him
- to oppose Him

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(11:49) **High Priest—Caiaphas**: the office of High Priest began with Aaron and his sons (Ex.28:1). The office was hereditary and was for life; however, when the Romans conquered Palestine, they made the office political. They chose their own man, a man who would cooperate with the Roman government. Finding such a man was often difficult. For example, between 37 B.C. and 67 A.D. there were at least twenty-eight High Priests. These men were greatly respected and highly honored throughout life. Even when they were removed from power by the Romans, they were still consulted by other Jewish leaders. The ex-High Priest, Annas, is a prime example. He still wielded unusual power (cp. Jn.18:13; Acts 4:6). He and the other men who had served as High Priests or else held the top positions of leadership were also called "chief priests."

The term of office for a High Priest was determined solely by the Romans. The Romans let a High Priest reign as long as he pleased them. The reign of each of the twenty-eight priests averaged only about three years, except for Caiaphas. Caiaphas was High Priest for eighteen years (18 A.D. to 36 A.D.). Apparently he was a master of intrigue and compromise. This throws great light on his fearing an uproar (Mt.26:5) and wishing to wait until the feast was over to arrest Jesus. There was the danger that the people might rally to the support of Jesus if they saw Him arrested. So many believed Him to be a great prophet that a serious uprising was a real possibility. Caiaphas knew the Romans would hold him responsible and remove him from office. He would lose everything he had. The shrewdness of the man is seen in the strategy he laid. They were to arrest Jesus quietly after the masses had left the feast.

4 (11:54) **Unbelief**: the response of Jesus to unbelief and opposition.

1. Jesus withdrew from those who rejected Him. He...
   - went away.
   - pleaded no more with them.
   - walked no more among them.
   - gave them up to their own desires (see note—Ro.1:24-32).

The Lord's Spirit does not always strive with men (see note—Jn.7:33-34). Jesus even told His disciples to turn their backs upon rejecters (cp. Mt.10:14; Mk.6:11; Lk.9:5).

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Ro.2:4-5).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb.3:12-14).

2. Jesus concentrated on and drew closer to His disciples.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt.18:20).

"And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them" (Lk.24:15).

"And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Lk.24:32).

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

5 (11:55-57) **God, Providence**: the providence of God in moving events despite unbelief and opposition.

1. God controlled the time. It was the Passover season, a significant fact. The Feast symbolized the removal of sins. Note that while the people were celebrating the Passover Feast, the leaders were seeking to commit the most heinous crime: the murder of the very Son of God Himself. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.22:7.)
2. God stirred the people's interest. Pilgrims flooded into Jerusalem by the hundreds of thousands during the Passover season. The picture is that of people buzzing about wondering and asking if Jesus would come to the Feast. Note that the people actually "sought" Jesus (v.56). God took even the rejection of evil men and worked it out to cause others to seek His Son.

Thought 1. God takes the rejection and opposition of men and uses it to stir interest in His Son. Throughout history some of the greatest movements and revivals of Christianity have been the result of persecution and attempts to stamp out the name of Christ. A man's rejection is often used by God to stir salvation in others.

> **"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt.10:22).**
>
> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).**
>
> **"For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:11).**
>
> **"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor.4:17).**
>
> **"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor.12:9).**
>
> **"But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear" (Ph.1:12-14).**
>
> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" (Jas.5:10).**

3. God controlled man's devilish plots. He kept the people from cooperating with the leaders and betraying His Son. No man can move against the name of Christ nor against the followers of Christ until God is ready. Although the world is corrupt and evil, God controls the times of His Son and His Son's followers. Not a hair of their head can be touched until God is ready to use the trial and persecution for good.

> **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:28-33).**

	CHAPTER 12	5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?	a. He followed Jesus, but he criticized believers
	F. Jesus and Reactions to His Revelation, 12:1-11 (Mt.26:6-13; Mk.14:3-9)	6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.	b. He expressed concern for the ministry, but he had an ulterior motive
1 Jesus dined in a home in Bethany a. The place where Lazarus was raised b. Six days before the Passover c. Martha served d. Lazarus was present	Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.	7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.	c. He worked for Jesus, but he did not love Jesus
2 The supreme believer a. The repentant love b. A sacrificial & costly love c. A believing love: The Christ, the Anointed	2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.	8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.	
3 The hypocritical, unbelieving disciple	3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.	9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.	**4 The half-sincere seekers** a. Came to see Jesus b. Came to see the spectacular c. Came for socializing
	4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,	10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;	**5 The fearful, self-seeking religionists** a. They plotted to destroy Jesus b. They feared personal loss
		11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.	

DIVISION XI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE, 11:1-12:11

F. Jesus and Reactions to His Revelation, 12:1-11

(12:1-11) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ had just revealed Himself to be the Resurrection and the Life. John gives four reactions to that revelation.

1. Jesus dined in a home in Bethany (v.1-2).
2. The supreme believer (v.3).
3. The hypocritical, unbelieving disciple (v.4-8).
4. The half-sincere seekers (v.9).
5. The fearful, self-seeking religionists (v.10-11).

1 (12:1-2) **Jesus Christ, Ministry—Fellowship**: Jesus dined in a home in Bethany. Both Matthew and Mark record this anointing of Jesus. Note that John says it actually took place six days before the Passover. Matthew arranged his gospel by subjects, so he placed it in the midst of discussing Jesus' death. Note that Matthew and Mark say that Jesus was in the house of Simon the Leper, and John says that Martha served (Mt.26:6; Mk.14:3). Apparently Simon the Leper was the husband of Martha (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.26:6 for more discussion).

Note that the stress of the Scripture is twofold.

⇒ Jesus was with Lazarus, the young man who was raised from the dead.

⇒ Jesus was facing the Passover. He was only six days away from becoming the Passover Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.

2 (12:3) **Believer**: there was the reaction of the supreme believer. By supreme is meant the supreme quality of life, *love*. The supreme believer is a person like Mary who *loves* the Lord with her whole being, sacrificing all that she is and has. Mary gave herself out of a heart of pure love for the Lord.

1. The supreme believer expresses a repentant love. Mary had criticized and accused Jesus of neglecting her family when He had not come sooner to the aid of her brother Lazarus (cp. Jn.11:32). Here she is seen repenting of her sin. (See outline notes 2, 4—Jn.21:15-17; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 17:29-30.)

> **"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Mt.5:4).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**
>
> **"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron.7:14).**
>
> **"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart" (Ps.119:2).**

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12).

2. The supreme believer expresses a sacrificial and costly love. Note the words "very costly." The ointment (murou) was a perfume or oil. Three hundred pence or denarii equaled a year's wage (one denarii was the average pay for one day's labor). Just imagine the scene! A bottle of perfume worth a whole year's wage being poured upon the feet of Jesus. Think of the costly sacrifice being made. Perfume was the most precious thing to Eastern women. Mary was taking her most precious possession and giving it to her Lord.

3. The supreme believer expresses a believing love. She honored her Lord as the Christ, the *Anointed One*. Mary's anointing was an act of love and faith in the Lord Jesus. Very simply put, Mary anointed Jesus to show how deeply she loved Him and believed Him to be the true Messiah, *the anointed One of God* (see notes—Mt.26:6-13; cp. Mt.1:18). He was her Savior, Lord, and King. He had done so much for her and her family that she wanted Him to know how much she appreciated and loved Him.

Something else needs to be noted as well. Mary sensed something within Jesus: a foreboding, a preoccupation of mind, a heaviness of heart, a weight of tremendous pressure. Her heart reached out to Him and wanted to encourage and help Him. Being a young woman in the presence of so many men, she was not allowed to vocally express herself that much. Such a privilege was not allowed women of that day, so she did all that she could. She acted by arising and going after the most precious gift she could think of—a very costly bottle of perfume. She gave it to Jesus in such a way that He would know that at least one person truly loved Him and believed Him to be the Messiah. Her hope was that such worship and love would boost His spirit. (See note—Mt.26:6-13 for a descriptive picture of what Mary sensed.)

Thought 1. What do we do to show our love and faith to Christ? Imagine how difficult it was for Mary to do what she did in the presence of so many men. She set aside pride and embarrassment in order to demonstrate her love and faith in Jesus. How far are we willing to go in order to show our love and faith?

Thought 2. Note how Mary demonstrated her love and faith.

1) Mary gave the most precious possession she had to the Lord.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Ph.3:8).

"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim.6:19).

2) Mary publicly demonstrated her love and faith in Christ for all to witness.

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:5).

"O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" (Ps.31:23).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Mt.10:38-39).

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).

"Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints" (Phile.5).

"[Jesus Christ] whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

3 (12:4-8) **Hypocrite—Betrayer—Apostate**: there was the hypocritical, unbelieving disciple. This was Judas. A study of Judas' character in these verses reveals what it is that often causes a disciple to become hypocritical and unbelieving.

1. Judas followed Jesus, but he criticized other believers. He was a professing believer, but when he disagreed with others, he criticized them. He criticized even...

- those who had great devotion and love for the Lord.
- those who repented to the point of making great sacrificial gifts.

Mark pointed out that Judas was especially strong in his criticism. He says that Judas was indignant, growling, rebuking, scolding (see note—Mk.14:4-5).

Thought 1. Criticism is a sign of hypocrisy, for all stand in need of repentance and devotion, and all need to give more and more. When we come so short ourselves, how can we possibly criticize what we consider to be the mistakes of others?

> **"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Mt.7:3; cp. v.1-5).**
>
> **"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).**
>
> **"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).**
>
> **"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor.4:5).**
>
> **"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not" (Jas.4:2).**

2. Judas expressed concern for the ministry, but he had an ulterior motive. Again, imagine the scene. A bottle of perfume worth a whole year's wage was being poured over the feet of Jesus. Common sense would seem to say, "Sell it. Use the money for the poor, the hungry and the homeless." This is just what Judas did say. He questioned the act, what he considered a waste. After all, if Mary wished to anoint Jesus, she could have used a less expensive perfume.

However, Judas' motive was impure. The words "had the bag" mean that Judas was the treasurer of the small band of Jesus' disciples (v.6). However, he was a thief; he had been swindling some of the money. A gift of 300 denarii would have allowed him the chance to steal quite a sum. Deep within he was angry at the lost chance to enrich himself; he was angry at Mary, but even more he was angry at Jesus for allowing such wastefulness.

Thought 1. How many express concern for the ministry but do so in order to gain from it? Their concern is shown by joining a church and making some contribution, or by showing interest in some venture or need. However, their motive is...

- to be socially acceptable.
- to be recognized and honored.
- to please some family member.
- to gain some credit with God.
- to get a tax write-off from the government.

> **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Mt.23:25).**
>
> **"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).**
>
> **"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim.6:10).**
>
> **"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days" (Jas.5:3).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**
>
> **"The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death" (Pr.21:6).**
>
> **"He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccl.5:10).**
>
> **"Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD" (Jer.7:11).**

3. Judas worked for Jesus, but he did not love Jesus. Jesus was strong with Judas: "Let her alone." The reason for this sharp rebuke was that Judas did not understand, and the reason he did not understand was because he did not love Jesus. Note: just because someone works for Jesus does not mean that he loves Jesus. Note two significant points.

a. Jesus said that Mary's anointing pointed toward His burial, that is, His death. This is exactly what Jesus said: "She did it for my burial." Some commentators think that Mary knew what she was doing, that she understood what Jesus had been saying when He predicted His death. They feel that Mary grasped the fact when others did not. But this is unlikely. The atmosphere surrounding the whole scene was that the Kingdom of God was about to be set up and Israel was about to be freed from Roman domination and set up as the center of God's rule upon earth. However, whether she knew what she was doing or not, Jesus

took her act and applied it to His death. He said that her love and faith, the anointing of His body, pointed toward His death. In simple terms, Mary's love and faith and her gift and anointing *were a witness of anticipation*. She was witnessing to the Lord's death by looking ahead to it.

Today the believer's love and faith and his gift and anointing are *a witness of fact*. The believer is to witness to the Lord's death by looking back to it. It is a fact: He did die for the sins of the world.

> **"For I delivered unto the first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**

b. Judas lost the opportune time; Mary grasped it. Mary *loved* Jesus and Judas did not. Jesus made a significant point that is often missed: opportunities come and go, and once they are gone, they are gone forever. Mary demonstrated the difference. The poor would always be present for believers to help, but the privilege of ministering to Jesus would not always be available. Therefore, if His disciples were to minister to Him, they had to grasp the opportunity while He was with them.

Thought 1. What a lesson for mankind! The presence of Jesus—a sense of His presence and of His Word—is not always pounding away at the mind and heart of man. Man must grasp the opportunity to show his love and sacrifice for Christ when it presents itself. The opportunity will pass. In fact life, which is an opportunity and a privilege within itself, will pass and pass soon. The servant of the Lord must love and act while it is still day. The night will come when no man can work.

> **"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).**
>
> **"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).**
>
> **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).**

4 (12:9) **Jesus Christ, Seeking—Sincerity—Hypocrisy**: there are the half-sincere seekers. A person who is only half-sincere has three clear traits. These are clearly seen in the crowd thronging the dinner which Jesus attended.

1. The crowd came to see Jesus. Jesus was the central figure; He was the Person being proclaimed by some to be the Messiah and being talked about so much by all. Everyone was wondering and questioning and had some desire to see Him and to find out for themselves. At the least, they wanted to find out what was going on and causing so much conversation across the country.
2. The crowd came to see the spectacular, that is, to see Lazarus, the man rumored to have been raised from the dead. They were anxious to see one who had experienced such a phenomenal event and to see if a resurrected man was any different. (See note—Jn.2:23; Lk.4:9-12.)
3. The crowd came to a social occasion, a festive atmosphere. Wherever Jesus was, there was action and things were happening. It was where everyone was gathering. This is clearly seen when man keeps in mind the teeming thousands flooding into the area for the Passover and the atmosphere that surrounds such a convention-like crowd. There was bound to be a worldly, carnival atmosphere despite the religious observances. Half-sincere seekers always add to the carnality of a worldly atmosphere, no matter the focus of an event.

Thought 1. How many sitting in the presence of the Lord and His church are only half-sincere? How many come to church just because it is the thing to do, the place to be, the place where everyone else is? How many seek the spectacular signs only?

> **"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee" (Mt.12:38).**
>
> **"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).**
>
> **"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).**
>
> **"Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Lk.12:56-57).**
>
> **"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (Jn.4:48).**
>
> **"They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?" (Jn.6:30).**
>
> **"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor.1:22-23).**

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

5 (12:10-11) **Jesus Christ, Response to—Religionists**: there are the fearful, self-seeking religionists. (See outline above and notes—Jn.11:47-48; 11:49-53 for discussion of this point.) Note two points.

1. The leaders now sought to destroy Lazarus also. They probably thought Lazarus and Jesus were collaborating to deceive the people. Note also the impact the miracle was having. So many people were affected by the miracle that the authorities felt they had to destroy Lazarus in order to prove that Jesus could not raise the dead.

"But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father....Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not" (Jn.8:40-41, 44-45).

2. "Many" of the Jews, those who had formerly opposed Jesus, were now beginning to believe in Jesus. This is significant. It shows that the impact upon the nation was enormous, affecting even the religious leaders.

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).

	XII. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GLORIFIED SON OF MAN, 12:12-50	as it is written,	A young colt
		15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.	b. The prophecy: The King comes in peace
	A. Jesus Proclaimed as King: The Triumphal Entry, 12:12-19 (Mt.21:1-11; Mk.11:1-11; Lk.19:28-40)	16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.	**4 The disciples' reaction** a. The bewilderment: Did not grasp the significance b. Their understanding: Grasped after His resurrection
1 Crowds gathered for the Passover (11:55f)	12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,	17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.	**5 The people's reaction** a. The eye-witnesses to Lazarus' resurrection: They buzzed about
2 The false concept of Christ a. Held by "many" people b. Went forth to meet Him c. Took palm branches*psi* d. Cried Hosanna (save) e. Thought He was a political Messiah	13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.	18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.	b. The hearers of the miracle: They sought Him, sought for the sensational
		19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.	**6 The religionists' reaction: Despair & rage**
3 The true concept of Christ a. The symbol of peace:	14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon;		

DIVISION XII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GLORIFIED SON OF MAN, 12:12-50

A. Jesus Proclaimed as King: The Triumphal Entry, 12:12-19

(12:12-19) **Introduction**: this is the revelation of Jesus as the coming King. It involves both a false concept and the true concept of His coming. It is a picture of how men have seen Jesus down through the centuries.

1. The crowds gathered for the Passover (v.12).
2. The false concept of Christ (v.12-13).
3. The true concept of Christ (v.14-15).
4. The disciples' reaction (v.16).
5. The people's reaction (v.17-18).
6. The religionists' reaction: despair and rage (v.19).

1 (12:12) **Passover**: the crowds gathered for the Passover. Note the words "much people": a great multitude was swarming into Jerusalem for the Passover. Josephus, the notable Jewish historian of that day, estimated that over two million people were involved in the great Passover Feast. It is known that 256,500 lambs were slain at one Passover and that each lamb represented at least ten worshippers. This, of course, puts the number of people well over two million (William Barclay. *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.134f). Teeming thousands from all over the world were flooding into the city to observe the Passover. The mass of people and the necessary housing and food arrangements to handle such a mass of people can hardly be imagined. An excitable vacation and carnival-like atmosphere was bound to prevail over such a mob of people. Such was the scene as the people gathered for the great Feast.

2 (12:12-13) **Messiah, Misconceptions of—Deliverer—Utopia**: the false concept of Christ. The false concept sees Jesus as an earthly Savior, One who is to bring utopia to earth for the people of God. The false concept sees Jesus...

- as the *Conqueror*: as the One who is to straighten out the problems of this earth by overcoming all the enemies of mankind including evil men, hunger, disease, and poverty.
- as the *Provider*: as the One who is to feed, house, and give health, plenty, and success to man; as the One who is to be sought to bless man in all the good things of life.
- as the *Indulgent, Passive Lord*: as the One who accepts man no matter what man does, just so he is somewhat religious; as the One who allows man to live as he desires, doing his own thing despite the sin and injustices and immorality of his behavior.

The false concept fails to see two things in understanding the Messiahship of Jesus.

⇒ It fails to see the demand of Christ: the demand to serve by reaching out to a world that is lost and reeling in needs so desperate that the thoughtful mind staggers at the reality of it. It fails to see the demand of Christ for self-denial, a denial that demands the giving of all one is and has to meet the needs of the world.

⇒ It fails to see the spiritual concern of Christ: His concern with bringing peace between man and God—with saving man and being mindful that man lives *with God* and not separate from God; His concern with man's understanding that God is holy, righteous, and pure; His concern with man's living a life of faith and dili-

gently seeking God; His concern with man's living a holy, righteous, and pure life in order to be acceptable to God.

Note several significant facts in this point—facts that clearly show the false concept of Christ held by so many, both in Jesus' day and down through the centuries.

1. "Many people" were involved in welcoming Jesus in the Triumphal scene. Many held the false concept of Jesus as the earthly King and Savior of man, as the One who was to be sought in order to secure all the good things of this earth.
2. The people "went forth" to welcome Jesus. Note that they were not just sitting and waiting for Him to come. When they "heard" about Him, they actually went out to meet Him.
3. The people took palm branches to wave and lay them before Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.12:13).
4. The people cried "Hosanna," which means *save now*, or *save, we pray*. Man desires to be free, but note: man desires to be free on this earth so that he can move about and do as he pleases. He thinks little if any about being free from the bondages of this earth. He loves this earth and he wants all of it that he can get: houses, lands, clothes, food, sex, and recreation. Man thinks little about being held in bondage by such things; he thinks little about sin and death. He thinks little of being set free from the power of this earth and its possessions so that he can live eternally. He thinks little of spiritual freedom.
5. The people received Jesus as the political King and Messiah (see note—Jn.1:23).

Thought 1. How much like what happens today. The false concept of Christ that sees Him as the One who gives us *material blessings* is proclaimed, and people rush "out to Him." (See note—Eph.1:3.) What men fail to understand is that they must come to Jesus because they love Him, not because they can get something out of Him. They must come because of who He is, not because He blesses them with the possessions of this earth.

> **"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).**
>
> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor.7:31).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal.6:14).**
>
> **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph.5:11).**
>
> **"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Th.3:6).**
>
> **"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim.2:4).**
>
> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:13) **Palm Branches**: these were a symbol of victory and triumph. They were waved triumphantly as a conqueror rode victoriously through the city streets. The point is this: the people were welcoming Jesus as the great Conqueror and mighty Deliverer. But Jesus had come in peace, not as the judge or conqueror of the Romans nor of anyone else—not right then and not right now. Presently He is the Savior of all men; later when He returns, He will come as King.

3 (12:14-15) **Messiah, True Concept—Jesus Christ, Purpose—Colt**: the true concept of Christ. This was symbolized clearly in the riding of the young colt or donkey. In ancient days the colt was a noble animal. It was used as a beast of service to carry the burdens of men, but more significantly, it was used by Kings and their emissaries. When they entered a city in peace, they rode a colt to symbolize their peaceful intentions (cp. the judges of Israel and the chieftains throughout the land, Judges 5:10; 10:4). This differed dramatically from a conquering King. When a King entered a city as a conqueror, he rode a stallion.

Jesus was dramatically demonstrating two things for the people: first, that He was unquestionably the promised King, the Savior of the people; and second, that He was not coming as the conquering King. His mission was not to come as a worldly potentate, in pomp and ceremony, not to be the leader of an army to kill, injure and maim; consequently, the people had to change their concept of the Messiah. The Messiah was coming as the Savior of Peace who had been sent to save all men. He was coming to show men that God is the God of love and reconciliation.

1. The colt was a symbol of peace. Jesus came to bring peace, as pointed out in the above discussion.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

2. The colt symbolized service. It was a noble animal, an animal used in the service of men to carry their burdens. Jesus came upon the colt symbolizing that He came to serve men and to bear their burdens for them.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Ph.2:7-8).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:17-18).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

3. The colt symbolized sacredness. This particular colt had never been ridden before, and this fact had a sacred meaning (Mk.11:2). Animals and things used for religious purposes had to be animals and things that had never been used before (Num.19:2; Dt.21:3; 1 Sam.6:7). This detail points to the very sacredness of the event. It pictured for everyone that Jesus was deliberately taking every precaution to proclaim that *He was the sacred hope*, the promised Messiah of the people.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (Jn.11:25-27).

4 (12:16) **Scripture, Understanding of—Study of**: the disciples' reaction is clearly stated. They simply...

- did not grasp the meaning and significance of what was happening.
- misunderstood Jesus' Messiahship and Kingship.
- thought that Jesus was to be a worldly King and earthly Messiah.

The disciples were as guilty as the people in misunderstanding Scripture. The truth of Scripture—its prediction of these things and how Jesus fulfilled them—was made clear after the resurrection of Jesus. The task of revealing the truth to the heart of man was to be the task of the Holy Spirit (Jn.14:26).

When the Holy Spirit came, He quickened the truth to the disciples' minds, and the disciples saw clearly how Jesus had fulfilled the Scripture in the Triumphal Entry.

Thought 1. Scripture is unfathomable; its depth cannot be measured. There is a world of truth herein, an eternity of insight. The Holy Spirit takes the believer and quickens his mind and heart to grasp the Scripture.

⇒ To the man who seeks after the Word, the Spirit unfolds the Word of God and reveals the glorious truths of God.

⇒ To the man who hungers after the Word, the Spirit fills his soul with the good things of God's Word.

⇒ To the man who thirsts after the Word, the Spirit pours the living waters of the Word into his being.

"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Lk.12:12).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).

Thought 2. Since Jesus has risen and been glorified, no man has an excuse for not understanding the mission of Jesus. Jesus came as the Prince of Peace and as the Savior of the world. He did not come to fulfill the lustful cravings and worldly ambitions of men. Men are to be saved by Him and to surrender their lives to Him as the Lord of glory who now sits at the right hand of God the Father.

"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt.3:2).

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk.13:3).

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

Thought 3. Believers must depend upon the Holy Spirit to understand Scripture. Scripture *cannot be understood* apart from the Spirit of God. Believers must...

- be the Lord's in the truest sense.
- hunger and thirst after righteousness.
- come to the Word, the Bible.
- seek the Spirit for understanding.
- seek exactly what the Word says (not what men say).
- seek what the Word says to a man's own heart (application).
- be prayerful, open-minded, depending upon the Spirit for illumination (eliminating all preconceived notions).
- study, rightly dividing the Word, letting the Word interpret the Word.
- study, *seeking the approval of God*, not of men.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14; cp. v.9-15).

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col.3:16).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

5 (12:17-18) **Jesus Christ, Reaction to**: the people's reaction. Many of the people were sincere: they "believed on Jesus" (Jn.11:45). But many were as so many are in a crowd—simply sightseers, wanting to be where the people were and where the action was. They were after the excitement, the sensational, the spectacular (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:23; note—12:9 for more discussion and application).

"Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee" (Mt.12:38).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (Mt.23:28).

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time? Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Lk.12:56-57).

"Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (Jn.4:48).

"They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?" (Jn.6:30).

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor.1:22-23).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

6 (12:19) **Jesus Christ, Reaction to**: the religionists' reaction was that of despair and rage. Standing there, they witnessed the whole scene of surging thousands thronging the roadway welcoming Jesus as the Messiah. They became so upset and full of despair that they began to accuse and blame each other for the failure of their plots against Jesus.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

Note the exclamatory truth they proclaimed: "The world is gone after Him." John pictured a most dramatic scene: even the enemies of Jesus saw Jesus conquering the world. Practically every pilgrim in the city must have been caught up in the excitement. Teeming thousands upon thousands were lining the roadway between Bethany and Jerusalem crying for their Savior.

Thought 1. What a picture of how the world should be crying for the Lord's deliverance! Men by teeming thousands should be lining the roadways crying for His salvation.

"That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27).

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Dt.4:29).

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near" (Is.55:6).

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer.29:13).

"For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos 5:4).

	B. Jesus Approached as King: The Misunderstood Messiah, 12:20-36	this hour. 28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.	c. His prayer d. God's audible approval
1 Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus (cp.12:19) a. Jesus was accepted as king, 12:12f b. Some Greeks requested to see the king	20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: 21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. 22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.	29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. 30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.	e. The people's confusion f. God's purpose: To show His approval of Christ
2 Misunderstanding 1: His glory a. His hour had come[DS1] 1) He had to die first 2) He could then bear fruit b. Man's hour is come 1) Man must lose his life to bear eternal life 2) Man must serve & follow Jesus to be assured of Jesus' presence & God's honor	23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. 25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.	31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. 32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die. 34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man? 35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.	**4 Misunderstanding 3: The world** a. It has to be judged[DS2] b. It is ruled by an alien prince[DS3] c. It is conquered by the cross[DS4] **5 Misunderstanding 4: The Messiah (the Light)** a. The people misunderstood the Messiah b. The claim: He is the Light (the Messiah)—the light is to be extinguished[DS5]
3 Misunderstanding 2: His cause a. His troubled soul b. His great cause	27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto	36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.	c. The need 1) To walk in the light 2) To believe in the light

DIVISION XII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GLORIFIED SON OF MAN, 12:12-50

B. Jesus Approached as King: The Misunderstood Messiah, 12:20-36

(12:20-36) **Introduction**: man misunderstands the Messiah. There are four misunderstandings in particular.

1. Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus (v.20-22).
2. Misunderstanding 1: His glory (v.23-26).
3. Misunderstanding 2: His cause (v.27-30).
4. Misunderstanding 3: the world (v.31-33).
5. Misunderstanding 4: the Messiah (the Light)—the light is to be extinguished (v.34-36).

(12:20-36) **Another Outline**: The Glory and Power of the Cross.

1. Some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus (v.20-22).
2. The cross is the glory of the Messiah (v.23).
3. The cross brings forth fruit (v.24).
4. The cross demands man's death to self (v.25-26).
   a. Man must lose his life to bear eternal life.
   b. Man must serve and follow Jesus to be assured of Jesus' presence and God's honor.
5. The cross fulfills Jesus' cause (v.27).
6. The cross glorifies God's name (v.28-30).
7. The cross judges the world—the prince of the world (v.31).
8. The cross draws all men (v.32-33).
9. The cross reveals the true Messiah (v.34-36).

(12:20-36) **Another Outline**: there are really seven pictures here. (1) A corn of wheat (v.24). (2) A life lost (v.25). (3) A servant (v.26). (4) A troubled soul (v. 27-30). (5) A prince cast out (v.31). (6) The cross (v.32-33). (7) A light extinguished (v.34-36).

1 (12:20-22) **Greeks...Would See Jesus**: some Greeks, representing the world, sought Jesus. The scene was as follows. Jesus had just been hailed as the coming King and Messiah by teeming thousands of people: "The world is gone after Him" (Jn.12:19). Some Greek pilgrims who had come to attend the Passover Feast wished to see this Jesus who was being proclaimed King. In the author's mind, these Greeks represented the Gentile world, all the God-fearing people of the world who would see Jesus.

2 (12:23-26) **Jesus Christ, Glory of—Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the first misunderstanding is the Messiah's glory. The Greeks had just seen Jesus *glorified* as Messiah by teeming thousands. It was as if the world were going after Him. They wanted to be part of the movement, so they requested an interview with Him. What Jesus did was try to correct the misunderstood idea of the Messiah held by the world. He wanted to prepare both the Greeks and those standing around (the whole world) for His death. He wanted to teach that the way to glory is not through triumph and praise, not through domination and subjection. The way to glory is through death to self and through service to God and man. Jesus did two things.

1. Jesus said that His hour had come: the Son of Man was now to be glorified. His hour, of course, referred to His death (as the next verse clearly states and this whole passage shows. See note—Jn.2:3-5.)

Note that Jesus revealed His death by using the picture of a grain of wheat. As stated, Jesus said that He would now be glorified, but His glory was not to be the glory of an earthly potentate. His glory was to be the glory of the cross. It was to be by death that He was to gain the allegiance of men and be exalted as King.

⇒ God would exalt Him as King because He had done exactly what God wished: He died for the sins of the whole world. (See note—Jn.10:17-18 for important discussion of this fact.)

⇒ Men would become His subjects because He had died for them and given them an eternal inheritance with God the Father.

The picture of the wheat can be simply stated: before the glory—before fruit can be borne—death is a necessity. Jesus must die before He can be enthroned as King and bear the fruit of subjects and a kingdom. (See note—Jn.13:31-32 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. The glory of Christ is the glory of the cross.

1) It is the cross that stirs God to exalt His dear Son above every name that is named.

> **"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).**
>
> **"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).**
>
> **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins....And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:14, 18).**
>
> **"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Heb.1:8-9).**
>
> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pt.2:24-25).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit....Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Pt.3:18, 22).**
>
> **"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Is.53:12).**

2) It is the cross that stirs men to offer themselves as living sacrifices to God's dear Son (in appreciation and love for saving them).

> **"For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:10-11).**

"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Ro.14:8-9).

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:20).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit.2:14).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

2. Jesus also said that man's hour had now come. Man must do the same as He did.

a. Man must lose his life. If he does, he will gain eternal life. What did Jesus mean by this unusual statement? Very simply, the person who *abandons* this life and world, who *sacrifices and gives* all that he is and has for Christ, will save his life. But the person who *keeps* his life and what he has and *seeks* more and more of this life, will lose his life completely and eternally.

The person who "saves his life"...

- who seeks to avoid aging and death and denies Christ—will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks to make his life more and more comfortable and easy and secure (beyond the necessary) and neglects Christ—will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks to gain wealth and power and fame by compromising Christ—will lose his life eternally.
- who seeks the excitement and stimulation of this world and ignores Christ—will lose his life eternally.

As said above, the person who loses his life for Christ and sacrifices all he is and has for Christ saves his life and saves it eternally. The person who keeps his life and what he has for himself will lose his life and lose it eternally. The call of Christ is just what He says—a life of denial that takes up the cross and follows in His steps.

"Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you" (Jer.5:25).

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).

"But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great" (Lk.6:49).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal.5:24).

b. Man must serve and follow Jesus. The man who does is assured...

- of Jesus' presence: "Where I am, there shall also my servant be."
- of the Father's (God's) honor. The Father will honor any person who honors His Son—His only Son whom He loves with His whole Being.

"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk.10:43-44).

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Mt.19:27-29).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him" (Ps.91:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:23-24) **Jesus Christ, Hour of**: the phrase "the hour" or "my hour" is a constant symbol of Jesus' death. "The hour" refers to all the events of the cross and all the trouble and sufferings surrounding the cross. Note two facts.

1. "The hour" is a set, fixed time in the purpose of God.
   - ⇒ Jesus said, "The hour is come" (Jn.12:23-24, 27; 13:1; 17:1; Mt.26:18, 45; Mk.14:41).
   - ⇒ He had said some time before, "Mine hour is not yet come" (Jn.2:4; cp. 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20).

The hour of Jesus was inevitable: a definite period of time, a set of events, a number of experiences that He had to face and go through. As He said, He must die in order to bring forth fruit (v.24).

2. The hour was to have a definite beginning. There was a set time for the trouble to begin (v.27), a set time for Him to begin suffering for the sins of the world. There was a fixed hour when He was to begin suffering the pain and anguish, the agitation and disturbance, the pressure and weight, the strain and stress of having to be separated from God in behalf of man (see notes—Mt.20:18; 27:46-49).

3 (12:27-30) **God, Glory of—Jesus Christ, Purpose**: the second misunderstanding is the Messiah's cause or purpose. Note six points.

1. Jesus was experiencing a "troubled" soul. "Troubled" (tetaraktai) means agitated, pressured, heavy, weighed down, strained, stressed, disturbed.

2. The reason His soul was so troubled was that He was about to face the great cause for which He had come into the world. His hour was at hand, staring Him in the face; the terrible sufferings were now beginning (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Hour*—Jn.12:23-24). Note two things.
   a. His supreme purpose was to face the hour God had set for Him: He was to die. He had come to die, and to die was the supreme cause of His life.
   b. His supreme obedience. Imagine the terrible sufferings of the hour. Should He pray, "Father save me from this hour?" He could not, for He had come to die. He must obey God, and to obey God was the supreme act of His life (see note—Jn.10:17-18).

3. Jesus prayed for the glory of God. He prayed for the Father to glorify His own name. This is significant. It shows a complete *selflessness* on the part of Jesus. It shows that the primary concern of Jesus was to complete His purpose and cause on earth, which was to glorify God by doing exactly what God wanted. How was God glorified? By Jesus' obedience. God was glorified in the same way a superior is honored and respected. His Word was carried out and obeyed.

Note: the verb "*glorify*" is in the Greek aorist tense which points to a single act or event which would glorify God (v.28). The single act concerned the cross. Jesus was asking His Father to glorify His own name through the cross.

   a. God would be glorified in the cross by the *supreme act of obedience* on the part of Jesus. It was God's will for Jesus to die for the sins of men. By dying, Jesus would show that God is the supreme Being of the universe. God is the One who is to be honored and respected and obeyed. He would thereby be glorified.

> **"And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup [death] pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt.26:39).**
>
> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**
>
> **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).**
>
> **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**
>
> **"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God....By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:5-7, 10).**

   b. God would be glorified in the cross by *men's seeing the love of God* in the cross. God gave His only Son to die *for* men that they might not perish but have everlasting life. Some men would see and believe this glorious truth; therefore, they would bow down, surrendering their whole beings to God. They would begin to follow and obey His will, honoring and praising Him for all He had done and was doing for them. The name of God would thereby be glorified by the cross. (See note, pt.1—Jn.12:23-26 for verses of Scripture.)

4. God accepted and approved Jesus' prayer. Note that the approval was audible. God actually spoke from heaven, saying that He had glorified His name and that He would glorify it again. Note three things.
   a. Jesus prayed according to God's will: "Glorify [honor] thy name" (cp. Mt.6:9). Therefore, God answered His prayer.

      Thought 1. God will answer any prayer that is according to His will (1 Jn.5:14-15). This stresses the importance of knowing God's will. Studying God's Word is the only way to know the will of God.

   b. God accepted Jesus' prayer. This means He accepted Jesus' death in behalf of man. We can rest assured that we are delivered from death if we believe on Jesus (cp. Jn.5:24).

c. God will glorify His name in the future. He will keep His Word and fulfill all His promises. We can rest assured of the promises of God.

5. The people standing around were confused. Some thought the voice was merely thunder; others thought that an angel had spoken to Jesus.

6. Jesus plainly told the people that a voice had spoken. It had spoken for their sakes in order to help them believe that He was the Son of God.

The point is this. By the thousands, people had just welcomed Jesus in the triumphal entry, welcomed Him as their earthly King and Messiah, the One who was to bring heaven and utopia to earth. (See outline and notes—Jn.8:21-24.) Jesus had to correct the misunderstanding of His cause. He had come not to rule as an earthly King for man; He had come to die for man. God's concern was not just for the seventy years of a man's life; God's concern was to save man eternally.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).**
>
> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).**
>
> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

4 (12:31-33) **World, Corruption—Creation**: the third misunderstanding concerns the world. The world is not what it should be. It is not what it was created to be: perfect and permanent. The world was perfect in its distant past: it was created perfectly, just as it should be. However, man misunderstands the world. He ignores and neglects *the fact* that the world...

- is not perfect; is not in its original state or even close to it; is not what it should be; is not in the condition for which it was meant.
- is not permanent as it is; will not always be here; was not always here.
- is to be changed and recreated into a new heavens and earth just as God intended.

Standing there, the people had welcomed Jesus in the triumphal entry, thinking He was going to set up a worldly kingdom upon this *present earth*. They thought in terms of the physical earth, in terms of worldly kingdoms and material wealth and power. Jesus had to correct their misconception. He had to show them that God's concern was not for man and his world to exist for just a brief span of time, but for eternity.

What Jesus said was an alarming revelation. Note the phenomenal claim in the word "now." He said "*Now*," it is I—my being lifted up, my cross and death—that would cause these things to happen.

1. Jesus said that this world is to be judged (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *World*—Jn.12:31).
2. Jesus said that the world is ruled by an alien power (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Satan*—Jn.12:31).
3. Jesus said that both the world and Satan would be conquered by the cross, by His death (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Cross*—Jn.12:32).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(12:31) **World, Judgment of—Nature, Judgment of—Man, Judgment of—Corruption**: the world has to be judged...

- judged as being imperfect.
- judged as being in some state other than what it should be.
- judged as being short of God's glory and of God's will.

If the world is ever to be perfected, it has to be judged as imperfect. God has to judge the world as less than what He wills. Once the world is judged as defective and imperfect...

- then it can be condemned and destroyed.
- then it can be recreated in a perfect form and state of being.

This is exactly what Scripture teaches. Scripture says three things about the world's having to be judged and recreated in order to be perfected.

1. The earth itself and the heavenly bodies above have to be judged. Why? Because they are imperfect; they have the seed of corruption within. The earth and the world are *running down*, wasting away, failing and dying. Eventually, even if the world were allowed to run long enough, the earth could not sustain life. The Bible says the earth...
   - has to be judged because it is not perfect.
   - has to be made perfect by being recreated and put into a permanent state. (Cp. 2 Pt.2:3-4, 8-13 for discussion.)
2. Nature itself, the animal and vegetation life of the earth, has to be judged. (Note: this fact is closely aligned to point one above. It is separated only in an attempt to simplify the discussion and to help in understanding the teaching of Scripture.) Nature is imperfect; it has the seed of corruption within. Nature is often beautiful in its sunsets, green pastures, and animal life. But nature is also destructive in its storms, earthquakes, fires, and struggle for survival. The beautiful mockingbird sitting in a tree can be singing its song, and in a moment's time turn into a savage by attacking the worm. Nature is not perfect, not what it should be. It is short of God's glory and short of what God wills it to be. God's will is

for *a nature* in which the lion lies down with the lamb, a nature in which all things are at peace and without corruption. In its present condition, nature...

- despite its beauty, can be savage.
- despite its peace, can be stormy.
- despite its producing good, can produce bad.
- despite its being right, can be evil.
- despite its enticements, can destroy.
- despite its nourishment, can starve.

The Bible says that nature has to be judged because it is not perfect. It has to be made perfect, that is, recreated and put into a permanent and perfect state.

> **"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope" (Ro.8:19-22).**

3. Man (and his world system) has to be judged. Man is imperfect; he has the seed of corruption within. Man lies, steals, cheats, and kills. Man has many good moments—every man, no matter who he is—but he also has many bad moments. Moods, feelings, thoughts, weaknesses of both body and mind—so much causes man to come ever so short. In addition man ages; he wastes away and dies—and nothing can stop the process. Man is short of God's glory; he is not perfect; therefore, he must be judged. He has to be recreated and made into a perfect creature; he has to be given a perfect and permanent body.

> **"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).**
>
> **"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15:49-54).**

It is important to note why the seed of corruption is in the world. The world was not corrupted by its own will or act. It was corrupted because of sin (cp. Ro.8:20). The sin of man brought corruption into the world. As soon as man sinned...

- the world was no longer perfect. It was contaminated, polluted, dirtied, corrupted.
- the seed of corruption, of wasting away, deteriorating, decaying and dying was planted in the world.
- the results of sin fell upon the world as well as falling upon man.

The world had been made for man, for man's dwelling place and enjoyment (cp. Gen.1:1-3:24). And God gave man a choice: if man chose perfection, his world would remain perfect just as God had created it; but if man chose sin and evil and death, his world would become imperfect, full of sin and evil and death. Therefore, when man sinned and became corrupted, he plunged the world into corruption. All creation became as man, just as man had chosen.

As stated, the world and its physical dimension of being were made for man; therefore, it was bound to suffer the very same fate as man. God had so ordained it. Therefore, when man is saved and delivered from sin and corruption, his world will also share the deliverance of man. The world will be saved and delivered from sin and corruption. There is to be a glorious day of redemption, a redemption both for man and his world. God will give all believers a redeemed and perfected world in which to live. As God declares, "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev.21:5).

> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-13).**

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(12:31) **Satan**: Jesus said the world is ruled by an alien prince. The world is not ruled by God; it is ruled by Satan. The Bible says three significant things.

1. Satan is the ruler and the prince, that is, the power of the world in all its evil and corruption (Jn.12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor.4:4; Eph.2:2. See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Rev.12:9 for more discussion.)
2. The sin and evil of the world prove the world is ruled by an alien prince. God is not the author of sin. God *does not* tempt men, not with evil (Jas.1:13). God is not the Father of sin and evil, of destruction and devastation. God does not do such things. The father of such corruption is the devil (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:38; note—8:41-47; DEEPER STUDY # 1 *and note*—8:44 for discussion).
3. Satan is now "cast out" by the cross of Christ. Note the words "cast out" (ekblethesetai exo, future passive of ekballo which means a sure fact *lying in the future*). The words mean to cast out of, to cast from or forth, to cast *clean out* (exo) of a place. Satan in all his power, rule, and reign is cast out by the death of Christ. His power, rule, and reign over lives is now broken.

a. Satan's power *to charge men with sin* is now "cast out." Men now have the power to escape the penalty of sin. Christ took the sins of men upon Himself and paid the penalty for their sin. He died for the sins of the world.

> **"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).**
> **"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Ro.8:33).**

b. Satan's power *to cause death* is now "cast out." Men no longer have to die. Christ died *for man*, became man's substitute in death.

> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**

c. Satan's power *to cause men to be separated from God* is now cast out. Men no longer have to go to hell. Christ was separated from God *for man* (see note—Mt.27:46-49). Man can now live forever with God.

> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**
> **"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Ro.8:11).**

d. Satan's power *to enslave men* with the habits of sin and shame is now "cast out." By His death, Christ made it possible for man to be freed from sin. The believer, cleansed by the blood of Christ, becomes a holy temple unto God, a temple fit for the presence and power of God's Spirit. Men can now conquer the enslaving habits of sin by the power of God's Spirit.

> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**
> **"Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).**

Thought 1. Jesus Christ has destroyed and triumphed over the power of Satan (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Cross*—Jn.12:32 for discussion of how the cross delivers and gives man so much.)

> **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn.14:30).**
> **"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:13-14).**
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(12:32) **Jesus Christ, Cross**: the words "lifted up" refer to the cross of Christ, to His death upon the cross. Jesus said that once He is "lifted up," He will draw all men to Himself. Note two points.

1. Note why the cross of Christ attracts men. It was the cross...
   - that delivered men from sin, death, and hell.
   - that made it possible for men to live abundantly and eternally.
   - that gave to men the presence and power of God's Spirit to guide and care for them day by day.

2. Note how the cross of Christ gives so much to man. Very simply stated, Jesus died *for man* on the cross. When a man believes that Jesus died *for him*, God takes that man's belief and *counts* it as righteousness. God simply *counts* the man as perfect. The man is *not* righteous, nowhere close to perfect. The man, God, and everyone else knows he is not perfect. But the man honors God's Son by believing on Him; therefore, God honors the man.

The point to see is that God will do anything for the person who truly honors His Son. God loves His Son so much that He is willing to do anything for anyone who honors Jesus. If a man honors Jesus by believing and following Jesus, God will take that man's faith and...

- count his faith as righteousness.
- deliver him from sin and from death.
- give him both abundant and eternal life (Jn.10:10).
- place the Holy Spirit and His power within the man to help him live day by day (cp. 1 Cor.6:19-20; Ro.8:1-39; Gal.5:22-23).

The point is this: it is the cross of Christ that breaks the power of Satan in the world. It is the cross of Christ that "casts out" Satan: his power, his rule, and his reign. Man, by believing that Christ died for him, can now be counted righteous and delivered from the power of Satan, from the evil power that entices him to sin and that causes him to die and face the judgment of God. Man can now know the power of God, the power that freely forgives him and gives him life forever. Man can now experience the marvelous grace of God. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Grace*—Tit.2:11-15. See notes, Justification—Ro.4:22; 5:1.)

5 (12:34-36) **Jesus Christ, The Light**: the fourth misunderstanding concerns the Messiah (the Light). Note: the people clearly understood that Jesus was speaking of death, but it was this that confused them. They had just acknowledged Him to be the Messiah, and they had always understood the Messiah was to live forever (cp. Ps.89:36; 110:4; Is.9:7; Dan.7:14). Was He really the Messiah? Could they be mistaken? Was the Son of Man someone else? Jesus answered two things.

1. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, *the Light of the world* (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Jn.12:35-36; DEEPER STUDY # 1—8:12). But He stressed a critical point. The Light was to be with them for only a little while longer; the Light was to be extinguished.

2. Jesus pointed out the twofold need of man.

   a. Man must walk in the Light *while* he has light. If the Light was to be extinguished, it would not always be present for men to see. And once men lost the Light two things would happen.
      ⇒ Darkness would overtake and overcome men.
      ⇒ Men would not know where they were going. They would be groping and stumbling, falling and dooming themselves to an eternity of darkness.

   b. Man must believe in the Light. If men believed, something significant would happen. They would become children (huioi, sons) of the Light.
      ⇒ "Believe" (pisteuete) is continuous action.
      ⇒ "Become" (genesthe) is a once-for-all act, a personal experience that happens all at once.

      A man who truly sees Jesus Christ as the Light of the world believes and continues to believe. And the very moment his heart leaps toward Christ in belief, he becomes a child of the Light, a child of God Himself. The man sees the Light and begins to walk in the Light, living the kind of life he should.

> **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).**
>
> **"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).**

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(12:35-36) **Light—Believers**: light is one of the great words of Scripture. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:12.)

1. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 Jn.1:5).
2. Jesus Christ is the Light of the world—the very embodiment of the heavenly light (Jn.8:12; 9:5).
3. The light of the knowledge of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor.4:6).
4. Jesus Christ "lights every man" who comes into the world (Jn.1:9).
5. Believers are said to become "children of light" through belief in the Light, Jesus Christ Himself (Jn.12:36).
6. Believers have been transferred from the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of Christ, the inheritance of light (Col.1:13).
7. Before they come to Christ, believers are not only in darkness but are an embodiment of darkness. But when they come to Christ, believers are placed in the Light and become an embodiment of the Light itself (Eph.5:8).
8. Believers are the light of the world (Mt.5:14-16).
9. Believers are to set their light on a candlestick—to make their light conspicuous (Mt.5:15).
10. Evil doers shun the light (Jn.3:20f).
11. The creation of light is a picture of the expulsion of spiritual darkness (Gen.1:2f).

	C. Jesus Rejected and Accepted as King, 12:37-50		
		43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.	c. They fail, loving the praise of men more than God
1 The unbelievers		44 Jesus cried and said, He	**3 The true believer**
a. They act illogically	37 But though he had done	that believeth on me, believ-	a. Believes on God—thru
1) They reject miracles	so many miracles before	eth not on me, but on him	Jesus, the Mediator[DS2]
	them, yet they believed not	that sent me.	b. Sees God—thru Jesus,
2) They reject revelation	on him:	45 And he that seeth me	the Mediator
	38 That the saying of Esaias	seeth him that sent me.	c. Is delivered from dark-
	the prophet might be ful-	46 I am come a light into	ness—thru Jesus, the
	filled, which he spake, Lord,	the world, that whosoever	Light
	who hath believed our	believeth on me should not	
3) They reject the arm of the Lord	report? and to whom hath	abide in darkness.	
	the arm of the Lord been re-	47 And if any man hear my	**4 The unbeliever—his judgment**
	vealed?	words, and believe not, I	a. Judged not by Jesus:
b. The results of unbelief: A just, judicial rejection by God[DS1]	39 Therefore they could not	judge him not: for I came not	He came to save, not judge
	believe, because that Esaias	to judge the world, but to	b. Judged by the words of
1) Man is blinded	said again,	save the world.	salvation: The very
2) Man is hardened	40 He hath blinded their	48 He that rejecteth me,	words he rejected will
3) Man is condemned to be lost	eyes, and hardened their	and receiveth not my words,	stand as a witness
	heart; that they should not see	hath one that judgeth him: the	against him
4) Man is condemned to remain unhealed	with their eyes, nor under-	word that I have spoken, the	1) Because Jesus' words are God's commandment
	stand with their heart, and be	same shall judge him in the	
5) Man never sees the glory of the Lord	converted, and I should heal	last day.	
	them.	49 For I have not spoken of	
	41 These things said Esaias,	myself; but the Father which	
2 The silent believers	when he saw his glory, and	sent me, he gave me a com-	2) Because God's word is life
a. They fail to confess Jesus	spake of him.	mandment, what I should say,	
	42 Nevertheless among the	and what I should speak.	3) Because the words of Jesus are the truth
b. They fail, fearing personal loss	chief rulers also many be-	50 And I know that his	
	lieved on him; but because of	commandment is life ever-	
	the Pharisees they did not	lasting: whatsoever I speak	
	confess him, lest they should	therefore, even as the Father	
	be put out of the synagogue:	said unto me, so I speak.	

DIVISION XII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GLORIFIED SON OF MAN, 12:12-50

C. Jesus Rejected and Accepted as King, 12:37-50

(12:37-50) **Introduction**: this is a clear picture of Jesus' being rejected and accepted as King.

1. The unbelievers (v.37-41).
2. The silent believers (v.42-43).
3. The true believer (v.44-46).
4. The unbeliever—his judgment (v.47-50).

1 (12:37-41) **Unbelief**: there are the unbelievers who act illogically. Their unbelief makes no sense, for God has done all He can to help man believe, yet man rejects and refuses to believe.

1. Unbelief rejects miracles. Note three significant facts.
   a. Note the words "so many miracles." Jesus was deeply touched by the sufferings of man. He reached out in a moving and loving compassion. He helped and ministered to everyone He could possibly reach—an innumerable number. In fact, Christ performed so many works and miracles that, if they should be written, "the world itself could not contain the books" (Jn.21:25).

      Jesus worked...
      - miracle after miracle
      - compassion after compassion
      - help after help
      - sign after sign
      - healing after healing

      Note also that the kind of miracle is emphasized. They were miracles of quality, miracles arising from the heart of God Himself. They were miracles of compassion and help. They were miracles arising from sincere motive of heart, a heart that had been touched by suffering humanity. They were pure miracles, strong miracles—miracles that God's power alone could do.
   b. Note the words "before them." Jesus did not do His works out in a desert, that is, far off in a corner in some obscure place out of the sight of people. Jesus did His miracles before the people, where the people could easily see them and where the miracles would demonstrate His deity and help the people to believe.

c. Note the words, "yet they believed not on Him." The Greek tense is continuous: "they were not believing on Him" even while He was ministering and demonstrating such enormous compassion and power. Their hearts were shut, closed to the clear and undeniable evidence that Jesus was truly the Son of God. They were in a *state of unbelief*. Their unbelief was illogical, making no sense whatsoever.

> **"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Mt.13:58).**
>
> **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).**
>
> **"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).**
>
> **"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).**
>
> **"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).**

2. Unbelief rejects revelation. Note: this fact is a fulfillment of prophecy (Is.53:1). Isaiah had proclaimed the report or the message of God, yet the people did not believe. They rejected and acted illogically. Their unbelief cut deeply and broke the heart of Isaiah. Filled with compassion and hurt for the people, Isaiah cried out to God, "Who hath believed our report?" The cry was the beginning of the greatest prophecy ever made about Jesus.

"Who hath believed our report?" The "report" was from God Himself, His message and revelation to the world. The "report" was both the words and deeds of Jesus. All that Jesus did through preaching and teaching revealed the truth; however, the "report" was more than words and deeds. Jesus Himself was the "report," the revelation of God to the world. God gave man...

- more than just words.
- more than just ink and paper.
- more than just the sounds of a voice.

God gave man a Life to live out the words. He gave man a *Person*...

- not only to speak the truth, but to live the truth.
- not only to speak the works, but to do the works.
- not only to preach God's will, but to demonstrate God's will.
- not only to teach men, but to show men how to live.

The Person, of course, was God's own Son, Jesus Christ. Yet despite the fact that God sent His own Son into the world to proclaim His "report" or His revelation, men still do not believe. They reject Jesus Christ, denying the report. They act illogically, making no sense whatsoever.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).**
>
> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (Jn.6:63-64).**
>
> **"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:12-19).**

3. Unbelief rejects the arm of the Lord. This, too, is a fulfillment of the same prophecy (Is.53:1). The arm of the Lord means the strength of God, His power to save and to deliver and to give life. It can also mean the Savior and Deliverer Himself. The *Arm* that saves and gives life is Jesus Christ. When it comes to God's strength to save and deliver...

- who knows it?
- who has experienced it?
- to whom has it been revealed?
- who has humbled himself so that God could reveal it?
- who has diligently sought enough so that God could reveal it?

Unbelief rejects the arm and salvation of the Lord. Such is illogical, making no sense whatsoever.

> **"Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe" (Lk.22:67).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not" (Jn.6:35-36).**

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

Now note a critical matter about unbelief. Unbelief results in some serious consequences (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.12:39-41 for discussion).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(12:39-41) **Unbelief—Judicial Judgment**: this passage says that God blinds and hardens man. A man cannot reject Jesus Christ and expect matters to stay as they are. No matter how mild a man's rejection is, the matter is serious to God. A man may reject Jesus in thought only, never saying a word or committing a public (visible) sin against Him. But no matter how mild the rejection, God still cannot overlook the rejection of His Son. He loves His Son too much, and His Son has done too much for man. His Son has taken the sin of man upon Himself and borne the punishment for man. His Son died for man. Jesus has done too much for God to bypass man's unbelief and rejection. When a man has the chance to see and open his heart but chooses not to look and closes his heart, that man suffers the consequences.

Another way to say the same thing is this: when God has loved the world and done so much for man, man cannot deny God's Son and expect to suffer no consequences. The consequences and results of unbelief are clearly spelled out, and they are terrible consequences, an awful fate for a person to suffer.

⇒ God blinds the eyes of the unbeliever.
⇒ God hardens the heart of the unbeliever.
⇒ God condemns the unbeliever to be lost.
⇒ God condemns the unbeliever to be unhealed.
⇒ God never reveals His glory to the unbeliever.

Now for an important question: Does this mean that God causes the unbelief of a man and condemns that man to be lost before he is ever born? No! Scripture shouts a thousand "No's!" A man is not lost...

- apart from his will.
- against his will.

A man is lost only because he chooses to have nothing to do with God and to be lost. What Scripture teaches is that God has set certain laws in the universe...

- laws both within man and within nature.
- laws which go into motion and take effect when man acts.

If a man does something, certain things will happen. If a man does something else, then something else will happen. Scripture teaches that unbelief is governed by these laws.

⇒ There is the law of sowing and reaping. If a man sows unbelief, he reaps unbelief.

> **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:7-8).**

⇒ There is the law of measure. If a man measures unbelief, he is measured unbelief. Whatever a man measures, he receives.

> **"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Mt.7:2).**

⇒ There is the law of seeking. If a man seeks, he finds. The harder he seeks, the more he finds.

> **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Mt.7:7).**

⇒ There is the law of wilful hardness and impenitence. The more a man hardens himself and refuses to repent, the harder and more impenitent he becomes. In fact, a man can become so hardened that he never repents, never even thinks about repenting. Such a man stores up wrath against himself.

> **"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Ro.2:5-6).**

⇒ There is the law of being "fitted" for destruction. The more a man refuses to believe, the more he is "fitted" and conditioned for destruction. Note that a man through his unbelief prepares and conditions himself.

> **"What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (Ro.9:22).**

⇒ There is the law of God's patience. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Therefore, God allows the world to continue, allowing more and more to be saved. He endures with patience the unbelievers who harden themselves and store up wrath against themselves in order that some might be saved and given the privilege of knowing the riches of His grace (Ro.2:5; cp. Ro.9:22-23).

> **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-9).**

⇒ There is the law of God's supreme purpose. God's supreme purpose is that His Son "be the first among many brothers" (Ro.8:29). God wants Jesus to have many brothers—brothers who will be conformed to His image and count Him as the Elder Brother: as the first and most honored, as the One who is to be worshipped and served eternally.

> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Ro.8:28-29).**

In order for Christ to gain more and more brothers who will honor Him, God is willing for unbelievers to continue on in their unbelief, ever hardening themselves under the just and judicial laws He has established. Men are allowed to go on in their unbelief, condemning themselves under the just and judicial laws of the universe.

These laws are what men call *the law of conditioning*. Men would simply say that the more a man does anything, the more he conditions himself to do that thing. The more he does it, the more it becomes a habit. (Cp. smoking, eating, or anything else.) This is what the Bible is saying: if a man hardens his mind and heart to the truth, he becomes conditioned more and more against the truth. His openness and sensitivity to Jesus Christ dwindles more and more, and it can dwindle so much that it is gone forever. Therefore, the more a man rejects Christ, the more he decreases his sensitivity and chance of ever accepting Christ.

What Scripture teaches can be summarized under what might be called *the law of judicial blindness and rejection*. This simply means that the person who rejects God's Son chooses to be blind and to harden his heart. Therefore, he is given over to a *just punishment*. He is justly blinded and hardened (conditioned) more and more. A man is led to a judicial blindness and rejection by God through...

- obstinate unbelief
- constant sin
- continued rejection

God's Word plainly says that there are conditioning laws within man and nature, and it is a fact that unbelievers have to live under these laws the same as believers. God cannot play favorites; He cannot snatch unbelievers out from under the just and judicial laws of the universe and force them to believe, taking away their wills. God has to allow all men to live under the same laws and to make the choices of life day by day. Believers have made the choice to follow God's Son. Unbelievers have made the choice not to follow God's Son. There can be no violation of their wills: unbelievers have to be allowed to go on in their unbelief, ever hardening themselves under the just laws of God's will established in the universe. As Jesus Christ clearly said, the words of judgment are already spoken: they are set up as God's law and will within the universe. It is the law and will of God that Jesus Christ proclaimed, and it will be His words that will judge men in the end time (Jn.12:48).

In addition to the above laws, compare the following verses.

> **"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness....For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections....God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Ro.1:24, 26, 28. See outline and notes—Ro.1:24-32.)**
>
> **"My Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).**
>
> **"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would [have] none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Ps.81:11-12).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**
>
> **"For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made" (Is.57:16).**
>
> **"Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos.4:17).**

(See note—Jn.6:44-46 for a discussion of God's part in *drawing* men to salvation.)

2 (12:42-43) **Believers, Silent—Confession**: there are the silent believers. These were the chief rulers and leaders among the people, and they were many. They believed on Jesus, realizing that He was who He claimed to be—the true Messiah; but they had one serious flaw. They were silent; therefore, they failed in three critical areas.

1. They failed to confess Christ. They *would not* confess Him.

> **"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).**
>
> **"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8-9).**
>
> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commentment" (1 Jn.3:23).**

2. They failed because they feared loss. They feared they would be excommunicated, put out of the synagogue. They feared they would lose their...

- position
- job
- security
- profession
- livelihood
- authority
- recognition
- esteem
- honor

> **"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt.16:26).**
>
> **"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col.3:2).**
>
> **"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).**
>
> **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).**

3. They failed because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. They loved what men gave:

- acceptance
- esteem
- favor
- recognition
- prestige
- commendation
- honor
- image
- glory

They would rather be accepted and approved by men than by God.

> **"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).**
>
> **"Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews" (Jn.7:13).**
>
> **"And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus" (Jn.19:38).**
>
> **"Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it" (Dt.1:17).**
>
> **"Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings" (Ps.49:11-13).**
>
> **"I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made of grass" (Is.51:12).**

3 (12:44-46) **Believer—Jesus Christ, Mediator**: there is the true believer. The stress of these verses is Jesus Christ, the Mediator (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.12:44). It is easier to see the meaning of the verses by switching the clauses as the outline does.

⇒ Through believing on Jesus Christ (the Mediator), a man believes on God.

⇒ Through seeing Jesus Christ (the Mediator), a man sees God.

1. A man believes on God—truly believes on God—only when he believes on Jesus Christ. Christ is the Mediator, the bridge builder between God and man. If a man wishes to approach God, the only living and true God, he can do so only by believing on Christ first. When a man claims to believe in God apart from Christ, he is believing in a god of imagination, a god of his own making. (Cp. Jn.14:6; 1 Tim.2:5.)

Note also that when a man believes on Christ, his faith is placed in God, the Sovereign Majesty who sent Christ to save the world.

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the word of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (Jn.6:28-29).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:3-6).

2. A man sees God only through seeing Jesus Christ. Christ claimed, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn.14:9). When a person looks at Christ, they see the very nature of God—the very acts and words of God Himself. Christ is the revelation of God who came to earth to reveal God. See DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,*3*—Jn.14:6.)

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (Jn.12:45).

"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:7-10).

3. A man is delivered from darkness only through Jesus Christ, the Light. Christ is the Light of the world (see note—Jn.8:12). He came to be the Light of the world in order to bring light and salvation to man. His very purpose on earth was to save and to give light. Christ came as a light into the world so that men would not have to live in a state of darkness. The man who believes on Christ is given light, the light to see and learn the truth of God and of himself, of the world and of others, of the future and of eternity.

"But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Mt.6:23).

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (Jn.1:4-5).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (Jn.3:19).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth" (Jn.12:35).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" (Eph.5:14).

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:12).

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 Jn.1:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(12:44) **Jesus the Mediator**: represents God before men and men before God. In Latin, the word for mediator is *pontifex*. It means bridge builder. (See note—Jn.19:23-24.)

4 (12:47-50) **Judgment**: there is the unbeliever, his judgment. Christ said two significant things.

1. The unbeliever is not judged by Christ. Christ came to save the world, not to judge it.
2. The unbeliever is judged by the words of salvation. The very words which man rejects will stand as a witness against him. The unbeliever rejected the words of salvation, so they will be his judge. Note that the unbeliever condemns himself, for the words of salvation have now been brought to earth by Jesus Christ. The full message of salvation is now available. No one is keeping man away from the words; no man is hiding the words from him. All man has to do is accept

them and carry them to other men. If man rejects the words of salvation, he condemns and judges himself. Why? Because in the last days, when the man stands before God, the words of salvation will *not be found* in him. The words will be *outside* the unbeliever, standing there to judge him.

There are three reasons why the words of Christ shall judge a man:

⇒ Because they are the very commandment of God Himself.

> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**

⇒ Because God's commandment is life.

> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**

⇒ Because the words of Christ are the truth, the very words which the Father told Christ to say.

> **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).**
>
> **"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).**
>
> **"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have know surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst sent me" (Jn.17:8).**

	CHAPTER 13	7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.	stood b. Washing has a deeper meaning: Spiritual cleansing
	XIII. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33	8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.	
	A. The Demonstration of Royal Service, 13:1-17 (Mt.26:20-24; Mk.14: 14-17; Lk.22:14, 21-23)	9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.	c. Washing is requested
1 In the Upper Room right before the Passover **2 The impetus for royal service** a. Knowing His hour had come b. Loving His followers to the very end c. Knowing His enemies	Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.	10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.	d. Washing is thorough & permanent
	2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;	11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.	e. Washing is not automatic nor by association
3 The extreme demonstration of royal service a. Knowing His mission	3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;	12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?	**5 The meaning of royal service**
b. Laying aside His garments	4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.	13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.	a. To serve Jesus as Master and Lord
c. Washing the disciples' feet*DSI*	5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.	14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.	b. To serve other believers royally & sacrificially, leading them to be washed & cleansed
4 The prerequisite for royal service: Washing & cleansing a. Washing is misunder-	6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?	15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.	**6 The reasons for royal service** a. Because of Jesus' example
		16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.	b. Because believers are not as great as the Lord
		17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.	c. Because of resulting joy

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

A. The Demonstration of Royal Service, 13:1-17

(13:1-17) **Introduction**: the disciples had been arguing over who would hold the leading positions in the government Jesus was about to set up (cp. Lk.22:24; Mk.10:35-45, esp. v.41). The discussion was heated. They were caught up in the ambition for position and power and authority. How the heart of Jesus must have been cut! He had so little time left for them to learn that the way to glory is through service and not through position and authority. How could He get the message across forcibly enough so that they would never forget the truth? It was this that led Jesus to wash the disciples' feet and to demonstrate what true royalty is: serving others.

1. In the Upper Room right before the Passover (v.1).
2. The impetus for royal service (v.1-2).
3. The extreme demonstration of royal service (v.3-5).
4. The prerequisite for royal service: washing and cleansing (v.6-11).
5. The meaning of royal service (v.12-14).
6. The reasons for royal service (v.15-17).

1 (13:1) **Upper Room**: this event took place right before the Passover. It took place in the Upper Room where so many significant events took place.

2 (13:1-2) **Ministry—Service**: the impetus for royal service. Three things *drove* Jesus to wash the disciples' feet and to demonstrate the royalty of service and ministry.

1. He knew "His hour" had come (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Hour*—Jn.12:23-24). He was to die and His time was short. Whatever He hoped to teach His disciples had to be taught now, for there would soon be no more time.

2. He loved His own, that is, His followers upon earth, those for whom He was responsible. *His own* includes *both* the heavenly host and all believers who have gone on to heaven. He is Lord, the Son of the living God to whom all has been given; therefore, His own includes all those in both heaven and earth who are followers of Him. And He loves them all. However, the present point is this: He loves "His own...*in the world.*" Therefore, He was compelled to zero in on them and to do whatever was necessary to help them, no matter the cost. He was compelled by love to wash their feet, no matter the humiliation and the degree of abasement required.

3. He knew His enemy, and He knew the enemy was about to strike and betray Him. He had to act before the enemy struck. The disciples had to be strengthened and fortified, shown and taught immediately. Once the enemy struck, it would be too late.

Thought 1. The same three things should *drive* every believer to serve and to serve now:

1) Knowing the hour has come, the time is ever so short.

> **"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (Jn.4:34).**
>
> **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).**
>
> **"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).**
>
> **"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none" (1 Cor.7:29).**
>
> **"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:16).**
>
> **"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col.4:5).**
>
> **"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim.1:6).**

2) Loving "his own," those for whom the believer is responsible.

> **"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (Jn.15:9).**
>
> **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn.15:13).**
>
> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).**

3) Knowing the enemy, that he is going to strike immediately and with all the force he can.

> **"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, *then cometh* the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side" (Mt.13:19).**
>
> **"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph.6:10-11).**
>
> **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas.4:7).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Pt.5:8-9).**

Note: the same facts should drive us to be faithful to our service, laboring all the time, persisting and persevering.

> **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).**

3 (13:3-5) **Service—Ministry**: the extreme demonstration of royal service. The service was *royal* because it was being performed by Jesus Christ, the Son of God Himself. He and He alone is Lord of lords and King of kings. As men-

tioned above, both the heavenly host and believers, whether on earth or in heaven, are His. This is the stress of this point: Jesus knew who He was. He knew His glorious Person, yet He humbled and even abased Himself. Note exactly what is said.

Jesus knew that the Father had given all things into His hands: all power and authority and glory and honor—all beings both in heaven and earth—all administration (ministry) and rule—all judgment and responsibility for saving the universe.

⇒ Jesus knew that He had come from God. He knew the exalted position from which He had come and the enormous condescension He had made. He knew the great gulf He had spanned in coming to earth.

⇒ Jesus knew the splendor and brilliance and glory of His Person.

⇒ Jesus knew that He was going to be returning to God to assume His former position of glory, honor, and rule. He knew that He was to take His place at the right hand of God very soon.

But note: He, who was King of kings and Lord of lords, who was God of very God, laid His clothing aside and began to wash the feet of men. He who was …

- Master became the slave.
- the Lord took on the ministry of humiliation.
- the Highest took the place of the lowest.
- the Sovereign became the subject.

Jesus knew who He was, yet He still gave the most extreme demonstration of service possible. He chose the most extreme act possible to demonstrate that there is royalty in service and ministry.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth" (Lk.22:26-27).

"For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Ro.12:3).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (Jas.4:10).

"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt.5:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(13:4-5) **Service—Greatness**: in the hot, dusty country of Palestine, most people wore sandals and their feet became extremely dirty. A water basin sat at the entrance of most Jewish homes. Upon entering a person's home, the poor would wash their own feet, and the rich would have a servant available to wash their feet.

Jesus was assuming the place of a servant or of a slave (doulos) who had no rights whatsoever. (See note—Ro.1:1.) He was demonstrating the route to royal service, demonstrating that…

- the way to royalty is service.
- the way to greatness is ministry.
- the way to power is humility.
- the way to position is serving.
- the way to rule is giving.

Luke tells us that the disciples were arguing over who was to assume the leading positions in Jesus' government when He took over the kingdom (Lk.22:24; cp. Mk.10:35-45). The disciples were probably so caught up in their thirst for power and authority that they were beyond considering anything rationally. What Jesus did was demonstrate for them the way of true royalty, the walk of a true statesman. There is a royalty to service—a kingly aire to ministry—a real dignity in humbling oneself to meet the needs of others. There is such a thing as royal service.

4 (13:6-11) **Cleansed—Washed—Forgiveness—Salvation**: the prerequisite for royal service is that of being washed and cleansed. What happened now was critical for every person who claimed to be a follower and a servant of the Lord. The crucial point is this statement:

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (Jn.13:8).

There is a deeper meaning to what Jesus was doing, a spiritual meaning. A person has to be washed and cleansed by Jesus…

- before he can become a part of Jesus
- before he can serve Jesus

Another way to say the same thing is this: before a person can ever serve Christ, he must be a part of Christ. However, before a person can become a part of Christ, there is a *critical prerequisite*, an absolute essential: a person must be washed and cleansed by Christ.

Now, note what happened.

1. Washing and cleansing are misunderstood. Jesus approached Peter to wash his feet, that is, to clean the dirt and pollution from the lowliest part of his being (his feet). Peter saw Jesus washing him and the others (mankind) and counted it too humiliating a thing for his Lord to do. Therefore, Peter drew his feet back in objection. Never would the Lord of the universe be allowed to do such a thing.

However, Peter saw only the human and physical act of Jesus in serving him and the others (mankind).

Thought 1. Most men misunderstand and object to the cleansing act of Jesus...

- to the humiliation and condescension of "His hour" (the cross v.1).
- to the cleansing blood of the Lamb, the Lord Himself.

Most men misunderstand the mission and service...

- that He came to wash and cleanse men from their sin and death, from condemnation and hell.
- that He came to cleanse men in His blood that they might be acceptable to God eternally.
- that He came to cleanse men that they might be fit to serve God, both now and forever.

2. Washing and cleansing have a deeper meaning, a spiritual meaning. (See the earlier part of this point for explanation.) Peter did not understand at first, but he did after Jesus' death and resurrection (cp. 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18).

Thought 1. Today there is no excuse for not understanding what Jesus was doing.

> **"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:3-5).**
>
> **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb.9:14).**
>
> **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).**

3. Washing and cleansing are requested. Every man should cry out as Peter did: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Note that Peter cried for a whole cleansing. He craved to be washed all over, through and through.

Thought 1. There is no such thing as holding back a part of one's body or behavior for oneself, to do as one pleases. There is no such thing as a partial cleansing. The tongue, the eyes, the hands—what one says, looks at, touches—must all be washed and cleansed by Christ, or "thou hast no part with me."

> **"Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Ps.19:12).**
>
> **"Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin" (Ps.51:2).**
>
> **"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps.51:7).**
>
> **"Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake" (Ps.79:9).**

4. Washing and cleansing are thorough and permanent. Peter had just cried for a whole and thorough cleansing. Now note a glorious truth, one of the most glorious truths in all of Scripture.

> **"He that is washed needs only to wash his feet; he is already clean, every whit [completely whole]" (Jn.13:10).**

Once a man is washed, he is already cleansed. Peter had already been cleansed; therefore, he did not need another bath (experience of being saved and cleansed). But note what was needed: his feet needed to be cleansed. As he walked through the dirt of the world, he needed to ask Jesus to cleanse him from the pollution which he had picked up. He needed a localized cleansing, a cleansing of the body parts that had become dirty.

> **"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor.7:1).**
>
> **"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim.2:21-22).**
>
> **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn.1:9).**
>
> **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 Jn.3:2-3).**

5. Washing and cleansing are not automatic nor do they come by association. This is clearly seen in Judas. Judas had been with Jesus, working by His side day in and day out. He was a professed follower and servant of the Lord, and so far as could be seen, he had no glaring public sin or corrupt habits. Yet, he never allowed Jesus to wash and cleanse him.

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor.5:6-7).

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor.6:11; cp. v.9-10).

"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (Jas.4:8).

"Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil" (Is.1:16).

"Wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jer.4:14).

5 (13:12-14) **Service—Ministry**: the meaning of royal service. Jesus asked the pointed question, "Know ye what I have done?" Then He demanded two things from His followers and servants.

1. The servant of Jesus must *serve Jesus as Master and Lord*. Note Jesus' claim: "*I Am*" Master and Lord. The servant of the Lord Jesus is not just a follower of Jesus. He is a servant, a slave (doulos) with no rights of his own whatsoever. He is at the beck and call of Jesus. He does not act on his own, nor do his own thing. He does not seek the things of the world: its positions, wealth, power, recognition, honor. He is not existing to *secure* these things; he is existing to serve Jesus and to serve Him alone. (See note, *Slave*—Ro.1:1.)

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men" (Eph.6:6-7).

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col.3:23-24).

2. The servant of Jesus is to serve other believers royally and sacrificially, leading them to walk in open confession and to be washed and cleansed from the dirt of the world.

a. The servant of Jesus is to serve others just as Jesus did by ministering to the human needs of others in all humility.

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mt.10:42).

"But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mk.10:43-44).

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Lk.10:36-37).

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (Jn.13:34).

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Gal.5:13).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal.6:2).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

b. The servant of Jesus is to minister to the spiritual needs of others by leading them to Christ for washing and cleansing from the dirt of the world.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (Jn.21:16).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Is.1:18).

6 (13:15-17) **Service—Ministry**: the reasons for royal service are threefold.

1. A believer is to serve because of Jesus' example. It would be easy to wash Jesus' feet, but to wash each others' feet is where the difficulty lies.

⇒ Is there someone's feet I am unwilling to wash? Remember Jesus washed even Judas' feet.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mt.16:24).

"Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus" (Ro.15:5).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:1-2).

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Ph.2:5).

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col.3:12-13).

2. A believer is to serve because believers are not as great as the Lord. Note: we are less than Jesus Christ...
   - in person and position.
   - in mission and work.

(The same saying is found in Mt.10:24; Lk.6:40; Jn.15:20. Cp. also Lk.22:26-27 for a picture of the truth.)

3. A believer is to serve because of resulting joy. The Greek tense is continuous, "Happy are ye if ye *keep on doing* them [these things, serving]." Just knowing the truth is not enough. We must do the truth and keep on doing the truth. When we do, we are filled with joy. (Cp. Jn.15:11.)

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Mt.11:29).

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:17).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn.17:13).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Is.61:10).

"Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).

	B. The Prediction of the Betrayer: A Picture of Apostasy, 13:18-30	disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.	d. Peter's gesture for John to inquire further
1 There is the heartbreak of betrayal a. Betrayer is not chosen b. Betrayer is of the basest sort: Eats with, yet turns away*psi*	18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.	25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?	e. John's inquiry
2 There is the prediction of betrayal a. To assure that Jesus is the Messiah b. To strengthen the dignity of the Lord's call c. To give assurance of God's indwelling presence	19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.	26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.	f. Jesus' indirect & merciful identification: The giving of a last chance
3 There is the last chance given to the betrayer a. The betrayer's presence exposed b. Jesus' distress	20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.	27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. 28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.	**4 There is the warning against betrayal** a. The evil possession b. The charge: Act now c. The deceiving of the disciples by the betrayer
c. The disciples' perplexity, nervousness, & self-consciousness	22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his	30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.	d. The judgment: Seen in the betrayer's being separated immediately

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

B. The Prediction of the Betrayer: A Picture of Apostasy, 13:18-30

(13:18-30) **Introduction**: this is a clear picture of betrayal and apostasy, of a man who turns away from Christ to the world. It stands as a strong warning to every man who *professes* to follow Christ.

1. There is the heartbreak of betrayal (v.18).
2. There is the prediction of betrayal (v.19-20).
3. There is the last chance given to the betrayer (v.21-26).
4. There is the warning against betrayal (v.27-30).

1 (13:18) **Betrayal—Apostasy**: there is the heartbreak of betrayal. When Judas or any other man betrays the Lord, the Lord's heart is cut to the core, for a soul is being lost. There are two things in particular that cut deeply.

1. The betrayer is not chosen by Christ. He cannot be, for he has rejected Christ; therefore, Christ has to reject him (Mt.10:32-33). Christ did draw Judas; He did move upon Judas' heart to quicken his mind. He did stir Judas to understand that He, Jesus, *was* the Messiah, the very Son of God Himself. But Judas rebelled against the *drawing power* of Christ and rejected the *quickening power* of Christ.

When a man is so drawn and quickened by God's Spirit, he must respond then and there. God says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with men" (Gen.6:3). Most persons are aware of a tugging and a pull to decide for God sometime in their lives. However, when the tug and the drawing power are rejected, it soon leaves; and the person ceases to think too much about the matter.

> **"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years" (Gen.6:3).**
>
> **"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).**

The point is this. When a person betrays Christ and begins to live in sin, he shows that he did not truly respond to *the movement* of God's Spirit within his heart. He exposes his true unregenerate nature: he is not one of the chosen of God. This breaks the heart of Christ, for He wants every man to pay attention to the call of the Spirit, to respond to His offer of eternal salvation. He wants everyone to become a true follower of His. He wants no one to be lost.

> **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pt.3:9).**

"Many are called, but few are chosen" (Mt.22:14. See notes—Jn.6:44-46; Deeper Study # 1—12:39-41 for more discussion.)

2. The betrayer is of the basest sort: he eats with Christ, yet his heel is against Christ. Judas actually ate bread with Jesus. Judas was a friend of Jesus, not an enemy. He did not hate Jesus; he cared for Him. He often walked into the house of God with Jesus and had close fellowship with Him. Judas was His follower, a choice disciple, yet Judas lifted up his heel against Jesus. The very wording of the prophecy shows the heartrending tragedy of the situation. The term "lifted up his heel" is the picture of a horse lifting up his hoof to kick. Judas *kicked* Jesus. He struck Him with the fatal blow...

⇒ of disloyalty: he forsook Christ.
⇒ of contempt: he rejected Christ.
⇒ of betrayal: he spurned the love of Christ, turning his back upon Him.

The whole scene is one of tragedy, a tragedy that is deplorable and heartbreaking. One who professed Christ was not a true follower of Christ. He was in fact a betrayer, an enemy, a person who chose and stood for the things of the world (money, recognition, power. See note—Jn.12:4-8.)

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph.5:5-6).

"For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:2-3).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(13:18) **Prophetic Reference**: cp. Ps.41:9.

2 (13:19-20) **Betrayal—Apostasy—Minister, Dignity of**: there is the prediction of the betrayal. Christ predicted the betrayal to strengthen and assure the disciples.

1. Christ wanted His disciples to be strong in their belief in Him as the Messiah. Once the prophecy came to pass, they would know He was omniscient (that He knew all things). And only God knows all things. Therefore, they would know that He was exactly who He claimed to be, the Son of God, the One who has the very nature of God Himself. Their faith in Him would be strongly strengthened.

Thought 1. God knows every person's heart. Even a person's inner thoughts are known to God, as well as what a person does. No one can hide what He does from God, not even a thought. God knows if a man is betraying His Son. He even knows if a man is thinking about sinning and turning his back on Jesus. The more a man thinks about sinning, the more likely he is to turn back. His betrayal can be predicted.

"For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad" (Lk.8:17).

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him" (Jn.6:64).

"For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21).

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings" (Pr.5:21).

"For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes" (Jer.16:17).

"And the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them" (Ezk.11:5).

Thought 2. The fulfillment of prophecy is strong evidence for both the deity of Christ and the inspiration of the Bible.

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Mt.5:18).

For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezk.12:25).

2. Christ wanted His disciples to be assured of the dignity of their call as servants of God. Judas had betrayed the call, and his betrayal had left a bad image in people's minds and reflected a poor image of the ministry. It could affect

some people, causing them to question the power of Christ, even causing others to actually withdraw and turn away from the ministry. The betrayal could also cause true disciples to become discouraged, feeling that God's call and ministry did not have the dignity Christ claimed.

> **"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (1 Th.5:12-13).**
>
> **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1 Tim.5:17).**
>
> **"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Heb.13:7).**

Christ was clear. The man may be dirty and unclean; he may even be a betrayer, but the call and ministry are not touched. The office of His servant and follower cannot be affected. Nothing can affect the relationship between Him and His true disciple, nor the relationship between the Father and His disciple. People will still continue to be saved. Nothing can change this. People out in the world...

- who receive the Lord's messenger receive the Lord.
- who receive the Lord receive God.

> **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:13).**
>
> **"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).**

3. Christ wanted His disciples to be assured of God's indwelling presence. Note that Christ put Himself on a par with God. To receive Christ is to receive God, and to receive Christ's indwelling presence is to have God's indwelling presence. What a glorious promise to the believer! His body is the temple of God (cp. 1 Cor.6:19-20. See DEEPER STUDY # 4—Jn.20:22; 2 Cor.4:7 for more discussion.)

> **"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21; cp. Jn.10:37-38; 14:10).**
>
> **"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:23).**
>
> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).**

3 (13:21-26) **Betrayal—Decision—Last Chance**: there is the last chance given to the betrayer. This scene is most descriptive. Jesus exposed Judas, but He did it quietly, and He did it to give Judas a last chance to repent and to turn from his evil.

Note that Jesus was "troubled in spirit" and "testified" (a strong, solemn witness), that he used the solemn attention getter, "verily, verily." All this stresses the extreme seriousness of betrayal. Jesus was "troubled in spirit": distressed, moved, disturbed over the desertion of this false believer and servant—this betrayer who was turning back to the sin of the world.

The disciples were perplexed and became nervous and self-conscious over Jesus' exposure of a betrayer. The disciples had no idea; they were totally unaware of a deserter. They looked at one another wondering just who it might be. Note two things.

⇒ Judas was a counterfeit disciple, an exceptional deceiver. In public he was ideal: moral, decent, upright. No one ever suspected him—not at all. It was what Judas did in secret that doomed him, not what he did in public. He was a deserter, a man of the world behind the scenes.

⇒ Note the tenderness of Jesus. He did not reveal the betrayer by name. Jesus was making the man aware that He knew about his desertion, and He was hoping that the man would begin to fear and turn from his evil deed.

The disciples wanted to know who the traitor was. One of the disciples who was leaning next to Jesus, apparently John himself (out of humility he did not give his name), was beckoned by Peter to ask Jesus for the name of the betrayer.

Note Jesus' tenderness and appeal: His love still reached out to Judas.

⇒ Jesus did not name Judas as the traitor, not vocally. He did not want the disciples to know who the betrayer was. Judas still had a chance.

⇒ Jesus drew Judas close by His side. Apparently, He asked Judas to sit by His side. He was close enough that Jesus could reach him and hand the sop to him. Jesus wanted him close so that Judas would be in a position to consider the seriousness of what he was doing. (Note: if the listener of this point is living in sin, God has him listening. God wants him to consider the seriousness of his sin. God will place the betrayer in a position where he has to consider the seriousness of what he is doing.)

⇒ Jesus gave very special attention to Judas. He gave the sop to Judas. The sop (a morsel of bread or meat) was a sign of special attention and affection. This act of affection actually turned suspicion away from Judas, for Jesus seemed to be saying "Judas means something special to me." This act also gave Judas a chance to repent.

⇒ Jesus identified Judas, but only to John. However, John did not fully grasp what was happening. Remember the disciples had no idea that Jesus was about to be murdered. The giving of the sop, because of its sign of affection, also threw suspicion away from Judas.

The whole scene, in all its descriptive drama and tragedy, is a picture of strong appeal—the appeal of the Lord to a man who was about to sell his soul for the goods of the world. It is the picture of a last chance being given to a betrayer.

Thought 1. Note that this is the last chance Judas would ever have to repent. There would be no more opportunities. The Lord was appealing and doing all He could. The decision was the deserter's. He would either turn to Christ or to the world. There would be no more chances.

> **"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).**
>
> **"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).**

4 (13:27-30) **Betrayal—Apostasy**: there is the warning against betrayal. This whole scene is a warning to every person who claims to be a follower of Christ. Remember, Judas was a disciple, a man who ate with Jesus and was a close friend of Jesus.

1. Evil possessed Judas; Satan entered him. This was a critical moment. Sitting there, Judas stiffened and refused to listen. He hardened his heart and made the decision...
   - to give himself over to evil and to do the work of Satan.
   - to be filled with the thoughts of wrong and of Satan.
   - to act for sin and for Satan.
   - to be controlled by evil and controlled by Satan.

   Judas made the decision to do as he had planned. He gave himself over to evil: to be possessed by Satan and evil.

Thought 1. The warning is clear. To do sin is to be possessed by sin and by Satan himself.

2. Jesus charged Judas: act now and act quickly. Once a person has made the decision to desert Him, Jesus wants no dallying around. He wants the traitor and counterfeit disciple out from among His fellowship.
3. The deception of the disciples. Judas had hid his sin well. The other disciples had no idea what was happening.

Thought 1. Being able to hide and keep sin a secret...
- is not a cute trick.
- is not a reason for feeling more suave or capable than others.
- is not a reason for feeling that one's ego is boosted.

Hiding and keeping sin a secret is building one's life upon a false foundation that will result in a collapsed life. The very fact that true disciples are unaware of a person's sin is a warning to the sinner. He is building a life of deception and lies that will crumble every worthwhile relationship he has.

> **"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Mt.7:26-27).**
>
> **"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).**
>
> **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.6:23).**
>
> **"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).**
>
> **"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 Jn.2:22).**
>
> **"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezk.18:4).**

4. The judgment is descriptive. The deserter...
   - was separated immediately.
   - went out into the night and into the darkness (see note—Jn.3:18-20; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:12).

	C. The Departure of Jesus From This World, 13:31-38 (Mt.26:30-35; Mk.14:26-31; Lk.22:31-34)	you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.	c. The mark of a true disciple: Love
1 Jesus' death brought a threefold glory a. The Son of Man's glory: The cross b. God's glory: Jesus' obedience c. Jesus' glory: The resurrection	31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.	36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.	**3 Jesus' death revealed stumbling loyalty** a. Cause 1: Misunderstanding Jesus' death
2 Jesus' death demanded a new commandment a. The reason: His departure from the earth	33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.	37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.	b. Cause 2: Carnal commitment
b. The new commandment: To love as Jesus loved	34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved	38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.	

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

C. The Departure of Jesus From This World, 13:31-38

(13:31-38) **Introduction**: the death and departure of Jesus from the world was most significant.

1. Jesus' death brought a threefold glory (v.31-32).
2. Jesus' death demanded a new commandment (v.33-35).
3. Jesus' death revealed a stumbling loyalty (v.36-38).

1 (13:31-32) **Jesus Christ, Glory; Death**: Jesus' death brought a threefold glory.

1. There was the Son of Man's glory. The glory of Jesus was the cross. This was true in four senses. (See note—Jn.12:23-26 for more discussion.)

a. Jesus was now ready to secure an eternal righteousness for man. He was now ready to take the final step as the Son of Man...

- as the One who was the Servant of all men.
- as the One who was to secure perfect righteousness by dying as God willed.
- as the One who was to pay the supreme price in obeying God (to die).
- as the One who was ready to die in obedience to God's will so that God could save man.

Jesus became the Perfect and Ideal Man because He was perfectly obedient to God, even in dying. As the Ideal Man, His righteousness and death could stand for every man's righteousness and death. A person just has to believe the fact that Jesus' death covers him. There was glory in being the Son of Man: in being every man's Ideal righteousness and death. The cross glorifies Jesus as the Son of Man. (See notes, *Son of Man*—Jn.1:51; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—*Justification*—Ro.4:22; note—5:1 for more discussion.)

> **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:14-15).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**

b. Jesus was now ready to make the final sacrifice for man, and He was ready to pay the supreme price to bring about the greatest event in all history: the salvation of man. The cross attracts and stirs men to give themselves to Jesus and to honor and praise Him. It is in the cross that men find their salvation; therefore, the cross is the glory of Jesus.

c. Jesus was now ready to triumph over Satan by breaking Satan's power over death and over the souls of men. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:28-34; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.12:31 for more discussion.)

⇒ Jesus spoiled principalities and power, triumphing over them in the cross.

> **"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col.2:13).**

⇒ Jesus destroyed the works of the devil.

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).

⇒ Jesus broke the power and fear of Satan over lives and death.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

There is glory in the triumph and victory over Satan, especially over one so powerful and influential as Satan. The cross is the glory of Christ.

"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:31-32).

d. Jesus demonstrated what perfect sacrifice and self-denial, courage and strength, love and compassion really are when He died on the cross. There is great glory in every one of these qualities. The cross is the glory of Christ.

2. There is God's glory. The glory of God was the perfect obedience of Jesus.

a. God was glorified by the supreme obedience of Jesus dying on the cross (see note, pt.3—Jn.12:27-30 for discussion). His obedience in dying upon the cross glorifies God.

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb.5:8).

b. God's justice was perfectly satisfied on the cross. His honor was restored by the cross, for the evil done against Him was justly punished upon the cross. The cross glorifies God.

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Ro.3:25).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:2).

c. God's love was perfectly demonstrated on the cross. He gave His *only* Son to pay the supreme price *for* man: to sacrifice His life *for* man. The cross glorifies God.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

3. There is Jesus' glory "in Himself." This glory is the resurrection, ascension, and exaltation. What is meant by "in Himself"? There are two possible answers.

⇒ Jesus was asking to be glorified in God Himself: with God's own Person, with His very special presence and power and glory. This, of course, was done when Christ was set upon the throne of God Himself (Rev.3:21).

⇒ Jesus was asking to be glorified *in His own Person*: to be infused with a manifestation of God's presence and power and glory. This was done in the resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of Christ (Ph.2:8-11).

Note: Jesus said that God would "immediately glorify" Him.

"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but it if die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:23-24).

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee....I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jn.17:1, 4-5).

2 (13:33-35) **Love—Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus' death demanded a new commandment. Again, note the reference to Jesus' death.

1. Jesus said that He was departing, that He would be with the disciples for only a little while longer. This was *the reason* Jesus had to give His disciples a new commandment. He was leaving. There were three reasons the new commandment on love was needed by every generation of believers.
   a. There are times when believers differ. There is always the danger of becoming critical, judgmental, censorious, and divisive. Remember, the disciples had just been arguing over who should receive the highest positions of authority in Jesus' new government (see note—Lk.22:24-30). They had been struggling against each other and were highly critical and judgmental of each other. They had been deeply divided. The need for a new commandment and a new supernatural love existed then even as it does today.
   b. There are times when believers feel a keen need for Jesus' physical presence. Jesus knew this. That is the reason He said that the disciples would seek His presence. True, believers have the Holy Spirit, and He is the all-sufficient Comforter and the abiding Presence of God Himself. But being human, believers need another human presence with them. They need a brother or a sister, a genuine believer who loves them with the supernatural love of Jesus Himself. Jesus knew this, so He commanded believers to love each other. Believers are to meet the needs of each other for companionship and fellowship and for care and concern.
   c. There is the need for some supernatural force to hold the disciples together. Jesus' physical presence had been the cohesive force that had held the disciples together when He was on earth. But once He had gone, His followers would need something else to hold them together. They must stay and serve together in one spirit and purpose. But how? The new commandment is the answer.
2. The new commandment is to love *as Christ loved*. Note several points.
   a. This is not the old commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." It is not a human, neighborly love that is being commanded. This *new commandment* was given to *disciples only*. It is the spiritual love that is to exist between believers as brothers and sisters and as servants of God who minister together.
   b. The love being commanded is the love of Jesus Himself which is the love of God Himself, the love that can be shed abroad in our hearts only by the Holy Spirit (cp. Ro.5:5). It is not the normal physical love among human neighbors which is being commanded by God. It is a spiritual love that is wrought only by the Spirit of God.

      Note: the distinctiveness of this love is that it is the love of Jesus Himself that dwells in the heart of the believer. Only the Spirit of God can put the love of Jesus there within the heart of the believer. The Holy Spirit can create within the believer the love of Jesus Himself, the very same love which Jesus had while here on earth. The love of Jesus is …

      - the love of *spiritual being*: the love that causes one to hunger after union with God and God's people.
      - the love of *spiritual life*: the love that shares the same life with all believers, both abundant and eternal life.
      - the love of *spiritual union*: the love that binds and ties believers together in life and purpose.
      - the love of *spiritual attachment or fellowship*: the love that shares needs and blessings and joys and sorrows and gifts together.

      The Holy Spirit can create within the believer a love that can melt and mold his heart to the hearts of other believers. But note: it is a commandment; therefore, it is conditional. The Holy Spirit *can* create such a love, but believers *have to receive it*. When the love of Jesus dwells in the heart of a believer, several things happen. The believer has a love that *causes* him…

      - to bind his life to the lives of other believers.
      - to tie his life to the same purpose as other believers.
      - to surrender his will and to be of the same mind as other believers.
      - to understand and feel with other believers.
      - to forgive other believers—always.
      - to sacrifice himself for other believers—always.
      - to seek the welfare of other believers before his own.
      - to deny self completely.
   c. The new commandment is the mark of a true disciple. The distinguishing mark of a true believer is not the normal human love of neighbors, not even the love of brothers and sisters or of husband and wife. It is the spiritual and supernatural love of Jesus Himself that dwells within the life of the believer. By this love shall all men know that a person is a *true* disciple of the Lord.

> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).**
>
> **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 Jn.4:7-8).**

3 (13:36-38) **Peter, Denial—Cross, Misunderstood**: Jesus' death revealed stumbling and faltering loyalty. Note what Peter did. He paid no attention to the new commandment Jesus had just given. His Lord had just said that He was going away and leaving them, but Jesus had not been clear. He had spoken in dark, secretive terms. It was this that had gripped Peter's heart. He must know what Jesus was talking about: if Jesus were talking about some spiritual truth and using symbolic terms or if He were really going to be leaving them.

Now note what Jesus did. He still used the same language: He was leaving, and where He was going they could not follow, not now. But they would follow Him later.

Peter was delving into things he could not yet understand. Jesus was returning to heaven and going back to the Father from whom He had come. He could not say it any clearer than what He had said. The disciples could not and would not understand until after the resurrection and ascension.

> **Thought 1.** How often our curiosity is aroused by the hints of Scripture about future events, the details of which are kept secret—all because it is not yet time for us to fully understand. Just think! If all were revealed, how could we walk by faith and prove our faith? If we walked by sight (seeing and understanding all), there would be nothing to believe.
>
> **Thought 2.** Note another fact. Peter got distracted and paid no attention to the greatest commandment Jesus had ever given His followers (Jn.13:34-35). It was the future event of Jesus' return to heaven that aroused his curiosity. It distracted his attention from where it should have been.

Jesus used the occasion to reveal Peter's stumbling and faltering faith. Peter stumbled for two reasons.

1. Peter misunderstood Jesus' death. Jesus was going to die and arise from the dead and then return to the Father. He had drilled this fact into the disciples for some months now, using words as clear and simple as possible (see note—Mt.16:21-28). Yet, they refused to accept His prediction. They thought of God's kingdom in terms of a physical kingdom and government set up upon this earth. They saw the Messiah ruling over all the nations of the earth with Israel as the central capital of the world. They thought in terms of earthly freedom, position, power, fame, wealth, possessions, comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction. They saw the physical and were blind to the spiritual. They did not see...
   - God's concern with eternity and the need for the cross.
   - that man had to be created spiritually: created anew with the very same nature as God in order to live with God.
   - that the cross was God's way for man to be saved: created anew, forgiven and made clean and acceptable before God. (Cp. 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18.)

Very simply stated, it was the idea of Jesus hanging upon the cross that was going to cause Peter to deny Jesus. Jesus had told Peter about the cross, but Peter had refused to believe it (cp. Mt.12:22; 18:1). The fact that human flesh was so depraved that God would have to crucify His own Son in order to save man was just too much to grasp. (See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Ro.6:3-5; notes—Ro.6:6-7; Gal.2:19-21; 5:24; pt.1, Gal.6:14-17. Cp. Ro.6:2; Col.3:3.)

> **Thought 1.** How many make the same mistake about the cross? Misunderstanding the cross and Jesus as the exalted Lord (as opposed to His being just a great teacher) causes stumbling and faltering faith.
>
> **"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor.1:18).**
>
> **"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness" (1 Cor.1:23).**
>
> **"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:3-5).**

2. Peter's commitment was a carnal, fleshly commitment. It was caused by not knowing himself—his own personal weaknesses or the weaknesses of his human flesh. Peter's self-image was strong. He saw himself as being above *serious* sin and failure. He asserted with all the confidence in the world that he would die for Jesus before denying Him.

Note several things.

a. Peter was a strong believer, one of the strongest.
b. Peter really failed to understand self and the flesh. The one sin that a believer should not commit is to deny Jesus. To die for Jesus rather than to deny Him is the one thing a genuine believer would be expected to do.
c. Peter believed strongly that he (his flesh) was above serious sin (cp. Ro.3:9f; 7:8, 14-18; Gal.5:19f).
d. Peter failed not once, but three times, and all three failures were on the same night with Jesus right off to his side (Lk.22:61).

> **"And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor.8:2).**
>
> **"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor.10:12).**
>
> **"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal.6:3).**
>
> **"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him" (Pr.26:12).**
>
> **"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Pr.28:26).**

	CHAPTER 14
	D. Jesus' Death Delivers Troubled Hearts, 14:1-3
1 **Delivers through belief**	Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
2 **Delivers through the hope for God's house & its mansions**	2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
3 **Delivers through Jesus' work**	3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
4 **Delivers through Jesus' return**[DSI]	
5 **Delivers through an eternal habitation with Jesus**	

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

D. Jesus' Death Delivers Troubled Hearts, 14:1-3

(14:1-3) **Introduction**: Jesus' death delivers troubled hearts. The disciples had reason to be troubled. Several things had just happened that would disturb any body of people.

⇒ *Divisiveness* had set in among them (see note—Lk.22:24-30).
⇒ *Desertion and betrayal* by one of them was now known (Jn.13:18f).
⇒ *Separation from the Lord* had been the topic of discussion (Jn.13:33).
⇒ *Denying Jesus* had just been talked about (Jn.13:38).

The scene needs to be clearly viewed, even felt in order to grasp the impact of what Jesus was about to say.

⇒ The disciples were greatly troubled (tarassestho): disturbed, agitated, perplexed, worried, tossed about, confused, distressed.
⇒ The disciples needed to be settled down and given some sense of peace: to receive some encouragement and some new hope.

(How much like believers! How often we are afflicted with trouble and need the same words of encouragement and hope—the same deliverance!) Jesus said that deliverance from trouble comes through five things.

1. Delivers through belief (v.1).
2. Delivers through the hope for God's house and its mansions (v.2).
3. Delivers through Jesus' work (v.2).
4. Delivers through Jesus' return (v.3).
5. Delivers through an eternal habitation with Jesus (v.3).

(14:1-3) **Another Outline**: Jesus' Death Delivers Troubled Hearts.

1. His commandment: believe in me (v.1).
2. His assurance: God has a house (v.2).
3. His departure: to prepare (v.2).
4. His great promise: to return (v.3).
5. His great purpose: an eternal reunion (v.3).

1 (14:1) **Belief—Faith—Deliverance**: deliverance from troubled hearts comes through belief in Jesus Christ as well as in God.

1. "You believe in God, believe also in Me. I Am the revelation of God, the Son of God Himself. Believing in me, that I am the Son of God, will deliver you from trouble." (See notes—Jn.14:6; 14:27 for discussion.)
2. "Believe in God; believe also in Me. Continuing to believe even while you are in the midst of trouble will carry you through. Believing in God and His Son will deliver your troubled hearts." (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24 for discussion.)

> **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (Jn.6:28-29).**

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

2 (14:2) **Heaven—Hope**: deliverance from troubled hearts comes through the hope for God's house. Note several points.

1. Jesus called God "*My Father.*" He knew His Father just as any son knows his father. He knew the truth: His Father *is*, really does exist and live. (Cp. Heb.11:6.) Note the claim to deity Jesus was making (see note—Jn.1:51).
2. Jesus knew *His Father's house*, the truth and reality of it. God's house is real; it does exist. It is a real world that exists in another dimension of being, the spiritual dimension. It is named heaven, for it is His Father's house. This world—the physical and material world—is the property of God, but it is not His house. This earth is not the eternal and permanent dwelling place of God. Heaven is the spiritual world or dimension of being, the *home* of God where the mansions for believers exist.
3. The word "mansion" (monai) means abiding place. It means places, residences, rooms, dwellings, areas, spaces for living. What a glorious hope! How much clearer could Jesus be: *a place* for every one of us—a place for every believer to dwell and live. Just as we have dwellings and homes here on earth, so Jesus promises us dwellings and homes (mansions) in heaven.

And note: there is no shortage. There are "*many* mansions." (In the other gospels, Jesus talks a great deal about believers inheriting huge areas or places, even whole realms and kingdoms, which probably mean the heavenly bodies all throughout the universe that will be recreated in the new heavens and earth; 2 Pt.3:10-13; Rev.21:1. See notes—Mt.19:28; 24:45-47; 25:20-23.)

Note how Jesus stressed the truth and reality of "God's house" and its "mansions": "If it were not so, I would have told you." Jesus did not lie. He told only the truth. Note something else: one thing is essential to inherit these mansions—belief in Christ (v.1).

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:1).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building" (Heb.9:11).

"For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb.11:10).

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country" (Heb.11:13-14).

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Heb.13:14).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (Rev.21:10).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).

3 (14:2) **Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection—Exaltation**: deliverance from troubled hearts comes through Jesus' work. Picture Jesus seated in the Upper Room surrounded by His disciples. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Where is He to go?

1. Jesus Christ went to the cross: to prepare redemption for us, even the forgiveness of sins.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18.)

"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev.5:9).

2. Jesus Christ went to be raised from the dead: to prepare the conquest of death and a new life and power for us.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Ro.6:4).

"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (1 Cor.6:14).

"For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you" (2 Cor.13:4).

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col.2:12).

"That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph.1:18-19).

3. Jesus Christ went to ascend into heaven and be exalted: to prepare an access into the presence of God and an eternal home for us.

"By whom [Christ] also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Ro.5:2).

"[God] hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph.2:5-6).

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col.3:1).

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him" (2 Tim.2:11).

Such a magnificent work in our behalf is bound to deliver us from trouble. But remember that Jesus began by stating a condition: "Ye believe in *God, believe* also in me."

4 (14:3) **Jesus Christ, Return**: deliverance from troubled hearts comes through Jesus' return. Note why He is to return: to receive us unto Himself. There are two times when Jesus comes for the believer.

1. There is death or the passing of the believer into heaven. Death is a private escort or a private presentation to the Lord (2 Cor.5:8). It is not the triumphant entrance and glorious march of victory which is promised when Jesus returns. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:3 for more discussion.)

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).

2. There is the return of Jesus Himself to gather all His dear followers unto Himself. It is this return of Himself to which He is referring in this passage.

Believers are to be glorified with the Father and Jesus. Such a glorious hope—meditating upon and grasping it—will carry a troubled soul through any trial, even the trial of martyrdom. But note again: believing in God and in His Son Jesus is the only way man can take part in His return. (See outline and notes—1 Th.4:13-5:3. Cp. Jn.5:28-29; Tit.2:12-13; 2 Pt.3:3-4, 8-16 for more discussion.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (Jn.5:25).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn.5:28-29).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:16-17).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:3) **Jesus Christ, Return—Death**: there is a difference in the Bible between the believer's meeting Jesus in death and meeting Jesus in the air at His return.

1. The believer does meet Jesus at death. The believer passes from this world into the next world, into heaven itself; and he passes quickly, *never tasting the pain of death* (see note—Jn.8:51). He passes quicker than the blinking of an eye,

never losing a moment's consciousness. One moment he is in this world; the next moment he is in the presence of the Lord. This is the believer's personal presentation to the Lord. It is the very first sight the believer will have of his Lord.

⇒ Stephen, while being stoned to death, anticipated going immediately to be with the Lord (Acts 7:59).
⇒ Stephen even "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7:55).
⇒ Paul actually said: "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).
⇒ Paul even said "he had a desire" to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better" (Ph.1:23).
⇒ Jesus had even promised the thief: "today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk.23:43).
⇒ The believers of Thessalonica who had already died are said to "sleep in Jesus" (1 Th.4:14). By "sleep" is meant they are resting in the presence of the Lord (see note—Jn.11:13).

"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk.23:43).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:3).

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24).

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:17).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me [transfer, take me] unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).

2. The believer, his body, does arise and meet Jesus in the air when He returns. The deceased bodies of believers shall arise from wherever and however many places they lie on earth. And the believers who are still living on earth shall arise in their bodies to meet the Lord in the air. It will be as quick as the blinking of an eye, and it shall happen. All believers, both in heaven and on earth, shall arise and receive their glorified bodies—dramatically and instantaneously. Jesus promised that He would come again, and He will. We must never forget: God promised that His Son would come the first time, and He came; so He will come again despite the unbelief of the vast majority of people.

Jesus Christ is coming again to give both Himself and His people a glorious reunion and march of triumph over sin, death, and hell...

- A reunion and march so glorious it explosively exceeds all that a man can think or dream.
- A reunion and march of indescribable perfection and joy, a march when all of the dear followers of Christ shall be gathered together before Him for the very first time. Each shall experience the presence and joy of all the saints, the dear, dear saints who have gone before and who have come after—including Paul, Peter, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Moody and all the other well-known servants of God; the multitudes who have been unknown to men, but are well-known to God—known to be first because they labored in the insignificant spots of the world as God directed and were ever so faithful.

There, before the Lord Jesus Christ, we will all stand for the very first time, every believer who has ever lived.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Lk.12:37).

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:3).

"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col.3:4).

"To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Th.3:13).

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Th.4:16-17).

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pt.5:4).

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:2).

5 (14:3) **Eternal Life—Heaven**: deliverance from troubled hearts comes through an eternal habitation with Jesus. Note the very reason Jesus will return to earth: "That where I am, there ye may be also." Where is Jesus? Wherever He is, the very place He is, is exactly where we shall be. We shall be with Him—with our precious Lord forever—with Him who has saved us—with Him who has forgiven our sins despite their awfulness—with Him who has delivered us from the bondage of sin, death, and hell—with Him who has cared for us and guided us day by day—with Him who has shared and given us His presence. Again, we shall be with our wonderful Lord forever and ever. This is the very longing of His heart, the very thing for which He prayed so intensely:

> **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24).**
>
> **"For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:20-21).**

	E. The Way to God Is by Jesus Alone, 14:4-7
1 **Jesus' destination** a. The destination is known b. The way is known, v.4 c. Thomas' contradiction & skepticism	4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?
2 **The way to God is Jesus Himself**[DSI,2,3]	6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
3 **The destination is God**	
4 **The only way to God is Jesus**	
5 **The only way to God is now revealed—unmistakably**	7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

E. The Way to God Is by Jesus Alone, 14:4-7

(14:4-7) **Introduction**: this subject is a continuation of Jesus' departure from this world. It is outlined separately because it is spurred on by another question, this one by Thomas. (Cp. Jn.13:36 for the first question by Peter.)

This is a critical passage—one of the most critical in all of Scripture. Jesus declared in unmistakable terms how a person gets to God, and He makes it clear: there is no other way to God.

1. Jesus' destination (v.4-5).
2. The way to God is Jesus Himself (v.6).
3. The destination is God (v.6).
4. The only way to God is Jesus (v.6).
5. The only way to God is now revealed—unmistakably (v.7).

1 (14:4-5) **Jesus Christ, Ascension; Exaltation**: Jesus' destination is under discussion. He had shaken the disciples badly, discussing at length the fact that He was leaving them. This is, of course, a prediction of His death and ascension (Jn.13:33, 36; 14:3, 4). Note two points.

1. Jesus told the disciples, "Where I go ye know, and the way ye know." And they did, for He had told them time and time again.

   a. "Where I go ye know": He was going back to the Father from whom He had come.

> **"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God" (Jn.13:3).**
>
> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn.14:2).**
>
> **"But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?....I go to my Father, and ye see me no more....Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father" (Jn.16:5, 10, 17).**

   b. "The way to get there you know": *through Him.*

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25-26).**

2. Thomas contradicted Jesus and spoke with skepticism.
   ⇒ We do not know where you are going.
   ⇒ How can we know the way?

Here sat the disciples, thinking that Jesus was about to lead them to set up the Kingdom of God on earth, freeing Israel and establishing it as the greatest nation on earth. Then all of a sudden He began to talk about going someplace; in addition, He insisted they could not follow Him.

They were, of course, thinking in terms of an earthly and temporal government, of worldly positions and power, of wealth and possessions, of pomp and ceremony. This was their problem. Jesus had told them where He was going in simple and clear terms. He had said frequently that He was...

- to die and rise again (see notes—Jn.7:33-34; Mt.16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27).
- to go to the Father (see note—Jn.7:33-34. Cp. Jn.8:14; 13:3; 14:2-3; 16:5, 10, 17.)

However, they refused to accept the fact. The result was inevitable. They were misunderstanding what He was saying and doomed to fail in their allegiance to Him.

Thought 1. Note the contradiction and skepticism of the world even today. The world proclaims: "We do not know where God is, not really. Even if He exists, we can only seek Him the best we can, trying to find out just where He is. Every man must find and discover his own way and hope he has found it."

> **"Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).**
>
> **"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).**
>
> **"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (Acts 17:23).**
>
> **"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).**
>
> **"[Men] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).**

Thought 2. The man who thinks in worldly terms and lives for the earth (position, power, wealth, honor, possessions) shall never know where Christ has gone nor how to get there. As Christ told Nicodemus, unless he was *born again* he would not "see the kingdom of God" nor "enter into the kingdom of God."

> **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he *cannot see* the kingdom of God....Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he *cannot enter* into the kingdom of God" (Jn.3:3, 5).**
>
> **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14).**

2 (14:6) **Jesus Christ, Mediator**: the way to God is through Jesus Christ Himself. This is a critical verse, for Jesus said that no man could reach God unless he approached God through Jesus Himself. Note Jesus' claim to deity: "I Am" (see note—Jn.6:20). Jesus made three phenomenal claims.

1. I Am the Way (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Jesus the Way*—Jn.14:6).
2. I Am the Truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus the Truth*—Jn.14:6).
3. I Am the Life (see DEEPER STUDY # 3, *Jesus the Life*—Jn.14:6).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:6) **Jesus the Way**: there is a difference between pointing the way to a particular place and taking someone by the hand to lead him there. The person who guides someone to his destination literally becomes the way himself. Jesus Christ not only points out how to walk through life and how to reach God, He personally shows the person the way. Therefore, He Himself is the Way. Note the repetition of the word "way" (v.4, 5, 6).

> **"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest [God's presence] by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb.10:19-20).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(14:6) **Jesus the Truth**: there is a difference between telling someone about the truth and living the truth before them. The one who lives the truth literally becomes the truth.

1. Jesus Christ is the *Embodiment* of truth (Jn.14:6). He is the picture of truth. God not only talks to man about Himself, God shows man what He is like in the person of Jesus Christ. Man can look at Jesus Christ and see a perfect picture of the truth of God.

> **"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).**
>
> **"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**
>
> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).**

2. Jesus Christ is the *Communicator* of truth. He Himself—His Person and His Life—makes things perfectly clear. He reveals the ultimate source and meaning and end of all things. He reveals the truth of man himself and of the world surrounding man. He shows man the right way to the truth, and He enables man to choose the right way to the truth.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness" (Jn.3:11).

"And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony" (Jn.3:32).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go" (Jn.8:14).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn.17:14).

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5).

3. Jesus Christ is the *Liberator* of truth (Jn.8:32; 15:3). He sets men free from the great gulf (estrangement) which exists between man and God, between man and his world, and between man and man. He sets man free from the frustrations which he constantly experiences. He frees man from the fears and weaknesses and defects that plague him. Jesus Christ is the only lasting Liberator on earth. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:9; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:23.)

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn.8:32).

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (Jn.15:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(14:6) **Jesus the Life**: there is a difference between telling someone about life and actually living life. The one who lives is the one who possesses life, and the more perfect one lives, the more life one possesses. Jesus Christ lived perfectly; therefore, He possesses life perfectly. He is the Life: the very embodiment, energy, force, and source of life itself. (See notes—Jn.1:4; 10:10; 17:2-3.)

"In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (Jn.1:4).

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.5:21).

"But [salvation] is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

3 (14:6) **Resurrection—Ascension**: the destination is God. Again, Jesus clearly said where He was going. He was going to "the Father." He was not going to remain dead. He was going to arise and ascend to the Father. This was a picture of both the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Now note: Jesus had just said He was going to His "Father's *house*." Now He said that He was going to "the *Father*" of the house. His destination was not so much the house, as glorious as the house is, but the Father Himself. The house without the Father would not be *home*; it would not be heaven.

This says something of vital importance to the believer. The believer's primary objective is to go to the Father Himself, not to heaven, not to a place. The believer's aim is to live in the *Father's presence* forever.

1. The believer longs to know and ever learn of the Father *personally*...
   - to know the Father face to face as his Father: as the One who created him, both physically and spiritually; as the One who loves the world so much that He would give His only Son to save mankind and provide so glorious a salvation.
   - to know the Father face to face as the Creator and Sustainer of all things: of all life and all worlds, of all universes and in all dimensions of being.
   - to know the Father face to face as the glorious Person who dwells in Light so brilliant and full of splendor that no man can approach Him.

- to know the Father face to face as the Supreme Majesty of the universe: the Supreme Majesty both of this world and of the world to come; the King of kings and Lord of lords who is above all, before all, over all, and forever shall be.

2. The believer longs to honor and worship the Father face to face: to praise the Father for Himself and for the wonderful privilege of life; to join in the praise of the universe which is to be given Him who is worthy of all praise, honor, glory, and worship forever and ever.

3. The believer longs to serve the Father face to face: to serve in perfection, without the blemishes and weaknesses so common in one's life and ministry here on earth.

Thought 1. The destination of Jesus was "the Father" Himself. The believer has the same destination: the believer's destination is "the Father," the One who so willingly and graciously adopted him into the family of God.

> **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).**
>
> **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal.4:4-7).**
>
> **"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).**

4 (14:6) **Jesus Christ, Mediator—Salvation**: the only way to God is by Jesus Christ (see outline and notes—Jn.10:7-10 for discussion).

> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).**
>
> **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).**
>
> **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).**
>
> **"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).**
>
> **"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).**
>
> **"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb.12:24).**
>
> **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).**

5 (14:7) **Jesus Christ, Revelation**: the only way to God is now revealed, and it is revealed unmistakably. Jesus Christ Himself is the perfect revelation of God. If a man wishes to see exactly who God is and what God is like, he must look at Jesus Christ. The supreme revelation of Jesus Christ is that God is love (Jn.3:16). And a God of love is bound to reveal the way, the truth, and the life in the most perfect picture possible. A God of love would never leave man in the dark, ever seeking, and never able to find and to know. (See notes—Jn.1:18; 3:13; DEEPER STUDY # 1—3:31 for more discussion. Also see outlines and notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:14; 1:18.)

1. A God of love is bound (by absolute love) to show man *THE WAY* to Himself. As love, He would never leave man in the dark, feeling about and stumbling after the Way. Jesus Christ is *THE WAY*. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of the Way.

2. A God of love is bound (by absolute love) to show man *THE TRUTH* about Himself. As love, He would never leave man in the dark, searching and grasping after the Truth. Jesus Christ is *THE TRUTH*. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of the Truth.

3. A God of love is bound (by absolute love) to show man *THE LIFE* of Himself. As love, He would never leave man in the dark, wandering aimlessly about and being hopeless in seeking after the Life. Jesus Christ is *THE LIFE*. Jesus Christ is the perfect picture of the Life.

> **"And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (Jn.12:45).**
>
> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).**
>
> **"All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jn.16:15).**
>
> **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:3).**

	F. The Embodiment of God Is Jesus Himself, 14:8-14	of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.	
1 Philip's request—show us the Father, a dazzling sight	8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.	11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.	**4 The clear challenge: Believe the claim of Jesus**[DS1]
2 The revelation: Jesus is the full embodiment of God	9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?	12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.	**5 The clear promises: Are conditional—to the person who believes in Jesus** a. The power to do great works[DS2]
3 The clear evidence a. God's presence b. Jesus' words c. Jesus' works	10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not	13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.	b. The answer to all prayers[DS3]

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

F. The Embodiment of God Is Jesus Himself, 14:8-14

(14:8-14) **Introduction**: this is one of the most astounding claims ever made—Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of God Himself.

1. Philip's request—show us the Father, a dazzling sight (v.8).
2. The revelation: Jesus is the full embodiment of God (v.9).
3. The clear evidence (v.10).
4. The clear challenge: believe the claim of Jesus (v.11).
5. The clear promises: are conditional—to the person who believes in Jesus (v.12-14).

1 (14:8) **Spectacular—Dazzling—Signs**: Philip's request was, "show us the Father"—a dazzling spectacular sight, a visible sight of God, a tangible God. Jesus had been discussing the fact that He was returning to the Father and that the disciples could not go with Him, not now (Jn.13:33-14:7). Philip's request shows how the disciples interpreted His words. They thought Jesus meant that He was going to some mountaintop or some other quiet place to meet God face to face just as great men of God had done in the past, men such as...

- Jacob (Gen.28:12f; 32:24f)
- Moses (Ex.3:1f; 24:9-11; 33:14-23; 34:5-9)
- Joshua (Josh.5:13f)
- Gideon (Judges 6:21f)
- Elijah (1 Kings 19:4f)
- Isaiah (Is.6:1f)
- Ezekiah (Ezk.1:1f; 10:1f)

Philip wanted to go with Jesus to see the Father as well. Why? Note two things.

1. Philip felt that a dramatic experience with God—that seeing God—would calm their troubled hearts and solve their problems...
   - of strife and division (see notes—Jn.14:1-3; Lk.22:24-30).
   - of betrayal and desertion (Jn.13:18f).
   - of denial (Jn.13:38).
   - of ignorance and misunderstanding (Jn.1:36; 14:5).

   Thought 1. Note the emphasis upon the dramatic experience: upon seeking the spectacular and the dazzling, the physical and visible—some sign that God *is*—that He actually exists. How many ask for the dramatic experience and the spectacular sign? They think that once they have had a dazzling sight of God, then...
   - their peace will come
   - their problems will be solved
   - they will believe
   - they will serve God
   - they will change
   - they will do right

2. Philip was not satisfied with what he saw in Jesus, nor with what He had received in Jesus. Walking by faith was not enough. Philip wanted to see some astounding and spectacular Person who appeared in dazzling form. Jesus, although the Son of God, appeared before Philip as a mere man in bodily form. He was not appearing in the dazzling, glorious Being of a heavenly Person. He was not in a spectacular form or vision as men of old had seen and as men usually think of God, the Supreme Universal Being. Jesus was appearing and communicating and living as a mere human being. Philip wanted more than what Jesus was.

   Thought 1. What an indictment against men! Men often say, "Jesus is not enough. More is needed. Jesus was a mere man; He could not be *the Son* of God. Perhaps He was *a son* of God in the sense that He was the best man who ever lived, but no more." Such men walk through life being blind to the great love of God.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor.4:4).

"[Men] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

2 (14:9) **Jesus Christ, Revelation**: the revelation was astounding—Jesus was the full embodiment of God. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." When a man sees Jesus, he sees a Person...

- who is the very nature of God
- who is the very character of God
- who is the very substance of God
- who is the very perfection of God
- who is God in all of His perfect Being

Jesus Christ is not the same Person as God the Father, but He has the same perfect nature. Jesus Christ is God the Son. Therefore, the person who has seen Jesus Christ has seen the Father in all the fulness of the Father's nature—that person has seen in Jesus the very embodiment of perfection, the perfect embodiment of Being, both perfect love and perfect righteousness.

"He that seeth me seeth Him that sent me" (Jn.12:45).

"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him" (Jn.14:7).

"All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jn.16:15).

"In Him dwelleth all the fulness of God" (Col.2:9).

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).

"Who [Christ] being the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb.1:3).

(See notes—Jn.14:6; 14:7. Also see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 1:14; 1:18 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. Note the emphasis is upon God *as Father*. Just as an earthly father, God is not distant and far off. He has not created and wound up the world and left it to run on its own, being unconcerned and uncaring. As Father, God is exactly as Jesus showed us...

- loving and just
- giving and helpful
- full of goodness and truth
- responsible and accountable
- directing and correcting
- forgiving and caring

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Mt.7:11).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).

"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (Jn.16:27).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 Jn.3:1).

3 (14:10) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Words of—Revelation**: the clear evidence that Jesus was the embodiment of God is threefold.

1. God's presence was proof that Jesus was the embodiment of God. God was *in* Jesus, and Jesus was *in* God. This can be called the *mutual Indwelling Presence* of God and Christ, each dwelling in the other. This simply means that each has the nature and being, the Spirit and Mind, of the other. Each has the Presence, the very Being and Spirit, of the other dwelling within Him—*perfectly*.

Note the point Jesus was making. The proof that He was the embodiment of God, that He was the One who came to earth to reveal God, is clear: God's presence is not only *with* Him; God's presence is *in* Him. He Himself *is* God. He Himself—His Person, His Being, His nature, His character, His love, His care, His just dealings, all that He is—revealed exactly what God is. Note also that Jesus asked Philip a question: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?"

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:10-11).

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn.17:21-22).

2. Jesus' words were proof that He was the embodiment of God. His words were the very Words of God which God Himself wanted to say to man. When Jesus spoke, it was the Father who was speaking through Him. Look at His words, His teaching, and His doctrine, and know that He was who He claimed to be: the Son of God Himself, the very embodiment of God. (See note—Jn.7:16-19 for more discussion.)

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Mk.13:31).

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Lk.4:22).

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power" (Lk.4:32).

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (Jn.3:34).

"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (Jn.7:16).

"The officers answered, Never man spake like this man" (Jn.7:46).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing" (1 Tim.6:3-4).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).

3. Jesus' works were proof that He was the embodiment of God (see notes—Jn.5:19; 5:20; 5:36; DEEPER STUDY # 2—10:25 for discussion).

4 (14:11) **Jesus Christ, Deity—Belief**: the clear challenge is forceful—believe the claim of Jesus. He was the embodiment of God. He was *in* the Father, and the Father was *in* Him—perfectly. Jesus was the One whom God sent into the world to show men who He is and what He is like. Jesus Christ was the revelation of God to man, who came to the world to show man that God is "the Father," the Father who loves and cares, forgives and executes justice. The challenge is to believe Jesus...

- believe in Him as a Person, as the Son of God Himself.
- believe in His claim, that His testimony and witness to Himself is absolutely true.

If a person has difficulty believing His claim, then he should look at His works: believe Him because of His phenomenal works; do whatever is needed to secure the evidence, but believe and accept His claim (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24).

"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (Jn.5:36).

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (Jn.9:4).

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).

"But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:38).

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" (Acts 2:22).

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(14:11) **Jesus Christ, Works**: note the purpose for the Lord's works—to stir the belief that He is the Son of God (Jn.10:38; 14:11; Acts 2:22).

5 (14:12-14) **Belief**: the clear promise to those who believe Jesus. There are two promises to the believer. Note the words "verily, verily"—words that call a person to rouse up and listen closely. What was being said was of tremendous importance.

1. The first promise is the power to do great works: the power to do the very same works that Jesus did. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.14:12 for discussion.)
2. The second promise is the answer to all prayers. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14 for discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(14:12) **Jesus Christ, Works—Believer, Works**: this is a surprising statement. It is a great promise: the believer shall do the very same works and even greater works than Jesus did. Note three facts.

1. The genuine beliver will do the same *kind* of work that Jesus did, work that is characterized...
   - by loving and caring
   - by ministering and healing
   - by proclaiming and teaching
   - by witnessing and testifying
   - by sharing and discipling
   - by helping and performing miracles

The believer will work, doing all he can to demonstrate the love of God in order to lead men to a saving knowledge of His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk.19:10).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

2. The genuine believer will work hard for the very same purpose as Jesus did. He will work...
   - to show men the love and justice of God.
   - to help men in all their need.
   - to lead men to believe on the Son of God that they might be saved and delivered from sin, death, and hell.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim.2:2-3).

3. The genuine believer will do even greater works than Jesus did. This means that the true servant of God will *reach more* people and have *broader results* than Jesus did. The whole world would eventually hear, and an impact would be made upon many societies and nations as a whole. But note the crucial point.

⇒ Greater works are possible only through Jesus, only because He has gone to His Father and is sitting at the right hand of the Father. From there—from the throne of power—He equips and enables the believer to do the works. The believer is able to do great works only through the presence and power of Jesus who is with the Father. (See note—Mt.28:19-20.)

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance" (1 Th.1:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(14:13-14) **Prayer—Jesus Christ, Name of**: this is one of the most wonderful promises in all the Bible. God hears the prayers of the dear believer. Note three points.

1. The only prayers heard and answered are those asked "in Jesus' name." What does it mean to pray "in Jesus' name"? It means two things.

   a. The believer prays knowing that...
      - the only acceptance to God is *in Jesus*. God hears the believer only because Jesus is acceptable to Him and the believer comes in the name of Jesus.
      - the only Mediator between God and men is Jesus; therefore, the believer approaches God in the name of Jesus.
      - the only Intercessor before God, the only Person asking God to accept man is Jesus.
      - the only Person, the only name that is perfect enough to approach God, is Jesus; therefore, the believer prays in the name of Jesus.

   (See notes—Jn.12:44-46; DEEPER STUDY # 2—12:44; notes—16:23-24; 16:25-27 for more discussion.)

   b. The believer seeks to glorify the name of Jesus only. To pray "in His name" means that the believer asks only those things that will...
      - honor His name
      - praise His name
      - bring glory to His name
      - lead to His name's being lifted up

   It means that the believer will ask nothing that would detract, lower, or lead away from His name.

> **"Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**
>
> **"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:23-24).**

2. Note why Jesus answers the prayers of the believer. His purpose is to glorify God. When Jesus answers prayer, not only is the Father glorified, but so is Jesus. The power and wisdom, love and care shown in answered prayer are of God through the name of Jesus. Therefore, when the believer prays and receives what he asked for...
   - his attention is upon both the Father and the Son.
   - his praise and thanksgiving are heaped upon both the Father and the Son.
   - his loyalty and surrender to both the Father and the Son are deeper and more mature.

> **"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col.1:12-14).**
>
> **"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Th.5:18).**
>
> **"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor.3:18).**
>
> **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb.13:15).**
>
> **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).**
>
> **"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps.29:2).**
>
> **"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name" (Ps.100:4).**

3. Jesus said that the believer is to pray to Him as well as to God. Jesus said, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, *I will do it*." Jesus is claiming to be God, to have...
   - the wisdom and knowledge,
   - the power and ability,
   - the love and care,
   - the desire and willingness,

...to do anything. A phenomenal claim! Yet it is a reasonable claim for the Son of God.

> **"Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" (Jn.14:10).**
>
> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).**
>
> **"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).**
>
> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**

	G. The Holy Spirit: Who He Is, 14:15-26	be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.	a. The special presence is conditional: Must obey & love Christ b. The special presence is questioned
1 Fact: If a person loves Jesus, he will keep His commandments	15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.	22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?	
2 He is the Comforter, the other Helper[DS1]	16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;	23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.	**6 He is the abiding presence of the Trinity** a. Is conditional: Must love & obey Jesus[DS4] b. Is the love & presence of God & Christ c. Is not given to those who do not love and obey Christ d. Is assured by God Himself
3 He is the Spirit of truth a. The world cannot receive Him b. The believer does receive Him & know Him	17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.	24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.	
4 He is the personal presence of Christ a. A spiritual presence, not a physical one b. A living, eternal presence c. A living union between God, Christ, & the believer[DS2]	18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.	25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.	**7 He is the Holy Spirit, the Teacher** a. The facts 1) He is promised 2) He is given by the Father in the name of Jesus b. His purpose 1) To teach the believer 2) To help the believer remember
5 He is the very special manifestation of Christ within the believer[DS3]	19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.	26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.	
	20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.		
	21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall		

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

G. The Holy Spirit: Who He Is, 14:15-26

(14:15-26) **Introduction—Holy Spirit, Doctrine of**: there are three great Scriptures that deal with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit at length.

1. The Identity of the Holy Spirit or who He is (Jn.14:15-26).
2. The Work of the Holy Spirit (Jn.16:7-15).
3. The Power of the Holy Spirit (Ro.8:1-17).

Note this significant fact: two of the passages involve a discussion by the Lord Himself. He is in the Upper Room spending the last hours He will ever have with His apostles while on earth. He is covering the major subjects they need to grasp before His death, revealing and filling them with the glorious truths that will *help* them through the upcoming trials they are to face.

The greatest help the believers are to receive is the very presence of God Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit. It is this that Jesus now reveals. He reveals the Holy Spirit, His identity, who He is. (See outline and notes—Jn.16:7-15 where Jesus reveals the work of the Holy Spirit. Also see outline and notes—Ro.8:1-17 where the power of the Holy Spirit is revealed.)

1. Fact: if a person loves Jesus, he will keep His commandments (v.15).
2. He is the Comforter, the other Helper (v.16).
3. He is the Spirit of truth (v.17).
4. He is the personal presence of Christ (v.18-20).
5. He is the very special manifestation of Christ within the believer (v.21-22).
6. He is the abiding presence of the Trinity (v.23-24).
7. He is the Holy Spirit, the Teacher (v.25-26).

1 (14:15) **Love—Obedience**: a fact—if a person loves Jesus, he *will* keep the commandments of Jesus. Note two things.

1. Obedience is not optional for believers. Jesus stated a simple fact that must be clearly understood: "If you love me you *will keep* [teresete] my commandments." This is the correct translation. Jesus is not giving an *optional commandment*, "If you love me, [then, optional] keep my commandments." He is saying that the man who truly loves Him *will* keep His commandments. To the believer, there is no option. He loves Jesus; therefore, he keeps His commandments. In this the believer is not claiming perfection, but he is claiming to love Jesus and to believe with all his heart that Jesus is the Son of God. Therefore, he diligently seeks Jesus, and he seeks to please Him in all that he does (cp. Heb.11:6).
2. What it means to love Jesus must be clearly understood.
   a. To love Jesus is not an emotional thing. It involves emotions, but it is not *based* upon emotions. It is not *feelings*: not feeling good today and loving Jesus, and feeling bad tomorrow and not loving Jesus. Loving

Jesus is not a fluctuating experience, not an up and down emotion. It is not an *emotional love* that changes with feelings.

b. To love Jesus is not a rational or mental commitment. Of course it involves the mind, but it is not just deciding that Jesus is the Son of God and adopting His teachings and morality as one's standard in life. It is not just living by His teachings and doing the best a person can. It is not a matter of the mind alone, not a matter of disciplining one's life to keep the law and its rules and regulations.

c. To love Jesus is a matter of the heart and of the spirit: a matter of man's most vital part, man's innermost being, all that a man is. The heart is the *seat* of man's affection and will (devotion). The heart attaches and focuses our affection and will and devotion to an object or a person. The heart causes a man to will to give himself either to good or bad. To love Jesus means that a man focuses his heart and affections and will (devotion) upon God by giving and receiving the love of God. It means that a man gives his *affection* and *will* (devotion), all he is and has, to Jesus Christ. It means he...

- freely accepts Jesus
- cherishes and attaches himself to Jesus
- sacrificially gives all he is and has to Jesus
- commits all he is and has to serve Jesus and His cause

(See outlines and notes—Mt.22:37-40; Jn.13:33-35; 21:15-17 for more discussion.)

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

2 (14:16) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit is the Comforter, the other Helper. Note four points.

1. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:16).

2. The receiving of the Holy Spirit is conditional. Note the conjunction "and." It is the person who *loves* Jesus who is given the Holy Spirit. Note also that the Spirit is given because Jesus prays for us. He is our *Intercessor*, the One who pleads our case. It is not that God is unwilling to give the Holy Spirit. That is not the point. The point is that Jesus Christ is our Mediator—our Intercessor—the One who makes it possible for us to receive the Spirit (cp. 1 Jn.2:1-2). If a person truly loves Jesus, that person is given the Holy Spirit.

3. The source of the Holy Spirit is "the Father." It is the Father who gave the Son, and it is the Father who gives the Holy Spirit. The picture is touching in that God is seen longing ever so deeply...

- to give the Holy Spirit to those who love His *only* Son.
- to do everything He can for the person who loves His Son, and of course the greatest thing God can do is to put His Spirit into a person.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk.11:13).

4. The Holy Spirit abides forever with the believer. His presence continues and never ends. The idea is that He never withdraws His presence.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(14:16) **Comforter** (paracletos): one called in, one called to the side of another. The purpose is to help in any way possible. (1) There is the picture of a friend called in to help a person who is troubled or distressed or confused. (2) There is the picture of a commander called in to help a discouraged and dispirited army. (3) There is the picture of a lawyer, an advocate, called in to help a defendant who needs his case pleaded. No one word can adequately translate *paracletos*. The word that probably comes closest is simply *Helper*.

3 (14:17) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. Note three facts.

1. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, the very same Truth that Christ is. He is the Embodiment, the Communicator, and the Liberator of truth (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Jesus the Truth*—Jn.14:6).

2. The world *cannot* receive the Holy Spirit. Note the word "cannot." It is impossible for the world to receive the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the world of unbelievers does not "see" or "know" the Holy Spirit. The world lives only for what it can see and know, only for the physical and material, only for what it can touch and feel, taste and consume, think and use.

The point is this: unbelievers reject Jesus. They do not love Him, and they care little if anything about Him. They are not interested in seeing or knowing Jesus. The result is natural:

⇒ They do not see the spiritual world or know it; therefore, they do not see or know the Spirit of that world.

⇒ They are unaware of the spiritual world; therefore, they are unaware of the Spirit of that world.

⇒ They do not know and love Jesus; therefore, they do not "know" the Spirit of Christ.

(Note this contrast between the "Spirit of the world" and the "Spirit of God," 1 Cor.2:12-14.)

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor.2:14; cp v.12-13).

3. The believer does know the Holy Spirit. The believer knows the Spirit both by experience and by His presence.

⇒ The Holy Spirit "*dwells with*" the believer: giving assurance, looking after, caring, guiding, and teaching.

⇒ The Holy Spirit is *in* the believer: communing, fellowshipping, sharing, and conforming the believer to the image of Christ.

> **"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (Jn.14:17).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).**
>
> **"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Lk.12:12).**
>
> **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Ro.8:9).**
>
> **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Ro.8:14).**
>
> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Ro.8:16).**
>
> **"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:6).**
>
> **"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (2 Tim.1:14).**
>
> **"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor.2:12).**
>
> **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor.3:16).**
>
> **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor.6:19).**
>
> **"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).**
>
> **"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 Jn.3:24).**
>
> **"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he is us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 Jn.4:13).**
>
> **"It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth" (1 Jn.5:6).**
>
> **"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezk.36:27).**

4 (14:18-20) **Indwelling Presence**: the Holy Spirit is the personal presence of Christ. Note four points.

1. Jesus said, "I will come to you." He meant that He would return after He had gone away, that is, died. He would come back to give believers His personal presence. He would not leave them comfortless (orphanous); the word means to be orphaned, to be without parental help, to be helpless. Jesus would not leave them to struggle through the trials of life alone.

Jesus' presence with His followers began with His resurrection and with the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was saying that He would come to the believer in the person of the Holy Spirit.

2. The world lost its opportunity to see Jesus. He said so. He said that He would be present for only a short time longer, then the world would see Him "*no more*." (The next time the world sees Him, He will be coming in judgment.)

3. The presence of Jesus is a living, eternal presence. He died, but He did not stay dead. He arose and conquered death. He arose to live forever. Now think: if Jesus Christ is living forever and He dwells within the believer, then the believer lives eternally. Christ the Eternal Presence lives *within* the believer; therefore, the believer becomes eternal. He never dies. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.8:51.) The believer is made eternal by the eternal presence of Christ *within* him.

In fact, when Jesus says "I live," He means He lives abundantly and eternally: He lives life in all of its full meaning. Therefore, by living *within* the believer, Christ imparts the same kind of life to the believer, a life that is both abundant and eternal. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)

4. The presence of Christ is a living union, a *mutual indwelling* between God, Christ, and the believer. "At that day" refers to Jesus' resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Now note: when Jesus arose from the dead, believers knew something. His claim was true in an absolute sense. Jesus really was "in" God. God is eternal, so by being "in" God, Jesus was bound to live forever; He was bound to arise from the dead.

Something else was known. All that Jesus had said was true. He was placing all believers "*in*" Himself and Himself "*in*" them; or to say it another way, when the Holy Spirit came, believers were placed "in" His Spirit and His Spirit "in" them. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Holy Spirit*—Acts 2:1-4 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(14:20) **Christ in You**: this is the first time the glorious truth of *Christ in you* is revealed to the disciples. The full understanding of the indwelling Christ was given and explained by Paul (see DEEPER STUDY #4—Jn.20:22; notes—1 Cor.3:16; 6:19; Eph.3:6; Col.1:26-27; cp. Jn.14:17-18, 20, 23; Ro.8:9; 1 Cor.2:11-12; 3:16; 6:19; 2 Tim.1:14; 1 Jn.2:27; Ezk. 36:27).

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:23).

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Ro.8:9).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph.3:17).

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory" (Col.1:27).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

5 (14:21-22) **Holy Spirit, Manifestation; Infilling—Revelation**: the Holy Spirit is the very special manifestation of Christ within the believer. Apparently, this refers to very special manifestations of the Lord to the heart of the believer, those very special times when there is a deep consciousness of love between the Lord and His dear follower (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:21). This is bound to be what Christ means, for He has already spoken about His personal presence within the believer (v.18-20). When believers go through terrible trials and experience severe crises, God knows and He loves and cares; so He moves to meet the need of His dear children. He moves within the believer's heart, manifesting His presence and giving a deep sense of His love and care, helping and giving confidence, forgiveness, and assurance—giving whatever the believer needs. The depth of the experience and the intensity and emotion of the *special manifestation* depends upon the need of the believer. God knows and loves His dear child perfectly, so He gives whatever experience and depth of emotion are needed to meet the need of His child. We must always remember that God loves each one of us so much He will do whatever is needed...

- to lift us up.
- to strengthen us.
- to conform us to the image of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note that the *special manifestations* of the Lord's presence are given only to the believer who does two things.

⇒ The believer who has Jesus' commandments receives the special manifestations of the Holy Spirit. To have His commandments means that the believer has searched and possesses the commandments of Jesus Christ. He has them in his heart, knows them, has made them his own (cp. Ps.119:11).

⇒ The believer who keeps the commandments of Jesus.

The believer who does these two things shows that he *truly* loves the Lord Jesus, and he that loves the Lord Jesus shall be loved of the Father and the Lord will love him as well. In fact, the Lord will *manifest* Himself to the believer who hides His commandments in his heart.

Note an important fact: the special manifestation is questioned. Judas asked the question for the first time, but the special manifestation of Christ's presence has been questioned and doubted by thousands ever since. Judas was thinking like all men think—in terms of a physical manifestation, a visible appearance.

DEEPER STUDY # 3
(14:21) **Manifestation** (phaneroo; emphanizo): when used in the sense of an unveiling or revelation, it suggests that a new thing has come to light; that something never known by man before is made known. Some mystery has now been revealed. It is something that cannot be discovered by man's reason or wisdom. It is a mystery that is hidden from man and beyond his grasp. Here in Jn.14:21-22, it means that Jesus' presence is revealed (brought to light), illuminated, manifested, quickened in the life of the believer. It means that He *manifests* Himself to His disciples in a very special way. He discloses His person, His nature, His goodness. He illuminates Himself *within* their hearts and lives. He gives a very special consciousness within their souls. (See notes—Jn.14:21-22; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4.)

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)" (Jn.7:38-39).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:21-23).

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).

"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 13:52).

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18).

6 (14:23-24) **Holy Spirit—Trinity**: the Holy Spirit is the abiding presence of the Trinity. Note the words, "My Father...*we* will come...and make *our* abode with him [the believer]." Both the Father and Christ come to abide in the believer in the person of the Holy Spirit (v.16-17, 26). All three dwell within the believer. Note four simple but profound facts.

1. The abiding presence of the Trinity is conditional: one must obey Christ, that is, love and keep His words.
2. The abiding presence of the Trinity is the *love* and *presence* of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit—all three dwelling within the life of the believer.
3. The abiding presence of the Trinity is not "in" the man who does not love and obey Jesus.
4. The abiding presence of the Trinity is assured by God Himself. Note what Jesus said: His words are the words of the Father who sent Him (see note, pt.2—Jn.14:10).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:22-23).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(14:23) **Love—Commandments**: the person who really loves Jesus will want to help Jesus by doing what He asks. Therefore, love and obedience are tied together so tightly that a person cannot love and not obey. A person's love is proven and clearly seen in his obedience. (Cp. 1 Jn.2:9-11; 3:10-17; 4:7-21.)

7 (14:25-26) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit is *the Teacher*. He teaches "all things" which Jesus taught. "All things" means all the things which Jesus taught including the presence of the Comforter (Holy Spirit), who is given to help the believer through the trials of life, and the indwelling presence and love of the Father and Son.

However, a crucial point must be heeded. The Comforter comes *only from the Father* "in the name" of Jesus.

⇒ In calling God "the Father," a Father-child relationship is stressed. One must become a child of God, that is, of the Father, in order to be given the Father's Comforter.

⇒ The words "in the name" of Christ mean that one must approach the Father "in" the name of Christ, that is, recognizing that Jesus alone is acceptable to God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14 for discussion).

The purpose of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is twofold.

1. To teach all things: both the words and the life of Christ, both the Truth and the Life, both the Word and how to live the Word, both the theory and the practice, both the principles and the conduct, both the morality and the behavior.
2. To help remember: to help remember all that has been taught in the Word of God, to help especially in the moments of trial when the truth is needed. In a moment of trial the Holy Spirit either infuses the believer with the strength to endure or flashes across his mind the way to escape (cp. 1 Cor.10:13).

"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Lk.12:12).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (Jn.16:13).

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).

	H. The Source of Peace, Joy, & Security, 14:27-31	Father: for my Father is greater than I.	ascension) b. The Father's greatness c. A confirmed faith
		29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that,	
1 The source of peace a. The peace of the world b. The peace of Christ c. The source: Jesus only	27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.	when it is come to pass, ye might believe.	**3 The source of security** a. Jesus' victory over the prince of the world
		30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.	
2 The source of joy (rejoicing) a. The return of Jesus to the Father (His death, resurrection, &	28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the	31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.	b. Jesus' obedience to the Father

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

H. The Source of Peace, Joy, and Security, 14:27-31

(14:27-31) **Introduction**: this is a passage which speaks ever so warmly yet forcibly to the needs of men. It covers the source of *peace, joy*, and *security*.

1. The source of peace (v.27).
2. The source of joy (v.28-29).
3. The source of security (v.30-31).

1 (14:27) **Peace**: the source of peace. Peace (eirene) means to bind together, to join, to weave together. It means that a person is bound, woven and joined together with himself and with God and others.

The Hebrew word is *shalom*. It means freedom from trouble and much more. It means experiencing the highest good, enjoying the very best, possessing all the inner good possible. It means wholeness and soundness. It means prosperity in the widest sense, especially prosperity in the spiritual sense of having a soul that blossoms and flourishes.

1. There is the peace of the world. This is a peace of escapism, of avoiding trouble, of refusing to face things, of unreality. It is a peace that is sought through pleasure, satisfaction, contentment, absence of trouble, positive thinking, or denial of problems.

2. There is the peace of Christ and of God. This is, first, a *bosom peace*, a peace deep within. It is a tranquility of mind, a composure, a peace that is calm in the face of bad circumstances and situations. It is more than feelings—even more than attitude and thought.

This is, second, the *peace of conquest* (cp. Jn.16:33). It is the peace independent of conditions and environment; the peace which no sorrow, no danger, no suffering, no experience can take away.

> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**

This is, third, the *peace of assurance* (cp. Ro.8:28). It is the peace of unquestionable confidence; the peace with a sure knowledge that one's life is in the hands of God and that all things will work out for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

> **"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Ro.8:28).**

This is, fourth, the *peace of intimacy with God* (cp. Ph.4:6-7). It is the peace of the highest good. It is the peace that settles the mind, strengthens the will, and establishes the heart.

3. There is the source of peace. Peace is always born out of reconciliation. Its source is found only in the reconciliation wrought by Jesus Christ. Peace always has to do with personal relationships: a man's relationship to himself, to God, and to his fellow men. A man must be bound, woven, and joined together with himself, with God, and with his fellow man.

> **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).**
>
> **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled" (Col.1:20-21).**

Man secures peace in the following manner.

1. By justification.

> **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).**

2. By loving God's Word.

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps.119:165).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

3. By praying about everything.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Ph.4:6-7).

4. By being spiritually minded.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:6).

5. By staying his mind upon God.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Is.26:3).

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Ph.4:8).

6. By keeping God's commandments.

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea" (Is.48:18).

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Ph.4:9).

The subject of peace is often divided into (1) the peace *with* God, which is wrought through salvation (Ro.5:1; Eph.2:14-17); (2) the peace *of* God, which is the very peace of God Himself and which points to God as the Source of peace (Lk.7:50; Ph.4:6-7); (3) the peace *from* God, which God gives to dwell in the heart of the believer as he walks day by day in the Lord (Ro.1:7; 1 Cor.1:3).

2 (14:28-29) **Joy—Rejoicing**: the source of joy and rejoicing. Joy (chara) and rejoicing (echarete, the same root word as joy) mean an inner gladness and a deep seated pleasure. It is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful behavior.

The source of joy is threefold. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:11 for more discussion.)

1. The return of Jesus to the Father causes believers to joy and rejoice. "I go away, and come again unto you" is a reference to His death, resurrection, and ascension.

a. The death or cross of Christ attracts and causes men to joy and rejoice. The cross is the source of their deliverance from sin, death, and hell (see note—Jn.12:32).

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn.12:32).

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal.6:14).

b. The resurrection and ascension of Christ attracts and causes men to joy and rejoice. The resurrection and ascension are the sources of their new life and hope for eternity (see notes, *Resurrection*—Jn.14:6; 7:33-34; Mk.16:19-20).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Ro.5:1-2).

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps.16:11).

"And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Is.35:10).

2. The Father's greatness causes believers to joy and rejoice. The Father demonstrated His great love and power by releasing Jesus ...

- from the flesh: in all its limitations and weaknesses.
- from the world: in all its trials and tensions.
- from the devil: in all his oppressions and attacks.
- from the pressure of men: in all their needful demands and in some cases terrible threats and attacks.

The Father took Jesus home, back from where He had come; and He restored Him to His seat of glory, exalting Him above every name that is named (Ph.2:9-11). The believer joys and rejoices in the phenomenal power of the Father's greatness.

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (1 Pt.1:8-9).

"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Ph.4:4).

Thought 1. The implication of the Father's power for the believer is phenomenal. The believer will also be released from the flesh, the world, the devil, and the pressure of men, just as Jesus was.

> **"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).**

3. A confirmed faith causes believers to joy and rejoice. The claims of Jesus have been proven and verified. Just as He told His disciples, all that He predicted has come to pass.

⇒ He did leave (die). ⇒ He did go to His Father (the ascension).

⇒ He did return (the resurrection). ⇒ He did send the Holy Spirit.

Note: by foretelling these things, Jesus strengthened the faith of believers enormously. (In fact, think about it: He could have chosen no better way to strengthen the faith of believers.)

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn.17:13).

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).

3 (14:30-31) **Security**: the source of security. The believer's security comes from two sources.

1. Security comes from Jesus' victory over Satan. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.12:31; DEEPER STUDY # 4—12:32 for discussion.)

a. "Satan cometh": he was using men (Judas and the religionists) to make a last ditch effort to destroy Jesus. But Satan had nothing in Jesus; there was nothing which he could use to attract Jesus to sin. There was no lust, no greed, no selfishness—nothing in Jesus that Satan could use to destroy Him.

> **"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (Jn.8:46).**
>
> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb.4:15).**
>
> **"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb.7:26).**
>
> **"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:19).**

b. Jesus was predicting that He would be completely victorious and triumphant over Satan.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
>
> **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn.14:30).**
>
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers [upon the cross], he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col.2:15).**
>
> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**

2. Security comes from Jesus' obedience to the Father. The Father's great commandment was for Jesus to die for the sins of the world. His death was the supreme act of obedience. (See note—Jn.12:27-30.)

> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**
>
> **"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again" (Jn.12:27-28).**
>
> **"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).**

	CHAPTER 15		
	I. The Relationship of Jesus to the People of the World,[DS1] **15:1-8**		
1 Jesus, the Vine; God, the Vinedresser; & man, the branch	I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.	in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.	Not abiding, not attached
2 Unfruitful branches: Are taken away	2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.	5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.	b. Cannot bear fruit c. Do not understand the nature of bearing fruit in life: Can do nothing apart from Christ
3 Fruitful branches a. Are pruned b. The purpose for pruning		6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.	d. Are doomed: Gathered, cast away, burned
c. How branches are pruned 1) By the Word	3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.	7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.	**5 Attached branches: Results & promises** a. Receive nourishment—answered prayers
2) By abiding[DS2]	4 Abide in me, and I in you.	8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.	b. Glorify God c. Prove their attachment—discipleship
4 Unattached branches a. Are by themselves:	As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide		

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

I. The Relationship of Jesus to the People of the World, 15:1-8

(15:1-8) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Facing Death**: Jesus was facing the most terrible scene in all human history. The Son of God was about to be murdered at the hands of men. All that He had to face was weighing ever so heavily upon His mind, in particular the reaction of everyone to Him and their fate. He had come to save them all, and few were responding in a genuine way. He was even facing the collapse of His own inner circle. Most tragically, they were falling away.

⇒ One disciple was in the very process of betraying Him (Judas).
⇒ The leader of the disciples was to deny Him three times, even by cursing (Peter).
⇒ The other disciples were to flee and desert Him.

And then, there was the world of men who were rejecting Him: the religionists who strongly professed to know and live for God, and the non-religionists who had no attachment to God and professed none.

He had come to save them all and not one was standing with Him in His most needful hour. As the thought of it all raced through His mind, He recalled the vine of God so often described in the Old Testament (Ps.80:8-16; Is.5:1-7; Jer.2:21; Ezk.15:1-8; 19:10; Hos.10:1). In it He saw a graphic lesson that the disciples needed to learn, the great lesson of "The Vine and the Branches"—the relationship of Jesus to the people of the world.

1. Jesus, the Vine; God, the Vinedresser; and man, the branch (v.1).
2. Unfruitful branches: are taken away (v.2).
3. Fruitful branches (v.2-4).
4. Unattached branches (v.4-6).
5. Attached branches: results and promises (v.7-8).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(15:1-8) **Fruit-bearing—Abide**: there are four stages of fruit-bearing given: (1) no fruit (v.2), (2) fruit (v.2), (3) more fruit (v.2), and (4) much fruit (vs.5, 8).

What does it mean to say a Christian is to bear fruit? It means to bear converts (Ro.1:13), to bear righteousness (Ro.6:21-23), to bear Christian character or the fruit of the Spirit (see notes—Gal.5:22-23). Note also the conditions for bearing fruit in life: cleansing (v.3), abiding in Christ (v.5), and obedience (vs. 10, 12). A true Christian is a person who really does abide in Christ (1 Jn.2:10). John said that to abide in Christ means eight things. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, Abide—Jn.15:4-6.)

1. A person walks in open confession before God. He walks through life opening up his life to God; he confesses all known sin. He does not walk in sin, and he does not allow any sin to go unconfessed (1 Jn.1:6-10).
2. A person walks and fellowships with Christ. He lives and moves and has his being with Christ. He communes and lives in a consciousness of God's presence, and from God's presence, he learns of God and he draws the strength and authority to live victoriously day by day (1 Jn.2:6; 2:27; cp. Ps.16:11; Pr.3:5-6).
3. A person continues in the church; he has not gone out from the church (1 Jn.2:19).
4. A person possesses confidence, an unashamedness in life, that prepares him for eternity (1 Jn.2:28).
5. A person does not walk in continuous sin (1 Jn.3:6). He experiences constant victory over sin.
6. A person actively surrenders himself to obey God's commandments (1 Jn.3:24).
7. A person experiences the indwelling presence and witness of the Spirit (1 Jn.4:12-13).
8. A person dwells in love and unity and fellowship with all other believers (Jn.17:21-23; 1 Jn.4:16; cp. 1 Jn.4:20).

1 (15:1) **Jesus Christ, The Vine**: Jesus is the Vine; God is the Vinedresser or the Cultivator or the Gardener; and men are branches.

1. Jesus is the *true* Vine. He is the genuine vine, not a false, counterfeit vine. In fact, He is opposed to the counterfeit, the sham, the deceitful, the *pretender*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *True*—Jn.1:9.)
2. God is the Vinedresser. He is the One who carefully planted the Vine (Christ) and waters and feeds the Vine. He is the One who cares for, looks after, and watches over the Vine and the branches. He is the One who prunes and purges, cleans and protects, the Vine and its branches.
3. Men are branches. And note, they are all judged on the basis of how they relate to the *True* Vine. They are...
   - either *unfruitful* (v.2) or *fruitful* branches of the true Vine (v.2-3).
   - either *unattached* (v.4-6) or *attached* branches of the true Vine (v.7-8).

2 (15:2) **Profession, False—Believers, Warning to—Fruit Bearing—Judgment of Believers**: there are the unfruitful branches. They are taken away. Note that these are *attached branches*. They differ from the unattached branches (v.4-6). Jesus said that they are "in me," but they have a problem: they bear no fruit.

1. The unfruitful branches *did become* attached to Christ. They did have some *organic* relationship to Him. There was a time, a point, when they began to bud and sprout. They even grew into branches. They...
   - listened to Jesus and the gospel
   - opened their ears
   - made a profession
   - were baptized
   - seemed capable of bearing fruit
   - appeared to be fruitful branches
2. The branches are unfruitful. They are "in" the Vine, a part of it, but they simply bear no fruit. What does this mean? (See outline and notes, *Judas*—Jn.13:18-30; *The Sower and the Seed*—Mt.13:1-9.)
   a. Unfruitful branches do *not relate enough* to Christ; they do not draw enough nourishment from Him...
      - to draw life
      - to bear fruit
      - to continue in the Vine (cp. Mt.24:13; 13:13)
   b. Unfruitful branches are *not genuine enough* to bear fruit. Their profession is...
      - more *profession* than *possession*
      - more *pretending* then *being*
      - more *deception* than *truth*
      - more *counterfeit* than *real*
   c. Unfruitful branches become apostate and deserters—men and women who abandon the faith. (Cp. 1 Jn.2:19.)

> **"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (Mt.13:22).**
>
> **"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none" (Lk.13:6).**
>
> **"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).**
>
> **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).**
>
> **"And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices" (2 Pt.2:13-14).**

3. God "taketh away" (airei) the unfruitful branches. The word means to take away and to remove. In relation to the vine, the branch is pruned, removed, and taken away. This is a severe warning to every branch "in" the vine, to make sure his profession is genuine enough to bear fruit.

Scripture says at least two things about the judgment of unfruitful branches that sin.

a. The unfruitful branches that sin are taken away and removed from the Vine and destroyed by fire.

> **"Now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Mt.3:10).**
>
> **"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn.2:19).**
>
> **"Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have" (Lk.8:18).**
>
> **"But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned" (Heb.6:8).**

b. The unfruitful branches that sin are chastened and disciplined by being taken away and removed through death (see note—1 Jn.5:16). The Bible warns professing believers of severe chastening, the chastening of...
- sinful behavior that causes loss of all reward by fire—a loss so great a man is stripped as much as a burned-out building. It is the loss of all except the very salvation of a man (1 Cor.3:11-15, esp. 15).
- sinful behavior that destroys the flesh so that the Spirit may be saved (1 Cor.5:5).
- sinful behavior that causes death (1 Cor.11:29-30; 1 Jn.5:16).
- sinful behavior that merits no escape (Heb.2:1-3; 12:25f).
- sinful behavior that prohibits man from ever repenting again (Heb.6:4f).
- sinful behavior that causes man to miss God's rest (Heb.4:1f).
- sinful behavior that prohibits any future sacrifice for sins and merits terrible punishment (Heb. 10:26f).

(See DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Jn.5:16 for more discussion.)

The point must be heeded, for Scripture gives severe warnings to believers, that is, to the branches "in" the Vine. The branches must make sure they are bearing fruit or else face severe judgment. (Again, see DEEPER STUDY # 1—1 Jn.5:16 for more discussion.)

3 (15:2-4) **Fruit-bearing—Word of God—Believers, Cleansing of**: there are the fruitful branches. Note three points.

1. Fruitful branches are pruned. All bad spots, useless buds, misdirected shoots, and discolored leaves are pruned off. Even fruitful believers have spots, buds, shoots, and leaves that are bad, useless, misdirected, and discolored. Believers have areas and things that must be cleaned away and cleared up, areas of...
- thought
- attitude
- commitment
- behavior
- relationships
- service
- passion
- motives
- willingness

2. The purpose for pruning is *onefold*: to prepare the branch to bear more fruit. The purpose is not to punish, not to hurt and damage the branch. Note two things about fruit-bearing.
   a. The fruit a believer is to bear. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Fruit-Bearing*—Jn.15:1-8 for discussion.)
   b. The different stages of fruit-bearing. All believers are not 100 percent fruit-bearers. Some bear 60 percent, others only 30 percent. There are degrees of fruit-bearing, of commitment and dedication to Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:1-8; Mt.13:8, 23).

> **"But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Mt.13:8).**
>
> **"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Mt.16:27).**
>
> **"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt.25:23).**
>
> **"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour" (2 Tim.2:20).**

3. Note how the fruitful branches are pruned (katharoi) or purged and cleansed. There are three ways.
   a. Branches are cleansed by the words which Jesus has given to men, by the Word of the Lord Himself. The Word of God refines men by purging away all the dross and contamination, pollution and dirt that clings to them. When a man comes to the Word of God sincerely, the Word of God shows...
   - what he is doing and what he is not doing.
   - where he fails and how he fails.
   - the sins of commission and of omission.

> **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (Jn.17:17).**
>
> **"And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (Jn.17:19).**
>
> **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).**
>
> **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Ps.119:9).**
>
> **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps.119:11).**

   b. Branches are cleansed by the mirror of the Word of God. When a man looks into the Word of God, he reflects both himself in his shortcomings and Christ in His perfection. The Word of God forces man to measure himself against Christ.

> **"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (Jas.1:23-24).**
>
> **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim.3:16).**

(See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Heb.4:12 for more discussion.)

c. Branches are cleansed by "abiding" in Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Abide*—Jn.15:4). Note exactly what Jesus said: "Abide in me, and I in you." This can mean at least two things.

⇒ It can mean a promise: "Abide in me and I will abide in you." The believer is thereby cleansed by his position or by being in Christ (see note, pt.4—Jn.13:6-11).

⇒ It can mean a command: "See to it that you abide in me, and I in you." The believer is cleansed by continuing in Christ and remaining faithful.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(15:4) **Abide—Abiding**: to abide, dwell, continue, stay, sojourn, rest in or upon. It is being set and fixed and remaining there, continuing on and on in a fixed state, condition, or being. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Abide*—Jn.15:1-8; 6:56.) It should be noted that the more a branch abides in the vine, that is, the closer the branch abides to the heart of the vine, the more nourishment a branch draws from the vine and the more fruit it bears.

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (Jn.6:56).

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (Jn.14:16-17).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (1 Jn.3:6).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 Jn.4:13).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jn.4:15-16).

"For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever" (2 Jn.2).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).

4 (15:4-6) **Fruit-bearing—Unbelievers, Life of—Judgment**: there are the unattached branches. Jesus said four things.

1. The unattached branch is "out" and off by itself; it is not abiding in the Vine and not attached. Note the words "of itself" (v.4), off by itself. To say that a branch must be attached and abide in the vine may sound redundant at first. But the truth is pointed: there is no life and no fruit in life apart from Christ. Just as a branch suspended out in mid-air or lying on the ground without any attachment to the vine is lifeless and meaningless, so a man on the earth without attachment to Christ is lifeless and meaningless.

Those who seek life and meaning someplace other than in Christ are doomed to failure. The unattached and suspended branch is of and by itself—all alone upon this earth—and it is doomed to be by itself.

2. The unattached branch cannot bear fruit, not real and permanent fruit that is *acceptable or pleasing* to God. It cannot bear...

- any good or righteousness that is acceptable to God (Ro.6:21-23).
- character that is acceptable to God (Gal.5:22-23).
- converts to the saving grace of God (Ro.1:13; Tit.2:11-15).

3. The unattached branch does not understand the nature of bearing fruit in life: the fact that he can do nothing—cannot live and produce life—apart from Christ. No one bears fruit apart from Christ...

- no one lives or experiences life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3 for more discussion.)
- a man is helpless to find the meaning, purpose, and significance to life.

4. The unattached branch is doomed. He is cast forth to wither and to be gathered and cast into the fire and burned.

a. Cast forth (eblethe exo): to be plucked off and cast out, thrown away, discarded, disposed of. The unattached branch chooses to be unattached, so God lets it. It is *given over* and *given up* to be unattached. God abandons it. It is cast out of the way and left to itself to do as it chooses. (See outline and notes—Ro.1:24-32.)

b. Withered (exeranthe): to be dried up, wrinkled, peeled; to become sapless and bare; to lose energy and strength. The unattached branch experiences everything withering away—its...

- gifts and abilities
- life and body
- family and friends
- fate and destiny
- hopes and dreams
- confidence and assurance
- purpose and meaning

c. Gathered (sunagousin): the day of judgment arrives. In the Greek text, who it is that gathers is not given. The Greek simply says, "they gathered." This is probably God having His angels gather up all the unattached branches, "all that offend, and them which do iniquity" (cp. Mt.13:41).

d. Cast into the fire and "burned" (kaietai). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.5:22; note—8:12; DEEPER STUDY #4—Lk.16:24. Cp. Mt.13:42, 50; Rev.20:15; 21:8.)

> **"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Mt.13:30).**
>
> **"So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Mt.13:49-50).**
>
> **"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt.25:46).**
>
> **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:15).**
>
> **"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile" (Ro.2:8-9).**

5 (15:7-8) **Fruit-bearing**: there are the attached branches, and the results and promises made to them. These are the same as the fruitful branches mentioned earlier (v.2-3). Jesus had already covered the pruning or the disciplining of the branches, so here He covers the promises made to them and the results of their "abiding" in Him. Note that the promises and results are conditional: "If ye abide in me...." Note also that the words of Christ must abide in the believer. The thought is that a believer must take the Words of Christ and...

- study and learn them.
- have his thoughts and desires controlled by them.
- be motivated and controlled by them.

> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15; cp. Jn.14:15, 21, 24; 15:10, 14).**

The promises and results of abiding in Christ are threefold.

1. The attached branch receives nourishment, that is, answered prayers. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14 for more discussion.)

a. The branch is attached to the vine. It abides in the vine: dwells and lives and never faces a moment when it is not attached to the vine. So it is with the believer. The believer is attached to Christ: he abides, dwells, lives, and walks in the very presence of Christ, never facing a moment when he is not attached and walking in Christ. A genuine believer walks in constant fellowship and prayer with the Lord. He is always abiding and sharing with the Lord.

b. Similarly, the vine is always nourishing the branch, always sending its life-giving food and drink to the branch. So it is with Christ. Christ is always sharing His life-giving nourishment with the believer, always answering prayer and meeting the needs of the genuine believer.

> **"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn.16:24).**
>
> **"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).**
>
> **"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).**

2. The attached branch glorifies God by bearing much fruit. Remember what the fruit is. It is...

- righteousness

> **"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Ro.6:22).**
>
> **"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11).**
>
> **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).**

- godly character

> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).**

- converts

> **"Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles" (Ro.1:13).**

When men see fruit in the life of a believer, they are forced...

- to turn their mind to God
- to acknowledge that only God's power could do such
- to desire God to save them
- to begin asking God for help
- to accept God or to close their mind and reject God

God is glorified by the fruit born in the life of a believer, glorified by *some men* beginning to think about God and calling upon Him.

3. The attached branch proves he is a disciple by bearing fruit. There are ways to tell if a person really is attached to Christ:

⇒ Does he bear fruit?
⇒ Does he live righteously or do shameful things (Ro.6:21-23)?
⇒ Does he bear "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal.5:22-23)?
⇒ Does he lead the lost to Christ (Ro.1:13)?

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**

	J. The Relationship of Jesus to Believers, 15:9-11
1 He has loved believers **2 He has one great charge for believers: Continue—abide in His love** a. "Abiding" is conditional b. "Abiding" has a standard—the obedience of Jesus **3 He has one great purpose for believers: The completion of their joy**[DSI]	9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

J. The Relationship of Jesus to Believers, 15:9-11

(15:9-11) **Introduction**: Jesus has a very special relationship with believers, a relationship that delivers them from an existence that is barren, empty, lonely, unmeaningful, and sad.

1. He has loved believers (v.9).
2. He has one great charge for believers: continue—abide in His love (v.9-10).
3. He has one great purpose for believers: the completion of their joy (v.11).

1 (15:9) **Jesus Christ, Love of—God, Love for Christ**: Christ has loved believers. He has loved us with a very special love, the very same love with which God has loved Him. Two profound points are being discussed here.

⇒ The Father's love for His Son, Jesus Christ.

⇒ Christ's love for believers.

1. There are three significant reasons why the Father loves Christ.
   a. Christ is His Son, His *only* Son. God loves Christ because of a *natural love*. God naturally loves His Son just as most fathers naturally love their children.

> **"He [God] hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:6-7).**
>
> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"[God] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).**
>
> **"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee" (Heb.5:5).**

   b. God loves Christ with an *obedient* love. God is perfect, which means He is perfect love. Therefore, being perfect love, God is bound to love His Son. But this means much more than an ordinary love. Christ Himself is Perfect—the Perfect Son of God. Therefore, God loves Christ with a very special love. Imagine how much a parent would love a perfect child, a child who was always obedient: never being disrespectful, rebellious, haughty, selfish; and never causing hurt, pain, or doubt. Most parents love their children, but it is in special moments of obedience and caring that love swells up in the hearts of parents for their children. God's love for Christ is a perfect love, but it is a very special love based on the perfect obedience of Christ.

> **"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31).**
>
> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).**
>
> **"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God" (Heb.10:7).**

   c. God loves Christ with a *supreme* love. Christ paid the *supreme* price of obedience. He died and sacrificed Himself in obedience to God's will. Therefore, God's love for His Son is very, very special in that it is a supreme love. (See notes—Jn.10:17-18; 12:27-30 for discussion.)

> **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life....This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).**

"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31).

"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

2. Christ said that He loves believers with the same *kind* of love, the very *same* love that God has for Him.
   a. Christ loves us with a natural love.
      ⇒ Christ loves us because we are God's children.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal.4:4-6).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God" (Ro.9:26).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn.3:1-2).

      ⇒ Christ loves us because we are brothers of His.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt.12:50).

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb.2:11).

      ⇒ Christ loves us because we are the household and family of God.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:19).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

   b. Christ loves us with an obedient love.
      ⇒ He loves us because we believe God.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

      ⇒ He loves us because we diligently seek God.

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

      ⇒ He loves us because we obey His commandments.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

   c. Christ loves us with a supreme love. He loves us because we pay the *supreme* price of obedience: we deny self, take up our cross, and die daily in order to follow Him (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23 for discussion).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

2 (15:9-10) **Jesus Christ, Love of—Believers, Duty**: Christ has one great charge for believers—to continue or to abide in His love.

1. "Continuing" or "abiding" is conditional. A believer can...
   - break fellowship with Christ.
   - cease to keep his thoughts upon Christ.
   - walk out of the love of Christ.
   - get away from the love of Christ.
   - turn back to the world and to his old worldly friends (cp. 2 Cor.6:17-18).
   - give himself back over to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 Jn.2:15-16).

Jesus said that it is up to the believer to continue in His love. How? By doing what any person does when he wants someone to love him. The person draws near to the person he loves: he does good and tries to please the person. So it is with the believer. The believer continues in the love of Christ by drawing near and doing good and seeking to please Him—very simply by obeying His commandments. (Cp. Jn.14:21; 15:10, 14.)

Now note a critical point. Christ always loves; His love is *always* there. But it is up to *man* to walk *in* that love. A man can never know and experience the Lord's love unless he walks *in* it.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love....Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:10, 14).

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col.2:6).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 Jn.2:6).

2. "Abiding" in the love of Christ has a standard, a supreme example: it is Christ Himself. He was perfectly obedient to God; therefore, He continued in the Father's love. We are to look at His obedience as our prime example. (Again, see note—Jn.10:17-18.)

Note another critical point. A believer must do something if He is going to follow Jesus' example and keep Jesus' commandments. The believer must study and learn and abide in the Word of God, in the commandments and life of Christ. A person cannot keep a commandment unless he knows the commandment.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:4-5).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 Jn.2:28).

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (1 Jn.3:6).

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn.9).

3 (15:11) **Joy—Believers, Purpose**: Christ has one great purpose for believers—the completion of their joy. Note three points.

1. The joy of Christ: "My joy." His joy and glory was doing the will of God and looking ahead to the joy and glory of eternity with His Father and His followers. (See notes—Jn.12:23-26; 14:28-29.)

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb.12:2).

2. The joy of believers is the joy of Christ Himself reigning within their hearts. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Joy*—Jn.15:11.)

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Ro.5:2).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

3. The joy of believers is fulfilled as believers study His Word, the promises and commandments which He made. (See notes—Jn.14:28-29; DEEPER STUDY # 1—15:11 for discussion.)

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn.17:13).

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(15:11) **Joy** (chara): an inner gladness; a deep-seated pleasure. It is a depth of assurance and confidence that ignites a cheerful heart. It is a cheerful heart that leads to cheerful behavior.

Several things need to be said about the believer's joy.

1. Joy is divine. It is possessed and given only by God. Its roots are not in earthly or material things or cheap triumphs. It is the joy of the Holy Spirit, a joy based in the Lord. It is His very own joy (Jn.15:11; Acts 13:52; Ro.14:17; Gal.5:22; 1 Th.1:6).
2. Joy does not depend on circumstances or happiness. Happiness depends upon happenings, but the joy that God implants in the believer's heart overrides all, even the most troublesome matters of life and death (Ps.5:11; 2 Cor.6:10; 7:4).
3. Joy springs from faith (Ro.15:13; Ph.1:25; 2 Tim.1:4; cp. Mt.2:10).
4. Joy of future reward makes and keeps one faithful (Mt.25:21, 23; Acts 20:24; Heb.12:2).

The source of the believer's joy is severalfold.

1. The fellowship of the Father and His Son brings joy (1 Jn.1:3-4; Ps.16:11).
2. Victory over sin, death, and hell brings joy (Jn.14:28; 16:20-22; Is.12:3; 61:10).
3. Repentance brings joy (Lk.15:7, 10).
4. The hope of glory brings joy (Ro.14:17; Heb.12:2; 1 Pt.4:13).
5. The Lord's Word, the revelations, commandments, and promises which He made bring joy (Jn.15:11).
6. The commandments of Christ and the will of God bring joy. Obeying and doing a good job stirs joy within the believer's heart (Jn.15:11, 32; 17:13; Acts 13:52; Jer.15:16).
7. Prayer brings joy (Jn.16:24).
8. The presence and fellowship of believers bring joy (1 Jn.1:3-4).
9. Converts bring joy (Lk.15:5; Ph.4:1; 1 Th.2:19-20; Ps.126:5).
10. Hearing that others walk in the truth brings joy (3 Jn.1:4).
11. Giving brings joy (2 Cor.8:2; Heb.10:34).

	K. The Relationship of Believers to Believers, 15:12-17	eth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.	the Father made known by Christ
1 The supreme command of believers: Love one another **2 The supreme standard of believers: The love of Jesus** **3 The supreme bond of believers: "Friends" of Jesus** a. Is conditional: "If" b. Is based upon revelation: The words of	12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant know-	16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. 17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.	**4 The supreme purpose of believers: Chosen & ordained to go** a. To go forth b. To bear fruit c. To receive of God **5 Conclusion: The supreme command repeated**

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

K. The Relationship of Believers to Believers, 15:12-17

(15:12-17) **Introduction**: how believers relate to other believers is of critical importance. Division will destroy a body of people quicker than any other single thing. Division can...

- destroy the body of Christ.
- destroy a fellowship of believers.
- destroy the witness of believers.
- destroy a human soul seeking God.

Too many are known more for their grumbling, griping, complaining, murmuring, and divisiveness than for anything else. Nothing cuts the heart of Jesus more than such self-centered and divisive behavior.

The relationship of believers to each other is of critical importance.

1. The supreme command of believers: love one another (v.12).
2. The supreme standard of believers: the love of Jesus (v.12-13).
3. The supreme bond of believers: "friends" of Jesus (v.14-15).
4. The supreme purpose of believers: chosen and ordained to go (v.16).
5. Conclusion: the supreme command repeated (v.17).

1 (15:12) **Love**: the *supreme command* of believers is to love one another. They are to love one another just as Jesus has loved them. Note: Jesus is clear about what He means. He loved man so much that He paid the ultimate price. He died and sacrificed His life for man. (See notes—Jn.13:33-35 for discussion.)

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).

"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn.15:12).

"Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Ro.12:9).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pt.1:22).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

2 (15:12-13) **Love**: the *supreme standard* of believers is the love of Jesus Christ Himself. He paid the ultimate and supreme price of love. He died and sacrificed Himself for His friends. (See notes—Jn.10:17-18; 12:27-30; 13:31-32.)

"When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end [death]" (Jn.13:1).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35).

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor.5:14).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

3 (15:14-15) **Believers, Nature—Fellowship—Word of God**: the *supreme bond* of believers is the bond of "friends." Believers form a bond of "friends," a spiritual bond founded by Christ Himself. But note two things.

1. Being a "friend" of Jesus is conditional. A person has to *know* and *do* His commandments in order to be a friend of His. The implication is clear: there is no way to be His friend apart from *knowing what He says*. It is His Word that tells men about Him. Therefore, a person has to diligently seek to learn His Word and to do what He says in order to know Him and to become His friend. The point is clear: friends relate and commune with each other, *share* and *respond* to the word of each other, rejoicing when the word or conversation is that of joy, and helping when the word or request is that of need.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt.6:24).

"For whosoever shall do the will [Word] of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt.12:50).

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:17).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 Jn.2:17).

"Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father" (1 Jn.2:24).

2. The bond of "friends" is based upon revelation, that is, upon Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus Christ revealed and made known exactly what God told Him. It is *the Word of God* that gives birth and structure to the bond of "friends." The friends of Christ are built upon and centered around *the Word of God* (see notes—Jn.14:10; 7:16-19; DEEPER STUDY # 2—Acts 2:42 for discussion).

"I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him....When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (Jn.8:26, 28).

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (Jn.12:49-50).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:10-14).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:23-24).

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me" (Jn.17:8).

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him" (Eph.1:9-10).

"The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:26-27).

"For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb.2:11).

4 (15:16) **Believers, Purpose**: the *supreme purpose* of believers is to go and bear fruit. Believers are the chosen and ordained of Christ, and they have been given the very same purpose of Christ Himself: to go into all the world and bear fruit among men. This is one of the great verses of Scripture. Note two points.

1. Believers are chosen and ordained by Jesus. We do not choose Him nor do we ordain and send ourselves out to serve Him.

⇒ It is God who approaches and draws us (see notes—Jn.6:44-46. Also see note—Jn.6:37.)

⇒ It is God who appoints us to live for Him and to serve Him.

"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn.1:6).

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor.1:27-29).

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (1 Cor.12:28).

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

2. Believers are chosen and appointed for three very specific purposes.

a. To go forth as ambassadors for Christ, proclaiming the glorious message of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Believers are not called to be an exclusive club of retirees who have it made and who can go about doing what they want, knowing they are eternally secure. Believers are the ambassadors of Christ in the world. Once they have been saved, their duty—their sole reason for being *appointed* and *left* in this world—is to deliver the message of their King.

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

b. To bear fruit (see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Fruit-bearing*—Jn.15:1-8 for discussion).

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Mt.3:8).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:24).

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (Jn.15:2).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (Jn.15:5).

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Ro.6:22; cp. v.20-21).

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Ro.7:4).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

"For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph.5:9).

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Ph.1:11; cp. v.9-10).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col.1:10).

c. To receive the things of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14; note—15:7-8 for discussion).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Mt.21:22).

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Lk.11:9-10).

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (Jn.14:13-14).

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:7-8).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor.2:12).

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 Jn.3:22).

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 Jn.5:14-15).

5 (15:17) **Love**: the conclusion is forceful. The *supreme command* is repeated: love one another.

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

"Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation [hypocrisy]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another" (Ro.12:8-10).

	L. The Relationship of Believers to the World: (Part I) Persecution, 15:18-27	spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.	convicted of sin 1) The Lord's message convicts
1 The chilling reality: The world will hate	18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.	23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.	
2 The unjustified reasons for the world's hatred	19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.	24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.	2) The Lord's life & works convict
a. Because believers are new creatures	20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.	25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.	**3 The terrible guilt of the world: They are without cause**
b. Because believers are identified with Christ	21 But all these things will they do unto you for my names' sake, because they know not him that sent me.	26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, 0which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:	**4 The promise of victory over the world** a. Victory through the Holy Spirit: He is the Comforter—the Truth—the Witness
c. Because the world does not really know God	22 If I had not come and	27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.	b. Victory through one's own witness & fellowship with Christ
d. Because the world is			

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

L. The Relationship of Believers to the World (Part I): Persecution, 15:18-27

(15:18-27) **Introduction**: the relationship of true believers to the world is a bleak picture. The world hates true believers. The world and its people shun, isolate, talk about, ridicule, mock, bypass, overlook, consider strange, and joke about genuine believers. The persecution often goes even farther, involving abuse and murder within the workplace and community, depending on the society and the laws under which the believer lives. Jesus wanted the believer to be informed and to know what his relationship with the world is.

1. The chilling reality: the world will hate (v.18).
2. The unjustified reasons for the world's hatred (v.19-24).
3. The terrible guilt of the world: they are without cause (v.25).
4. The promise of victory over the world (v.26-27).

1 (15:18) **World—Persecution**: the chilling reality, the world will hate the believer. Note three things.

1. The meaning of the word "if" in this verse should be translated *since*. "Since the world hates you": there is no question about the world's hating the believer. It *will* hate him.

> **"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Mt.5:11).**
>
> **"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt.10:22).**
>
> **"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Ph.1:29).**
>
> **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).**

2. The "world" refers to the unbeliever: the unredeemed, the lost, those who have never trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The "world" stands for every person whose thoughts and lives are centered upon...
   - the lust of the flesh (food, clothes, money, immorality. Cp. Gal.5:16-21.)
   - the lust of the eyes (evil and immoral thoughts, coveting, seeing and desiring people and things).
   - the pride of life (position, honor, fame, self-centeredness, boasting, highmindedness. Cp. 2 Tim.3:1-5.)

> **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).**

3. The believer is to "know" something. The world hated Christ *first*.
   a. The believer is not to think some strange thing is happening to him; he is not to become discouraged.

> **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (1 Pt.4:11-12).**
>
> **"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 Jn.3:13).**

   b. The believer is to take heart, for Christ was victorious over the hatred. He was triumphant even over the bitterness of death. He arose and ascended to the Father.

> **"For consider him that endured such contradiction [hostility] of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb.12:3).**
>
> **"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb.2:10).**
>
> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**
>
> **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Is.53:5).**

2 (15:19-24) **Persecution, Reasons**: the unjustified reasons for the world's hatred. There are four reasons given.

1. The world hates believers because they are not of the world: they are new creatures. They are *called out* from the world. Believers are *in* the world, but they are not *of* the world. They are separated from the world, from its…

- spirit
- thoughts
- conversation
- pleasures
- friends
- comfort
- religions
- prejudices
- hoarding
- carnality
- passions
- covetousness

Because of their separation, the world does not love believers; it rejects and hates them.

> **"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn.17:16).**
>
> **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).**
>
> **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).**
>
> **"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Th.3:6).**

2. The world hates believers because they are identified with Christ. The servant is not above persecution: no servant is above his Lord. The Lord suffered persecution; therefore, the believer will suffer persecution. It is to be expected.

> **Thought 1.** It is an impossibility for a true disciple to be above his Master or for a servant to be above his Lord. If our Master and Lord suffered persecution, so will we. Why? He is our Master and Lord; that is, we are His. What He stands for is what we stand for. Whatever there was about Him that caused men to persecute Him, the same is *in us*. They will persecute us for *the same thing* and for *the same reason*. The genuine believer sacrifices himself, *all he is and has* to the Lord. He strives to conform his life to the Lord's; therefore, persecution is inevitable for the true believer.

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**
>
> **"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Jn.17:14).**
>
> **"Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor.4:9-11).**

3. The world hates believers because it does not really know God. The world is deceived in its concept and belief of God. The world conceives God to be the One who fulfills their earthly desires and lusts (Jn.6:2, 26). Man's idea of God is that of a *Supreme Grandfather* who protects and provides and gives no matter what a person's behavior is, just so the behavior is not too far out. The world believes that God (the Supreme Grandfather) will accept and work all things out in the

final analysis. However, the true believer teaches against this, proclaiming that God is both loving and just. God does love us, but He demands righteousness of us. The world, of course, rebels against this concept of God.

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:2-3).

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (Acts 17:23).

"[Men] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:6-7).

"But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1 Jn.2:11).

4. The world hates believers because it is convicted of sin. Jesus said that two things convict the world.
   a. His message convicts the world of sin: it strips away the world's *cloke of sin*. He preaches and teaches righteousness; therefore, His message exposes the sins of people.

"And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not" (Jn.5:38).

"But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you" (Jn.5:42).

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:44).

"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (Jn.5:46-47).

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come" (Jn.8:21).

"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:23-24).

"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn.8:34).

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not" (Jn.8:44-45).

"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (Jn.8:47).

   b. His life and works convict the world of sin. (See notes—Jn.5:19; 5:20; 5:36; DEEPER STUDY # 2—10:25 for discussion.) Note the words, "they had not had sin." This does not mean that men would not be guilty of sin if Jesus had not come. What it means is that since He has come, men have seen exactly who God is. God has been revealed to men; therefore, they stand guilty of the most terrible sin of all: rejecting God and His Son. If He had not come, they would not be guilty of *this sin*.

Note the claim of Jesus to be the revelation of God—to be equal with Him. To hate Him is to hate the Father also.

"Then said they unto him, where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also" (Jn.8:19).

"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:28-29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"Ye have not known him [God]; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:55).

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me" (Jn.10:25).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jn.14:11).

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (Jn.15:24).

3 (15:25) **World, Without Excuse**: the terrible guilt of the world. The world is without excuse. (Cp. Ps.35:19.) There is no sense for its hatred of Jesus. The world's hatred is a paradox; it is not understandable. Think about it. The world hates and opposes the One person...

- who lived and spoke for righteousness more than anyone else ever has.
- who cared and ministered more than anyone else ever has.
- who worked for true love and justice and the salvation of the world more than anyone else ever has.

(How deceived is the world and its humanity! To rush onward in madness for nothing but to return to dust and ashes. To seek life for only some seventy years [if that long].)

The world's hatred for Jesus Christ reveals that the true nature of the world is *evil*. The world is without excuse.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin" (Jn.15:22).

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Ro.1:20).

"They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul" (Ps.35:12).

"And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love" (Ps.109:5).

4 (15:26-27) **World, Victory Over—Holy Spirit**: the promise of victory over the world. Victory comes from two sources.

1. There is victory through the Holy Spirit.
   a. He is the believer's Comforter through persecution (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:16).
   b. He is the believer's Spirit of Truth through persecution. The truth will prevail through all persecution. (See note—Jn.14:17.)
   c. He will testify to the world, convicting them even while they are hating Christ. Note: the Holy Spirit is sent "from the Father" and "proceedeth from the Father" (para tou patros ekporeuetai), that is, "from the side of the Father." He is said to be a *distinct Person* from the Father and Son; He is said to be a *divine Person*, coming "from the very side of the Father."

"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (Mt.10:19).

"And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Lk.12:11-12).

"For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist" (Lk.21:15).

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).

2. There is victory through the believer's own witness and fellowship with Christ. The believer walks and fellowships with Christ from the very beginning of his conversion. He sees and hears with the eyes and ears of his heart, and he learns of Christ. Therefore, he declares the glorious message of Christ so that this world, even its persecutors, may have fellowship with believers and with the Father and His Son (1 Jn.1:3).

Note another fact: the believer bears witness because he really knows Christ. It is practically impossible to know the true Messiah, the Savior of the world—to know that no man has to die—and not proclaim the message. A genuine believer is a person of conviction, a person who cannot keep quiet if he knows and experiences the truth himself.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:3).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Is.43:10).

	CHAPTER 16	do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.	**cution: The religionists do not know God nor His Son**
	M. The Relationship of Believers to Religionists: (Part II) Persecution, 16:1-6	4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.	**4 The preparation for persecution** a. The believer must expect persecution & not be caught off guard
1 Jesus warned that religionists would persecute believers **2 The persecution: Worship shall be forbidden** a. Shall be put out of worship & killed b. To be done by religionists **3 The reason for the perse-**	These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. 2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. 3 And these things will they	5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? 6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.	b. The believer must know that God *is* & that Jesus reigns c. The believer must keep his mind on his destiny d. The believer must call upon the Holy Spirit

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

M. The Relationship of Believers to Religionists (Part II): Persecution, 16:1-6

(16:1-6) **Introduction—Jesus Christ, Mediator**: believers live in a world of religion and religionists. The world even looks upon believers as religionists, but they are not. Believers are ambassadors of the living Lord, ambassadors who have been left on earth to deliver the message of eternal hope and life to a hopeless and dying world. In this fact alone the believer faces a tremendous problem. There is only One God and He has only One Son, whom He loves beyond anything man could ever dream. To demonstrate that love, God has set His Son up as the only way to approach Him. All men must approach God *in the name* of His Son. The world feels this is narrow—much, much too narrow. Therefore, the world rejects God's Son and sets up its own ways to approach God. The end result is a world full of religions and religious approaches to God. (See outline and notes—Jn.10:7-10 for more discussion.)

This passage deals with the relationship between believers and the religionists of the world.

1. Jesus warned that religionists would persecute believers (v.1).
2. The persecution: worship will be forbidden (v.2).
3. The reason for the persecution: the religionists do not know God or His Son (v.3).
4. The preparation for persecution (v.4-6).

1 (16:1) **Persecution, Response To**: Jesus warned the believer that religionists would persecute His followers. Jesus warned the believer because He wants to prevent the believer from slipping away. The word "offended" (skandalisthete) means to stumble and to trip. Persecution by religionists can be a stumbling block to the believer. The believer can find himself being...

- questioned
- ridiculed
- passed over
- rejected
- mocked
- attacked
- criticized
- isolated and cut off
- tortured

The believer can stumble and fall over persecution. Persecution can...

- cause a believer to question his beliefs.
- cause a believer to weaken and return to the way of false religion.
- silence a believer and his witness.
- cause a believer to deny Jesus.

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Ro.14:13).

2 (16:2) **Persecution, Kinds; By Whom**: the persecution is to be severe, and it is to be religious in nature. Believers will be forbidden to worship. As an example, Jesus mentioned the ultimate persecution: the believer will be put out of the church and killed. Note three points.

1. The persecution is religious; it is carried out by those who think they really know God and are doing exactly what God wants. They think they are purifying the church and cleansing it of false teaching, a teaching that is narrow, a teaching that is prejudiced against other religions and beliefs and other ways to God.

Thought 1. False religionists do not see how there can be only one way to God. They conclude that Christ is wrong, that He is not the only Way, the only Truth, the only Life. They conclude...

- that the way to God is by being good and doing good, the best one can.
- that the particular religion does not really matter. What is important is that religion *inspires* one to be good and caring and to be a better person.

2. False religionists have always rejected and abused true believers and prophets. And they have often been dogged in their opposition and abuse. Nothing can be any more harsh and tragic than religious persecution. Religious persecution involves such things as…

- having one's faith, position, and ministry questioned.
- being accused, abused, talked about, and plotted against.
- being denied rights.
- being silenced, not allowed to worship or serve.
- being removed from service.
- being tried and imprisoned, tortured and killed.

(Cp. Saul of Tarsus, Acts 8:1-3; cp. Acts 26:9; Gal.1:13.)

"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience" (Jas.5:10).

3. Persecution within the church often happens. On this earth, God's house is full of people who have not really committed their lives to God. They do not know Him personally—not in a real intimate way. Therefore, the believer who truly takes a stand for God and His righteousness is sometimes opposed and persecuted by those within the church. The persecutors do not understand God nor His righteousness; therefore, they can become two-faced: slandering, reviling, and insulting the believer behind his back. They can also scold, mock, and attack the believer face to face. They can go so far as to try to destroy a believer's reputation and life, depending on the society in which they live. It is a terrible tragedy when persecution takes place in the walls of God's house.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Mt.5:11-12).

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt.10:17).

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (Mt.24:9-10).

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Ro.14:4).

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake" (Lk.21:12).

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim.3:12-13).

3 (16:3) **Persecution, Reasons**: the reason for persecution by religionists. Jesus gives one reason that underlies all other reasons for persecution. False religionists do not know God nor His Son, Jesus Christ. This is a staggering statement made by Jesus, for religionists *think* they know God. But Jesus says they do not, not really. They have their own idea of God, but it is only…

- their idea
- their reasoning
- their idol
- their imagination
- their image
- their devices

Religionists are deceived in their concept of God and in their understanding of Christ. They reject Christ, rejecting His claim to be the Son of God and the One who has existed *by the side* of God throughout all eternity. They look upon Christ only as a man: a good man, yes, but only a man. Therefore, they reject Him as the revelation and picture of God. The problem is that they want no God; they want no Lord that demands total self-denial and allegiance—no God other than themselves and their own imaginations. They want the right and freedom to seek their own desires instead of the demands of some supreme Lord. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.5:15-16; notes—7:32; 11:47-57 for more discussion.)

"But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me" (Jn.15:21).

"And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (Jn.16:3).

"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world" (Jn.3:21).

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him" (Acts 13:27).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim.3:7).

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (1 Jn.3:6).

4 (16:4-6) **Persecution, Overcoming**: the preparation for persecution is fourfold.

1. The believer must expect persecution. He must remember that Jesus foretold that he would be persecuted. Remembering keeps the believer from being caught off guard and stumbling. The believer is to *prepare* for persecution by *thinking through* what he will do when he is...

- ridiculed
- criticized
- opposed
- questioned
- abused
- attacked
- slandered
- tortured
- imprisoned

The point is this: being forewarned, the true believer knows persecution is coming. Therefore, he is to prepare himself.

> **"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).**
>
> **"But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you" (Jn.16:4).**

2. The believer must know that God *is* (exists) and that Jesus reigns. Jesus had told the disciples that they would face trouble and persecution in the world. Now, as He prepared to leave this world, He was revealing more to them and giving them a fuller revelation. (Cp. Jn.15:26-27; 16:7f as well as the whole teaching of Jn.15:18-27; 16:1-6.)

a. Believers must know that God *is* (exists): that their Lord has definitely gone to the Father who sent Him.

> **"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).**
>
> **"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I" (Jn.14:28).**
>
> **"But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?" (Jn.16:5).**
>
> **"I go to my Father, and ye see me no more" (Jn.16:10).**
>
> **"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (Jn.16:28).**
>
> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).**

b. Believers must know that their Lord truly reigns.

> **"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:12).**
>
> **"[God's power] which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:20).**
>
> **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Ph.2:9).**
>
> **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).**
>
> **"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pt.2:22).**

Knowing these two great facts will help believers of all generations in preparing for persecution.

3. The believer must keep his mind focused on his destiny. Jesus has gone to the Father who sent Him. He has returned to heaven; therefore, the Father and heaven are the believer's destiny. If persecutors kill the believer, he gains; he does not lose. He gains something far better than this life, the presence of God Himself. (See note, *Resurrection*—Jn.14:6. See note—Lk.21:18-19. Cp. Ph.1:23.)

Note: the believer is not to wallow around in self-pity and sorrow, moaning over being persecuted. His mind and thoughts are to be on God and heaven.

> **"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).**
>
> **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:3).**
>
> **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (Jn.17:24).**
>
> **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).**
>
> **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).**

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).

4. Believers must call upon the Helper, the Holy Spirit. This point is covered in the next few verses and outline. The Holy Spirit is given by God to be the constant companion of the believer, to help and comfort the believer through the persecution. (See outline and notes—Jn.16:7-15.)

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (Jn.14:16-17).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).

	N. The Work of the Holy Spirit, 16:7-15	prince of this world is judged.	3) Of judgment: Bc. Jesus condemned Satan[DSI]
1 He helps believers	7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you	12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.	**3 He guides believers**
a. His help: More expedient	that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not	13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he	a. Through speaking the truth
b. His name: The Comforter, the Helper	come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.	will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall	b. Through leading into all truth
2 He convicts & convinces the world	8 And when he is come,	hear, that shall he speak: and	c. Through showing things to come
a. He convicts: Of sin, righteousness, and judgment	he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness,	he will show you things to come.	**4 He glorifies Jesus: He shows the things of Jesus to believers**
b. He convinces	and of judgment:	14 He shall glorify me: for	
1) Of sin: Because they believe not on Jesus	9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;	he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.	
2) Of righteousness: Bc. Jesus' rgt. is proven—He is ascended as Lord	10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;	15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine,	
	11 Of judgment, because the	and shall show it unto you.	

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

N. The Work of the Holy Spirit, 16:7-15

(16:7-15) **Introduction**: the clearest revelation of the Holy Spirit is given by our Lord Himself. He had already revealed who the Person of the Holy Spirit is (Jn.14:15-26). Now, He reveals the work of the Holy Spirit.

1. The Holy Spirit helps believers (v.7).
2. The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world (v.8-11).
3. The Holy Spirit guides believers (v.12-13).
4. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus: He shows the things of Jesus to believers (v.14-15).

1 (16:7) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit comforts and helps believers. Jesus said a surprising thing: "It is expedient for you that I go away." It was for the believer's good (profit, advantage) that Jesus would leave the world. Note the additional weight and emphasis Jesus gave to the fact: "I tell you the truth." It may be difficult for a person to see and understand, for it seems that we would be much better off if Jesus were here physically and bodily. Some people even cry out for His presence, for some sight, some vision, some dream of Him. But Jesus said that it was best that He leave and not be physically present. Why? There is one supreme reason: if He had not left, the Holy Spirit would not have come. The believer is *better off* with the presence of the Holy Spirit than he is with the presence of Jesus.

Now note. How can such a statement be made? How can the believer be better off with the Holy Spirit than with the physical, bodily presence of Jesus?

1. Since Jesus departed, we now have a *glorified and exalted Lord*. We have a Lord who rules and reigns and controls all: who is able to fulfill all His promises and meet our desperate need for life—life that is both abundant and eternal.

> **"[That you may know] what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).**

2. Since Jesus departed, we now have an *Intercessor* before the very throne of God. We have a Person who is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, because He was tempted in all points just as we are.

> **"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:14-16).**

3. Since Jesus departed, we now have the *presence of the Holy Spirit* with us at all times. Jesus in His human body could be only in one place at a time; but the Holy Spirit, who is Spirit, is able to be with all believers at the same time no matter where they are.

> **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (Jn.14:16).**

4. Since Jesus departed, we now have *a real gospel* to proclaim, the gospel of the risen and exalted Lord who is able to give eternal life to every person who calls upon Him.

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation....For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ro.10:8-10, 13).

5. Since Jesus departed, we now have the *worldwide work of the Holy Spirit*, His work of...
   - convicting and convincing the world (Jn.16:8-11).
   - helping and guiding believers (Jn.16:12-13).
   - glorifying Christ (Jn.16:14-15).

Note the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter. (See note—Jn.14:16.)

2 (16:8-11) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world. The word "reprove" (elegxei) means both *to convict* and *to convince* a person.

⇒ Convict means to prick a person's heart until he senses and knows he is guilty. He has done wrong or failed to do right.

⇒ Convince means to hammer and drive at a person's heart until he knows the fact is true.

The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the world of three things: sin, righteousness, and judgment.

1. There is the *conviction of sin*.
   a. The Holy Spirit *convicts* the world of its sin, that man is sinful. The Holy Spirit convicts a man that he...
      - misses the mark, that is, comes short of the glory of God.

        "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

      - trespasses, that is, wanders off the right path.

        "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph.2:1).

      - transgresses, that is, breaks the law of God.

        "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:2-3).

   b. The Holy Spirit *convinces* the world that a man's unbelief is wrong. The Holy Spirit convinces the world that Jesus really did die for sin. The Holy Spirit takes a man who does not believe on Jesus and convinces him that Jesus is the Savior—that his sins are really forgiven when he *believes* on Jesus.

      "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

      "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 Jn.2:1-2).

2. There is the *conviction of righteousness*.
   a. The Holy Spirit *convicts* the world of its lack of righteousness, that a man has no righteousness whatsoever that is acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit convicts a man that his righteousness...
      - is self-righteousness only.
      - is human righteousness only.
      - is the righteousness of works that are only human and therefore have an end.
      - is the righteousness of human goodness and therefore passes away when he dies.
      - is inadequate, insufficient, and unacceptable to God.

        "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith" (Gal.3:11; cp. Gal.2:16).

        "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities" (Is.64:6-7; cp. v.9-12).

   b. The Holy Spirit *convinces* the world that Jesus' righteousness is acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit convinces a man...
      - that Jesus really was received up into heaven by the Father *because* He was righteous.
      - that Jesus has secured righteousness for every man.
      - that man can approach God through the righteousness of Jesus.
      - that Jesus is the Ideal and Perfect Man, the very Son of Man Himself. (See note—Jn.1:51.)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

"To whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:24-25).

3. There is the *conviction of judgment*.
   a. The Holy Spirit *convicts* the world that judgment is coming, that a man is to face the personal judgment of God. The Holy Spirit convicts a man...
      - that he is both responsible and accountable to God and man.
      - that there is to be a real day of judgment sometime out in the future.
      - that he is to stand face to face with God and be judged.
      - that he is to be judged for sin and lack of righteousness, for what he has done and not done.

      "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Ro.14:12).
      "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

   b. The Holy Spirit *convinces* the world that Jesus has borne the judgment of sin and death for man. The Holy Spirit convinces a man...
      - that Jesus died bearing the penalty and judgment of sin for him.

      "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).
      "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

      - that Jesus, by His death, destroyed the power of Satan over sin and death.

      "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).
      "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

      - that man can be freed from sin and death, that he can be forgiven for his sin and given eternal life through the death of Jesus.

      "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).
      "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph.1:7).

   (See DEEPER STUDY # 2,3—Jn.12:31; notes—12:31-33; 14:30-31 for more discussion.)

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(16:11) **Satan**: this passage concerns the judgment of Satan. The judgment of Satan was executed by Christ upon the cross. It was upon the cross that Jesus Christ judged and condemned the devil in all his authority and power. How? There were two ways.

1. Satan is judged and condemned by the obedience of Christ upon the cross. God is perfectly pleased with Christ, for Christ did exactly what God wanted: *He obeyed God perfectly*. Therefore, God is bound to be perfectly pleased.

The point is this: what God wanted most of all was for Christ to die *for man*. Christ Himself said, "As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do." The ultimate commandment that would show perfect obedience was for Him...

- to die for man's sin.
- to receive the judgment of (physical and spiritual) death for man's sin.
- to suffer separation from God for man.

It was upon the cross that Christ obeyed God in the supreme, ultimate, and absolute sense. It was because he died—because He obeyed God perfectly—that God...

- has highly exalted Him (cp. Ph.2:9-11).
- has given Him a name above every name.
- has destined that every knee will bow before Him, of things *in heaven*, and things *in earth*, and things *under the earth*.
- has destined that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.
- has judged the world and ordained that it will be recreated and made into a new heavens and earth (2 Pt.3:10-13).

- has cast out Satan and enthroned Christ, giving Him the loyalty of man and the kingdoms of the whole world (Jn.12:31-32).
- has assured the return of Christ and His rule and reign (Tit.2:12-13).
- has promised that Christ will rule and reign over a new heavens and earth, over all throughout the universe (2 Pt.3:4-5, 8-13).

2. Satan is judged and condemned by the belief of men in the cross, in the death of Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Cross*—Jn.12:32 for discussion).

The cross judged and condemned Satan in all his authority and power. The judgment can be summed up in three areas.

1. The cross judges and breaks the power of Satan over the world (Jn.12:31). Satan is the ruler, the prince, the power of the world. This is taught by the Bible (Jn.12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor.4:4; Eph.2:2). The one example of his dominion familiar to most is the temptation of Christ. Satan offered the kingdoms of the world to Christ if Christ would worship him (Lk.4:6). He possessed the kingdoms to offer. But Christ refused to yield to the temptation. Instead He chose to obey God, to secure the authority over the kingdoms of the world by way of the cross. In this particular passage, Christ proclaimed the coming triumph of the cross. The cross broke forever the power of the devil over the kingdoms of the world, and it assures the return of Christ to rule and reign throughout the universe forever.

> **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (Jn.12:31).**
>
> **"[God] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col.1:13).**
>
> **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it [the cross]" (Col.2:15).**
>
> **"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor.15:24-25).**
>
> **"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11; cp. Rev.21:1f).**

2. The cross judges and breaks the authority and power of Satan over death (Jn.12:31). Satan holds the power of death. It is his selfish and sinful influence that has brought corruption, decay, and death to the earth. But Christ has broken the devil's grip over death forever. The cross delivers man from the fear and bondage of death and assures Christ the authority over life and death.

> **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).**
>
> **"For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death....O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor.15:25-26, 55-57).**

3. The cross judges and breaks the authority and power of Satan to corrupt men through worldliness and sin (Jn.12:32). Satan uses the world—its pleasures and desire for power and wealth and fame—to attract and enslave men, and enslavement inevitably leads to destruction. But the cross brings power to a man, spiritual power...

- to break his habits and bondages.
- to keep him from damaging and destroying his body and spirit.

The cross and its power to deliver and to give life have become the focal attraction of time and eternity. The cross liberates and frees man forever.

> **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me [to which he can appeal]" (Jn.14:30).**
>
> **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor.10:13).**
>
> **"He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn.3:8).**
>
> **"Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 Jn.4:4).**

3 (16:12-13) **Holy Spirit**: the Holy Spirit guides believers through three things.

1. The Holy Spirit guides by speaking the truth. Christ said that He had many things to say to the apostles, but they were not able to "bear" (handle, grasp) them, not yet. He would share them later through the Holy Spirit. Christ tells the Spirit what to say and how to guide believers. Christ, of course, is the One who knows the infirmities and the needs of men. He knows by personal experience (Heb.4:15-16). Therefore, He is the One who is appointed by God to instruct the Spirit in His *guiding* ministry. This should cause our hearts to leap with great joy and confidence, for the Lord knows exactly what we face—knows by experience.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Ro.8:14).

"For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death" (Ps.48:14).

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps.73:24).

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left" (Is.30:21).

"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Is.42:16).

"Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go" (Is.48:17).

2. The Holy Spirit guides by leading into all the truth. The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of Truth." He speaks only the truth and guides into "all the truth." The truth, of course, is Jesus Christ Himself. The Spirit leads the believer to Christ, the Truth, and teaches him "all the truth" about Christ. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.14:6; note—15:26-27 for more discussion.)

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (Jn.15:26).

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 Jn.4:6).

3. The Holy Spirit guides by showing (announcing, declaring) things to come. After Jesus arose, the Holy Spirit was the One who led the apostles to write the New Testament and to foresee the things revealed in its pages. Since that day, the Holy Spirit is the One who takes the things revealed in the Word and shows (declares, announces) them to the heart of the believer.

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor.2:9-10).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor.2:12).

Thought 1. Note two critical facts.

1) The believer must be dependent upon the Holy Spirit's leadership in learning the truth.
2) The believer's growth is progressive, coming only from the Holy Spirit's opening up the Word to him.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor.2:13).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jn.2:27).

4 (16:14-15) **Holy Spirit—Trinity**: the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ and *only* Christ. Note that the Spirit "receives" of Christ and shows (declares) it to believers. This means that He receives and declares...

- only what Christ is.
- only what Christ did.
- only what Christ said.

The Holy Spirit was sent *in Jesus' name* to proclaim Jesus alone. He, the Spirit of Truth, leads believers to Christ, who alone is the Truth. He did not come to proclaim a movement and message of His own but to proclaim the movement and message of Christ.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (Jn.14:26).

Note the phenomenal claim of Jesus. All that the Father has is His. He is the Son of God, the Son of the Father. (See note—Jn.1:34 for more discussion.) Note another fact: Christ is declaring that there is *perfect unity* in the Godhead. All things of the Father...

- are the things of the Son, of Jesus Christ Himself.
- are the things shown and declared by the Holy Spirit.

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn.17:22).

O. The Resurrection and Its Effects Foretold, 16:16-33

1 The resurrection perplexes people
- a. The death & resurrection of Jesus predicted
- b. The resurrection was perplexing
  - 1) The disciples' perplexity
  - 2) Jesus knew the disciples' perplexity & wished to help

2 The resurrection brings joy—irrepressible joy
- a. There was sorrow at first: His death
- b. There was then joy: His resurrection
- c. There was a good illust.: A woman's travail
- d. There was irrepressible joy
  - 1) Bc. of resurrection
  - 2) Bc. no man could take the joy away

3 The resurrection gives open access into God's presence

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.
17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?
18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.
19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?
20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.
21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.
22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.
23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.
24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.
25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.
26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:
27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.
28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.
29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.
30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.
31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?
32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.
33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

- a. The glorious promise
- b. The institution of prayer "in Jesus' name"

4 The resurrection reveals all about the Father
- a. The resurrection shows & declares the Father clearly
- b. The resurrection shows that the approach to God is "in Jesus' name"
- c. The resurrection shows that the Father Himself loves the believer

5 The resurrection validates the Messiahship of Jesus

6 The resurrection exposes weak faith
- a. The disciples declared their faith
- b. Jesus questioned their weak profession
- c. The cross tested & exposed their profession

7 The resurrection makes available true peace
- a. The world's peace: Tribulation
- b. The peace of Jesus: Triumphant

DIVISION XIII

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT MINISTER AND HIS LEGACY, 13:1-16:33

O. The Resurrection and Its Effects Foretold, 16:16-33

(16:16-33) **Introduction**: this is one of the great passages on the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it is one of the most glorious passages in all of Scripture. It is one of those passages that lays out more than man could ever imagine. Jesus revealed and proclaimed the resurrection and its effects upon the world.

1. The resurrection perplexes people (v.16-19).
2. The resurrection brings joy—irrepressible joy (v.20-22).
3. The resurrection gives open access into God's presence (v.23-24).
4. The resurrection reveals all about the Father (v.25-27).
5. The resurrection validates Jesus' Messiahship (v.28).
6. The resurrection exposes weak faith (v.29-32).
7. The resurrection makes available true peace (v.33).

1 (16:16-19) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection of Jesus Christ perplexes people. Jesus predicted His death and resurrection.

⇒ His death: "A little while, and ye *shall not see me*."

⇒ His resurrection: "And again, a little while, and ye *shall see me*, because I go to the Father."

The prediction puzzled the disciples, and they began to ask among themselves what Jesus meant (v.18). Jesus knew that they were puzzled and asked them about their perplexity, wishing to help them (v.19).

Note Jesus' claim: "I go to the Father" (see note, *Resurrection*—Jn.14:6 for discussion).

Thought 1. The resurrection does puzzle and perplex people; it always has and always will. People are puzzled by both the resurrection of Jesus and the coming resurrection of all men at the end of the world.

1) Some outrightly deny the resurrection, saying such is beyond human experience and could not possibly happen (an atheistic position).
2) Some say the resurrection may be, but it also may not be. Man has never known anything like it other than what Christians and a few others say about Jesus. But that happened so long ago that it cannot be scientifically proven; therefore, there is no way to know if it is true (an agnostic position).
3) Some say that the resurrection can be and that Jesus probably did arise but that it is a meaningless puzzle for *today*: "I will worry about its meaning tomorrow. I have no time to get involved and wrapped up in what it means, not now. Perhaps I will need to sit down and find out its meaning later, but right now other things are pressing and more important."

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"[Men] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Pt.1:13-15).

2 (16:20-22) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection brings irrepressible joy. Note four points.

1. Jesus said there was to be sorrow at first. He would be going away and leaving the disciples by sacrificing Himself for the world. They would "weep" and "lament" and experience deep grief. Their hopes would seem to be dashed upon the rocks of man's ultimate enemy: death.

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar" (Ps.42:6).

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped" (Ps.73:2).

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).

"But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me" (Is.49:14).

Note: Jesus said the world would rejoice at His death. Why? Because death would prove that He was not the Son of God; it would prove that He was only a self-proclaimed savior who was now dead. Death would prove Him false. And being dead, His demands would not be binding; they would be meaningless. Men would not have to do what He said: deny themselves and give all they were and had to Him. They would not have to go and give all they had to meet the desperate needs of a lost world.

"But his citizens [of the world] hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (Jn.12:25).

2. After sorrow there was to be irrepressible joy. Jesus said that He would arise, and His resurrection would cause His followers to burst forth with joy.

His resurrection meant that death was conquered. Men no longer had to die, no longer had to be condemned for sin. They could be delivered from sin and death by following Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.12:31; DEEPER STUDY # 4—12:32; DEEPER STUDY # 1—16:11 for discussion).

Thought 1. This joy is the answer to the weeping and lamenting over death. The great source of joy is the glorious news of the resurrection, the absolute knowledge and certainty that Jesus Christ is risen.

3. Jesus gave a good illustration of the violent contrast between the sorrow over death and the joy of the resurrection. The illustration describes a woman's travail in giving birth. She suffers so much that she literally groans and grasps in desperation for the new life to begin. Once the child is born, the sorrow and pain are all forgotten for a new life has emerged.

4. The resurrection brings irrepressible joy just as a newborn baby brings joy to a woman in travail. Two things cause the joy.

a. The resurrection and presence of Jesus Himself brings great joy. Just think: Jesus is not dead. His body has not decayed in a grave: He has arisen. He emerged from the grave and ascended to the Father. There is victory over the grave, triumph over death. Man can now live forever. No truth could fill a man with any more joy and rejoicing than *really knowing* that death has been conquered in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

> **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but *quickened* [resurrected] by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).**

b. The believer's joy of *really knowing* the resurrection of Jesus Christ cannot be taken away by any man. The fact is there: Jesus did die for man's sins and arise again to give man a new life—a life that is both abundant and eternal. The believer knows it. His joy is permanent, deep-seated, and unmovable. When the trials and sorrows of earth come upon him, he still...

- knows the joy of the Lord's presence and care.

> **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (Jn.14:16-18).**
>
> **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:7).**

- knows that Christ will escort Him into the Father's presence eternally.

> **"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:3).**
>
> **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor.5:8).**
>
> **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Ph.1:23).**
>
> **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me [escort, take me] unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" (2 Tim.4:18).**

- knows that he shall be a child of the new heavens and earth to be created for the Father's family.

> **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:16-17).**
>
> **"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pt.3:13).**
>
> **"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" (Rev.21:1).**

3 (16:23-24) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection gives open access into God's presence. Note two facts.

1. The glorious promise: an *open door* into God's presence. Jesus said "in that day," after His resurrection, there will be no need to ask Him anything. (This does not mean, of course, that we cannot ask Him, only that we do not have to ask Him.) The believer can walk right into the Father's presence. There is an *open door* into His presence. Whatever the believer asks the Father in Jesus' name, He will give it to the believer. This is the most glorious of promises, that we can approach God as our Father just as a child approaches his earthly father.

2. The institution of prayer—of our approach to God, of our communion with Him—*in Jesus' name*. This is the crucial point. Our approach to the Father, our prayer, must be *in Jesus' name*. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14.) Before Jesus, men had always asked God for things directly, but no more. The resurrection instituted a new and living way into God's presence. Men must now approach God through Jesus Christ...

- believing that the righteousness of Jesus covers them.
- asking God to accept their faith *in* Jesus as righteousness.
- thanking God for Jesus, His great love and sacrifice for them.

> **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).**
>
> **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn.14:13).**
>
> **"Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).**

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb.10:19-22).

Note two tremendous promises to the man who asks *in Jesus' name*.

⇒ He will receive what he asks.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (Jn.15:7).

⇒ His joy is full and complete (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.15:11 for discussion).

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (Jn.15:11).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

4 (16:25-27) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection reveals all about the Father. Note three points.

1. Jesus said that the resurrection would show (declare) the Father plainly. It shows and declares God's nature...
   - of *compassion*: of caring for the welfare of those gripped by sin and death.
   - of *salvation*: of delivering men from the fear and bondage of sin and death.
   - of *power*: of omnipotence, of being able to plan and carry out the plan of salvation by overruling all and by raising the dead.
   - of *life*: possessing life itself and being able to infuse life into the dead.
   - of *justice*: not allowing One who was sinless and perfect to be held by death.
   - of *Omniscience*: knowing all, knowing the terrible injustice done to the innocent Son of God and knowing how to solve and work the whole scene out for the good of salvation.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

2. It shows that the approach to God—prayer—is in the name of Jesus. (See DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.14:13-14 for discussion. Also see note, pt.2—Jn.16:23-24 of this outline.)
3. It shows that the Father Himself loves the believer. Jesus said that He would not have to beg the Father to receive and hear the believer. He does not have to intercede or take the believer to God. The believer does not need an Intercessor to be received by the Father. The Father Himself loves the believer. However, there is a crucial point to note. The Father *loves* the believer for a reason: the believer...
   - loves Jesus (see notes—Jn.14:15; 14:23).
   - believes that Jesus "came out from God" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34; notes—7:16-19; 7:25-31).

Thought 1. It is because of Jesus that the Father receives and hears the believer. Note how this picture of God as Father differs radically from the normal picture...

- that God is angry and has to be begged by Jesus to receive and hear us.
- that God is far off someplace out in space—almost too far to be reached.
- that maybe God is and maybe He is not, but one needs to go ahead and pray just in case.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (Eph.2:4-5).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 Jn.3:1).

5 (16:28) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection validates and proves Jesus' claim to be the Messiah. In one brief statement Jesus gave the whole plan of salvation.

1. "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world" (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.3:34; notes—7:16-19; 7:25-31).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

2. "I leave the world, and go to the Father" (see note, *Resurrection*—Jn.14:6).

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I" (Jn.14:28).

"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father" (Jn.16:16).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

Note Jesus' phenomenal claim. He came from "the Father" and is returning to "the Father."

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

6 (16:29-32) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection exposes weak faith. Something Jesus said struck the disciples' hearts. Just what it was is not really known. It may have been His promise to show them the Father (explain all that He was saying) or the fact that the Father loves them. Whatever it was, it caused the disciples to make a great declaration of faith:

⇒ "Thou knowest all things."

⇒ "Thou comest forth from God."

Thought 1. Note that this confession is the *Incarnation*, God Himself in the person of His Son coming to earth. It is a critical confession that must be made by every man.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:2-3).

Jesus questioned their belief and predicted their desertion. Note several clear facts about Jesus, facts that are a great encouragement to the believer.

1. Jesus was never alone, even when men did not stand with Him. The Father was with Him through every situation no matter how terrible. Even when He did not have the support of men, He had God and His support.

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"The Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

2. Jesus was forgiving. He forgave every one of the men, even for deserting Him. He did not hold their sin and failure against them. (How His arms reach out for every deserter, to forgive and to receive back!)

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification [forgiveness and acceptance]" (Ro.4:25).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9-10).

3. Jesus knew all. Even when He chose these men, He knew they would fail and desert Him, yet He went ahead and chose them. He knew they were trustworthy and would eventually prove faithful.

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).

7 (16:33) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the resurrection makes available true peace, triumphant peace (see note, *Peace*—Jn.14:27 for discussion). The world can give only trials and tribulation. No matter who the person is, the trials and tribulations come. Such is the way of the world, and no man can avoid it. Therefore, whatever peace comes to this world is transient, passing ever so quickly.

The peace of Jesus Christ—the peace that is *in Him*—is lasting. It is an *overcoming* peace, a peace that overcomes the trials and tribulations of the world, no matter what they are, even the terrible trials of sin and death. But note, the *overcoming peace…*

- is only *in Jesus*
- is only *in His Word*, in the things which He spoke

Note: the peace of God comes only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, only through His conquest and victory over sin and death.

> **"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24).**
>
> **"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4; cp. v.5-58).**
>
> **"[That you may know] what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph.1:19-20).**
>
> **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:13-14).**
>
> **"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).**

	CHAPTER 17	4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.	c. Reason: Christ finished God's work
	XIV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT INTERCESSOR, 17:1-26	5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.	**3 Request 2: Restore thy Son to His former glory—to His preexistent exaltation**
	A. Jesus Prayed for Himself, 17:1-8	6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.	a. Because He has revealed the Father's name
1 Jesus' hour had come, that is, His death	These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes, to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:	7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.	b. Because men now know that He is the Son of God, the revelation of God Himself
2 Request 1: Glorify thy Son—that He may glorify the Father	2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.	8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.	1) They now receive His Words
a. How: By giving Him power over all flesh	3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.		2) They now know His origin
b. Purpose: That He may give eternal life[DSI]			3) They now believe He is sent of God, that He is the Son of God Himself
1) Eternal life is knowing God			
2) Eternal life is knowing Christ			

DIVISION XIV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT INTERCESSOR, 17:1-26

A. Jesus Prayed for Himself, 17:1-8

(17:1-8) **Introduction**: this passage begins the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus (Jn.17:1-26). In this great chapter, Jesus is revealed to be *the great Intercessor*. He reached the summit of prayer: He prayed for Himself (v.1-8), for His immediate disciples (v.9-19), and for future believers (v.20-26). He asked only two things for Himself.

1. Jesus' hour had come, that is, His death (v.1).
2. Request 1: glorify thy Son—that He may glorify the Father (v.1-4).
3. Request 2: restore thy Son to His former glory—to His preexistent exaltation (v.5-8).

(17:1-8) **Another Outline**: The Hour Has Come.

1. The hour of glory (v.1).
2. The hour of power (v.2).
3. The hour of eternal life (v.2-3).
4. The hour of a finished work (v.4).
5. The hour of restored glory (v.5).
6. The hour of revelation (v.6).
7. The hour of a mission accomplished, or the hour of belief (v.7-8).

1 (17:1) **Jesus Christ, Hour of**: Jesus' hour had come. "His hour" refers to His death (see notes—Jn.2:3-5; 12:23-24). Note that Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and called God "Father." He was claiming to know God intimately, to be the very Son of God. Note also that Jesus made only two requests for Himself (v.1, 5).

2 (17:1-4) **Jesus Christ, Glory of**: the first thing Jesus asked was, "Father...glorify thy Son." But quickly note why: "That thy Son also may glorify thee." The whole purpose for God's sending Jesus to earth was to give eternal life to men; so in asking the two questions, "How is God glorified?" and "How is Jesus glorified?" the answer is simply: "by men's receiving eternal life." Both God's glory and Jesus' glory are found in the completion of the great work of salvation. There is...

- the glory of righteousness which Jesus secured by a perfect life.
- the glory of the cross itself.
- the glory of Jesus' resurrection which vindicates beyond question His Messiahship.
- the glory of Christ's ascension and exaltation.

All is summed up in the glory of man's salvation, in man's receiving eternal life. (See notes, *Jesus Christ, Glory of*—Jn.12:23-26; *God, Glory of*—Jn.12:27-30 for discussion. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Hallowed Be*—Mt.6:9; DEEPER STUDY # 6, *God, Will of*—Mt.6:10 for more discussion.)

Now note three things about Jesus' request to be glorified.

1. How is Jesus glorified? By God's giving Him the power and authority over all flesh (see note—Jn.13:31-32 for discussion. Also see note—Jn.12:23-26 for more discussion. These are important notes in seeing this point.)

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead [spiritually dead] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:24-27).**

2. The reason Jesus was exalted to be the Sovereign Majesty of the universe is onefold, and it is the most wonderful news in all the universe. Jesus was glorified so that He could give eternal life to men (cp. Jn.3:35-36; 10:28).
   a. He gives eternal life. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3.)
   b. God gives Jesus the persons who are to receive eternal life. Note: a man must be moved upon by the drawing power of God (Holy Spirit) in order to receive eternal life (see notes—Jn.6:44-46).

> **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:44).**

3. The reason Jesus was now ready to be glorified is simply stated: He had finished the work God had given Him to do. In doing the work God had given Him to do, He had glorified God on earth.

> **Thought 1.** The only way a person can glorify God on earth is to do what God says. If a man is interested in glorifying God, he will obey God. (See note, *God, Glory of*—Jn.12:27-30 for more discussion.)

> **"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).**
>
> **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.7:21).**
>
> **"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (Jn.15:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:2-3) **Eternal Life** (ainios): life, real life. It is the very life of God Himself. It is the very energy, force, being, essence, principle, and power of life. It has more to do with quality and with what life really is than with duration. To live forever in the present world is not necessarily a good thing. The world and man's body need changing. That changed life is found only in eternal life. The only being who can be said to be eternal is God. Therefore, life—supreme life—is found only in God. To possess eternal life is to know God. Once a person knows God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, that person has eternal life—he shall live forever. But more essential, the person has the supreme quality of life, the very life of God Himself. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10.)

> **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:14-15).**
>
> **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn.6:40).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee" (Jn.11:25-28).**
>
> **"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (Jn.12:25).**
>
> **"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ro.5:21).**
>
> **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal.6:8).**
>
> **"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).**
>
> **"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 Jn.3:14).**
>
> **"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:11-12).**

3 (17:5-8) **Jesus Christ, Glory of; Exaltation**: the second thing Jesus asked for Himself was to be restored to His former glory, to His preexistent exaltation (see notes—Jn.1:1-2; 13:31-32, pt.3 for discussion). Note what this says.

⇒ Jesus *dwelt* in a preexistent, eternal state and glory with God.

> **"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (Jn.8:58).**
>
> **"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (Jn.16:28).**
>
> **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power" (Heb.1:3).**
>
> **"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of thy kingdom" (Heb.1:8).**

⇒ Jesus set His glory aside when he came to earth as Man (see note—Ph.2:7).

> **"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).**
>
> **"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Ph.2:7).**

⇒ Jesus knew that He would return to the Father and be restored to His former glory.

> **"Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me" (Jn.7:33).**
>
> **"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I" (Jn.14:28).**
>
> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).**
>
> **"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).**
>
> **"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).**

There are two reasons why Jesus asked to be restored to His former glory.

1. Jesus had revealed God's name. By "name" is meant the whole character and nature of God—all that God is. This is a phenomenal claim, for Jesus was claiming to be the very revelation of God, the One who reveals God to men (see outline and notes—Jn.14:6; 14:8-11). Note several points.

   a. Jesus revealed God (the full revelation of God) to the people whom God had given Him. He shared the message of God, but He did not scatter the seed among the unthankful and unreceptive. He had even told His followers not to waste time on the unreceptive.

   > **"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Mk.6:11).**

   b. It was God who gave Jesus the believers who were to be shown and taught all about Himself. God is Sovereign, so He led both Jesus and the disciples together. God stirred and led these men, the first believers, out of the world to follow Jesus and to receive and to be shown the revelation of God. They learned of God—of His Person and nature, of His love and salvation—because God drew them to His dear Son (see note—Jn.6:44-46).

   > **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (Jn.6:44-45).**
   >
   > **"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:29).**

   c. The first believers belonged to God. They were His because He drew them to His Son by His Sovereignty and power and by His foreknowledge. He knew that they would believe on Jesus.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).

d. These men kept God's Word. They obeyed and did exactly what Jesus commanded. (See note—Jn.15:9-10.)

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

2. The men now knew that Jesus was the Son of God, the very revelation of God Himself. They knew "*that all things" which He had were given by God* (v.7). They knew that He was the very embodiment and revelation of God. (Note: Jesus was looking ahead beyond the resurrection in saying this. It would be the resurrection that would confirm all He had been revealing to them.)

a. They had now received His words as the very words of God (see notes—Jn.7:16-19; 14:10; 12:47-50).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (Jn.6:68).

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (Jn.7:16-17).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 Jn.2:3).

b. They now knew His origin: He had come *out from God* (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34; notes—7:16-19; 7:25-31).

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (Jn.3:13).

"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world....For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:33, 38).

"And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" (Jn.8:23).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).

c. They now believed that God *had* sent Him, that He had come to earth as the Ambassador of God to proclaim and reveal the salvation of God. (See note—Jn.3:32-34; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34.)

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

	B. Jesus Prayed for His Disciples, 17:9-19	13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.	**3 Request 2: That they might have His joy in all its fulness**
1 Jesus prayed for His disciples a. Because they had been entrusted to Him b. Because they belonged to both Jesus & God[DS1] c. Because glory came to Jesus through them d. Because Jesus was leaving the world	9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.	14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.	**4 Request 3: That God would keep them from the evil one or Satan** a. Because world hated them 1) Because of the Word 2) Because they are not of the world b. Because they were needed in the world
2 Request 1: That God would keep them & keep them together as one[DS2] a. Because they were in the world b. Because He had kept them & had lost none[DS3]	11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.	16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.	c. Because they were now of the same nature as Jesus **5 Request 4: That God would sanctify them[DS4]** a. Because they were sent into the world b. Because sanctification is the way of salvation

DIVISION XIV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT INTERCESSOR, 17:1-26

B. Jesus Prayed for His Disciples, 17:9-19

(17:9-19) **Introduction**: Jesus prayed for His disciples. What He prayed was striking and full of meaning for believers of every generation.

1. Jesus prayed for His disciples (v.9-11).
2. Request 1: that God would keep them and keep them together as one (v.11-12).
3. Request 3: that they might have His joy in all its fulness (v.13).
4. Request 3: that God would keep them from the evil one or Satan (v.14-16).
5. Request 4: that God would sanctify them (v.17-19).

1 (17:9-11) **Jesus Christ, Ministry—God, Faithfulness of**: Jesus prayed for His disciples. He was not praying for the world, not now. He specifically said so. Why?

⇒ It was not because He and the Father do not love the world. They do; they love the world deeply (Jn.3:16). The world was the very reason Jesus had come to earth: to save the world and keep it from perishing.

⇒ It was not because the world did not need prayer. It did, and He prayed for the forgiveness and conversion of men in the world (Lk.23:34).

There are four reasons why Jesus was praying only for His disciples. Note that the reasons are part of His prayer.

1. Jesus' disciples had been given to Him *by His Father* (v.9). They belonged to His Father, but they had been *entrusted into His hands*. He was responsible for them and their welfare. Therefore, He had to pray for them, that His Father would give them special strength in the coming days.

> **"According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph.1:4).**
>
> **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (1 Pt.1:2).**

2. Jesus' disciples belonged to both Him and the Father (v.10). Note exactly how Jesus worded this: "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." All the disciples were God's; they belonged to God. But all the disciples of God also belonged to Jesus. This is the mutual possession of all believers by both Jesus and God. They are both deeply concerned over the welfare of believers. God is as concerned over believers as Jesus is; therefore, Jesus can count on God's hearing and answering His prayer.

> **"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:29).**

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:23).

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Ro.8:29).

3. Jesus' disciples glorified Jesus; their lives brought glory to Him (v.10). They lived for Him by obeying His Word and working for Him and showing loyalty and allegiance. They lifted Him up to the world and proclaimed Him to be the Savior of the world and the Lord of the universe. He was thereby glorified, honored, and praised; therefore, He prayed for them—that they might become strong in their lives and witness for Him.

"That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Th.1:12).

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pt.2:9).

4. Jesus was leaving the world and returning to heaven and the Father (v.11). The whole mission of preaching the gospel to the world rested upon the shoulders of His disciples. They were the ones who were to go out into the world as His ambassadors to proclaim His Word. As they went, they needed to be strengthened and equipped by God to stand against some terrible forces. His followers were the ones who needed special prayer. His whole mission of reaching the world for God depended upon their endurance and faithfulness. In these last hours before He returned to heaven, He had to pray for them with power and intensity, asking great things of God.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt.28:19-20).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:10) **Jesus—Deity**: "all mine are thine, and thine are mine"—a phenomenal claim. A man can say that all he is and has belongs to God, but no man can say that all God is and has belongs to him. In Jesus' very prayer He was claiming deity—oneness with God. (See note—Jn.14:10; cp. Jn.10:30.)

"I and my Father are one" (Jn.10:30).

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him" (Jn.10:37-38).

"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (Jn.14:10).

"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (Jn.17:11).

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one" (Jn.17:22).

2 (17:11-12) **Unity**: first, Jesus prayed that God would keep His disciples—keep them together as one. Jesus was praying for the disciples to be kept from the *divisiveness* of the world, not that they would be kept from evil. He dealt with the evil of the world later (v.14-15). Note two points.

1. The disciples were in an extremely divisive world (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Unity*—Jn.17:11 for discussion).
2. Jesus kept the disciples while He was in the world. He lost none except Judas, and Judas' betrayal was to fulfill Scripture. (See outline and notes—Jn.13:1-30 for discussion of Judas.) Jesus was faithful *to God's name*, faithful in revealing God and lifting up His name to the disciples. Now He was leaving the world, so God had to take over. It was now up to God to keep them, and He would. God would keep the disciples as well as Christ did, for God was both faithful and able.

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(17:11) **Unity—Believers, Walk**: believers are to be one just as Jesus and the Father are one. The unity between believers is to be as strong as the unity between Jesus and His Father. This is a phenomenal truth, a truth that consumed the Lord's thoughts. It was the very theme of Jesus' prayer (v.11, 21, 22, 23). Believers must be one. Note two points.

1. Believers are in an extremely divisive world, a world full of...

• prejudice	• selfishness	• angry spirits	• self-praise
• competition	• egotism	• possessiveness	• hate
• lust	• hurt	• pride	• war

The list is unlimited, for divisiveness comes from the depraved nature of man, the nature that Christ came to change and to convert to love. The divisive world was a threat to the early disciples. Being in the world, they could have been influenced and led astray in the ways of divisiveness. Jesus had to pray for them, for God to keep them together as one.

Note Jesus' request. It is an eye-opener, an astounding request: "That they may be one, *as we are one*." Believers are to be as unified as God and Christ are. What does this mean? It means that we are to have the *same kind* of unity that Jesus and the Father have. We are to be one in *nature, character, and purpose*.

a. Believers are to be one in nature. The believer is a person who...

- has been "born again" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:1-15. Cp. Jn.1:13; Tit.3:5; 1 Jn.2:29; 4:7.)

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pt.1:23).

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 Jn.5:1).

- has been made into a "new creature," become a "new man" (cp. Gal.6:15; Eph.4:24; Col.3:10).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:17).

- has become a partaker of the "divine nature."

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pt.1:4).

However, the nature of believers includes more than just a personal rebirth of one's spirit. When a man becomes a believer, his new nature makes him a member of God's...

- new body of people.

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph.2:16).

- new nation.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:19).

- new temple.

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph.2:21).

- new family.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph.2:19).

- new fellowship or church.

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:22).

- new building.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph.2:20-22).

- new race (see note—Eph.4:17-19).

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Eph.4:17. Note: the word *other* is not in the Greek. The believer is a new creation, a new race distinct from the Gentiles. He is no longer to walk as the Gentiles walk.)

This, of course, means that a believer is to live and walk in unity with other believers. He is not to allow the divisive spirit of the world to infiltrate his life: grumbling, griping, complaining, criticizing, envying, gossiping, opposing, bypassing, overlooking, ignoring, isolating. (See notes—Eph.2:11-22; pt.4, 2:14-15; 1 Cor.3:16 for more discussion.)

b. Believers are to be one in character. They are...

- to be godly and holy, denying the works of the flesh and living pure lives even as Jesus and His Father are one in their holy Being and Life (cp. "Holy Father," v.11).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit.2:12-13).

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pt.1:15-16).

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Pt.1:5-7).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Pt.2:9).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal.5:19-21).

- to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23).

c. Believers are to be one in purpose. They are to surrender and give all they are and have to minister and proclaim the message of salvation to a lost and dying world, a world reeling in desperate need. Believers are to give all for the salvation of the world just as Jesus and the Father gave all for the salvation of the world.

(See note, *Church, Unity*—Eph.4:4-6 for more discussion of the unity upon which believers are built. Also see note—Lk.8:21 for more discussion.)

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:20).

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(17:11-12) **Security—Assurance**: the *keeping power* of God does not mean that God delivers believers from the trials of this world, but He delivers them through the trials. It means that He gives a victorious life. The believer is guaranteed a victorious life if he will just follow Christ. There are two reasons for this guaranteed security. First, God is bound to answer the prayer of His Son; and second, God the Father has given all Christian believers to Christ. This fact is said six times in this chapter alone (Jn.17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24). God will allow absolutely nothing to separate Christian believers from His Son.

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (Jn.6:39).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:27-29).

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Ro.8:35.)

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Ph.1:6).

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Th.3:3).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim.1:12).

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pt.1:5).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev.3:10).

[3] (17:13) **Joy**: second, Jesus prayed that the disciples would have His joy in all its fulness. (See note 3 and DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Joy*—Jn.15:11; note—14:28-29 for discussion.)

[4] (17:14-16) **Persecution—World, Against Believers**: third, Jesus prayed that God would keep the disciples from the world and from the evil one or Satan. Both the world and Satan are evil and stand opposed to all that Jesus and His disciples proclaimed.

⇒ The world and Satan stand against the love of God. Why? Because God's love is not the *grandfatherly love of indulgence*. God's love is the true love of obedience, an obedience that gives all one *is* and *has* to meet the needs of a desperate world lost in sin and death. True love loves so much that it gives everything and does all it can to help any who are in desperate need. Most men in the world are unwilling to give anything other than a mere token, and even then recognition is desired for what little is given.

⇒ The world and Satan stand against the holiness and justice of God. Why? Because it means that both must stand before God some day to give an account of their lives and deeds, sins and dirt, pollution and evil.

⇒ The world and Satan stand against Jesus. Why? Because Jesus was the One who claimed to be the Son of God, and if He is truly the Son of God, then total allegiance is due Him. And neither the world nor Satan are willing to serve anyone other than self.

There were three primary reasons why God needed to protect the disciples from the world and the devil.

1. The world and the devil hated the disciples of Jesus. Note why.
   a. The disciples of Christ have the Word of God. It is God's Word that reveals...
      - God's love, a sacrificial love that gives all it has, is different from the love the world wants. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Love*—Mt.5:44; notes—22:37-38; 22:39 for discussion.)
      - God's holiness and justice and man's depravity, a fact that man rejects and refuses to face.
      - Christ, the Son of God Himself, who demands total allegiance and commitment to become ministers and servants of God.
   b. The disciples were not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world.
      ⇒ Jesus came from God, "out of heaven" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:31).
      ⇒ The disciples and other believers were born again by the Spirit of God and given the very nature of God. The world and the devil want absolutely nothing to do with a selfless and sacrificial nature, a righteous and godly nature that gives all one is and has to meet the needs of the diseased and starving and lost masses of the world. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.3:1-15. Cp. Jn.1:13; 2 Cor.5:17; Tit.3:5; 1 Pt.1:23; 2 Pt.1:4; 1 Jn.5:1; 2:29; 4:7.)

> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**
>
> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren [giving all we are and have]" (1 Jn.3:16).**

2. The disciples were needed in the world. The need was not for them to be taken out of the world; the need was for them to be kept from the evil one or from Satan (cp. Eph.6:10-18). The disciples were called to be ambassadors and messengers of God in the world. God's mission to save the world depended upon their loyalty and faithfulness. They had to be kept and protected and covered with the armor of God.

> **"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles [strategies] of the devil" (Eph.6:10-11).**
>
> **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pt.5:8).**

3. The disciples were now of the same nature as Jesus. This is the same truth stated in v.14. The truth is so glorious, it has to be reemphasized. Note that it is also the main reason the world and the devil attack the believer (see outline and notes—Jn.15:19-24 for more discussion).

> **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).**

[5] (17:17-19) **Sanctification**: fourth, Jesus prayed that God would sanctify the disciples. Note the two things said about the disciple or believer.

⇒ He is to be sanctified (see DEEPER STUDY # 4—*Sanctification*—Jn.17:17).

⇒ He is to be sanctified through God's truth, and God's truth is said to be God's Word. God's Word would refer to both the *living Word*, the full revelation of God in Jesus Christ Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.14:16) and to the spoken or *written Word* (see notes—Jn.7:16-19; 14:10; 2 Tim.3:16; note 3 and DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—2 Pt.1:19-21).

The disciples needed to be set apart to God *through His truth* for two reasons.

1. They were being sent into the world just as Jesus had been sent into the world. Jesus had come into the world to bring men back to God through reconciliation. The disciples had to be *set apart* to this same task.

> **"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).**
>
> **"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mt.20:28).**
>
> **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Mt.28:19-20).**
>
> **"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor.5:19-20).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

2. Sanctification is the way of salvation chosen to reach the world. Jesus had set Himself apart to please God, and He pleased God to the ultimate degree. No matter the cost, the glory of God was to be done. Perfect obedience to God was the chosen way of salvation. Being set apart to serve and worship God is what salvation is all about. This is the reason Jesus prayed for His disciples to be sanctified. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Sanctification*—1 Pt.1:15-16 for more discussion.)

> **Thought 1.** Believers are sanctified through the truth, that is, through God's Word. It is through the study and practice of God's Word that believers are set apart unto God. As a believer studies God's Word, he sees more and more how he is to live. As he sees, he sets himself apart to live the way God tells him to live. The Word of God holds new instructions for the believer every day. The Word of God shows the believer how to be more and more conformed to the image of Christ every day. But note the crucial point: the believer must come to the truth, to the Word of God *every day* if he wishes to be *set apart* unto God for that day.

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(17:17) **Sanctify—Sanctification**: the word "sanctify" means to be set apart, to be separated (cp. 1 Pt.1:15-16). There are three stages of sanctification.

1. There is initial or positional sanctification. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, he is immediately set apart for God permanently, once-for-all (Heb.3:1; cp. Heb.10:10).
2. There is progressive sanctification. The true believer makes a determined and disciplined effort to allow the Spirit of God to set him apart day by day. The Spirit of God takes him and conforms him to the image of Christ more and more. This growth takes place as long as the believer walks upon this earth (cp. Jn.17:17; 2 Cor.3:18; Eph.5:25-26; 1 Th.5:23-24).
3. There is eternal sanctification. The day is coming when the believer will be perfectly set apart unto God and His service—without any sin or failure whatsoever. That day will be the great and glorious day of the believer's eternal redemption (Eph.5:27; 1 Jn.3:2).

	C. Jesus Prayed for Future Believers, 17:20-26		
1 **Jesus prayed for all future believers**	20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;	hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.	the world 1) God sent Christ 2) God loves believers
2 **Request 1: That believers may be one** a. The standard: As God & Christ are one b. The purpose: That the world may believe c. The source: God's glory[DS1]	21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:	24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.	4 **Request 3: That believers may be with Him in glory** a. The reason: To behold His glory b. The assurance: God's love
3 **Request 2: That believers be perfected in unity**[DS2] a. Source: Jesus within b. Reason: To convince	23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou	25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.	5 **Conclusion: A testimony** a. Of the world: Has not known God b. Of Jesus: Knew God c. Of believers: Have known that God sent Jesus d. Jesus' faithfulness 1) He declared God 2) His purpose: That men might know God's love

DIVISION XIV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE GREAT INTERCESSOR, 17:1-26

C. Jesus Prayed for Future Believers, 17:20-26

(17:20-26) **Introduction**: Jesus prayed for future believers, for all those who would believe on Him from that moment to the end of the world. What He prayed is very precious to believers, but it is also an indictment against believers of every generation (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:23).

1. Jesus prayed for all future believers—for all who would believe the Word (v.20).
2. Request 1: that believers may be one (v.21-22).
3. Request 2: that believers may be perfected in unity (v.23).
4. Request 3: that believers may be with Him in glory (v.24).
5. Conclusion: a testimony (v.25-26).

1 (17:20) **Salvation, Essentials—Jesus Christ, Prayer Life**: Jesus prayed for future believers, for all those who would believe the message of the early disciples. This is most precious. Jesus prayed for us—for you and for me—for all of us who believe today. Just think for a moment. Who is the weakest believer on earth today? Who is the strongest? Of course only God knows, but think of the preciousness of the fact: Jesus prayed for every one of us...

- for the weakest as well as for the strongest.
- for the diseased as well as for the healthy.
- for the orphan as well as for the children of the family.
- for the widow and widower as well as for the couple.
- for the prisoner as well as for the free.
- for the believer in the darkest jungle as well as for the believer in the limelight.

There is no thought any more precious than the thought that Jesus prayed for us all—every one of us who believe today.

Note: this verse gives the three essentials for men to become believers.

1. There is the messenger of God, the disciple of Christ, the person who proclaims the Word so that men can *believe on* the name of Jesus. There has to be a messenger to carry and proclaim the message.

> **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Ro.10:14).**
>
> **"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:20-21).**

2. There is God's Word. The messenger is *God's* messenger, *His* ambassador. Therefore, the Word he takes to the world is God's Word. Note the references to God's Word in this chapter alone.

> **"They have kept thy Word" (Jn.17:6).**
> **"I have given them thy Word" (Jn.17:14).**
> **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth" (Jn.17:17).**

3. There is belief. We must believe the Word. We are the Lord's disciples today because we believe the Word (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**
>
> **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (Jn.8:51).**

2 (17:21-22) **Unity**: first, Jesus requested that we may be one. This is critical, the imperative that absolutely must exist between believers. It is the central theme of Jesus' prayer (v.11, 21, 22, 23). Believers *must be one*. Note exactly what Jesus said.

1. The standard for unity is the *oneness* between Jesus and His Father. Believers are to be one just as the Father and Jesus are one. The very *same kind* of unity they have is to be the unity existing between us. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Unity*—Jn.17:11 for discussion and verses of Scripture.)
2. The purpose for unity is that the world may *believe* that the Father sent Jesus.

⇒ God sent Jesus (see notes—Jn.3:32-34; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34).

> **"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).**
>
> **"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42; cp. Jn.6:38; 10:36).**

⇒ Jesus came that men might have life and have it more abundantly.

> **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).**

⇒ A divided witness confuses the issue and cannot stand, just as a divided house and kingdom cannot stand (cp. Mt.12:25). There are not many messages nor many ways to God. There is only one message and one way.

> **"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16; cp. Ro.5:8; 1 Pt.2:24; 3:18).**
>
> **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6; cp. 1 Tim.2:5; Heb.8:6; 9:5, 24; 12:24; 1 Jn.2:1).**

Another approach to what Jesus is saying is this. Believers must *be one*: be unified, of one spirit and mind in proclaiming the central message of the gospel.

⇒ There is only one central message: that God sent Jesus "out of" heaven into the world.
⇒ There is only one request of men: to believe that God did send Jesus into the world.
⇒ There is only one mission: that men be one (unified) in proclaiming the message of the glorious gospel.

Thought 1. A terrible tragedy! There are many voices proclaiming so many different messages, messages of...

- works
- ritual and ceremony
- denominationalism
- rules and regulations
- morality
- false prophets
- humanism
- brotherhood
- secularism

3. The source of unity is God's glory, the very glory which Jesus Himself possessed. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.17:22 for discussion.) It is the glory of God given to believers that unites believers and makes them one with Jesus and His Father and one with each other. When believers *experience* the glory of God, they become one in being, character, and purpose. Their lives are given to each other to help one another...

- to be the new creature God has made them.
- to live as new creatures should, holy and righteous and pure.
- to proclaim the glorious message that God has sent His Son into the world.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(17:22) **Glory—Unity**: this is a significant verse dealing with the glory of the believer. Note the points made by Christ.

⇒ God gave glory to His Son Jesus Christ.
⇒ Jesus has given the very *same* glory to believers (see note—2 Th.2:14).
⇒ It is the glory of God that brings unity to believers, that causes them to surround God and live and work together to please Him.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Ro.12:5).

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor.10:17).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal.3:28).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13).

What is the glory of God that He gave to Christ and that Christ in turn gives to believers?

The glory of Christ is...	*The glory of the believer is...*
The glory of righteousness which He secured by living a perfect life. (See note—Jn.13:31-32.)	The glory of righteousness which Christ gives to the believer by faith. (See notes—Jn.1:51; 13:31-32; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2—Ro.4:22.)
The glory of the cross (see notes—Jn.12:23-26; 12:27-30).	The glory of the cross which gives to the believer both forgiveness of sins and the privilege of serving God Himself: the privilege of sacrificing all he is and has to God in order to reach a lost and desperate world. (See notes—Jn.12:23-26; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23. Cp. 1 Pt.2:24.)
The glory of the resurrection which wrought victory over death and hell. (See note—Jn.13:31-32.)	The glory of the resurrection which gives the believer a new life in Christ. (Cp. Ro.6:4-5; 2 Cor.5:17.)
The glory of the ascension and exaltation.(See note—Jn.17:5-8.)	The glory of living eternally in the presence of God and of being exalted to serve Him by ruling and reigning with His Son, Jesus Christ, forever. (Cp. Jn.14:2-3; Ro.8:16-17; Tit.2:12-13; 3:7.)

3 (17:23) **Unity—Love—Believers, Indictment Against—Mission—Evangelism**: second, Jesus requested that believers be *perfected* in unity, perfected as one body. This stresses beyond question the absolute necessity that believers live in unity. The world has not been reached for Christ—millions have been lost—because believers have not been unified enough to penetrate the world with the gospel. This is the terrible indictment against believers. The problem is certainly not God. He is willing and He is loving and powerful enough to use believers to reach the whole world. The problem is unquestionably believers, and as Jesus made pointedly clear in this verse, the problem is our love for one another.

The concern of Jesus is that we be *perfected* in one. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Perfect*—Jn.17:23.) Note two things.

1. The believer's source of unity is the Indwelling Presence of Christ within his life. Note that God is *in* Christ; therefore, the presence of Christ *in the believer* means that God dwells "in" the believer. The believer actually partakes of the divine nature of God (2 Pt.1:4. See note, *Indwelling Presence*—Jn.10:37-39; 14:10; 14:18-20; 14:23-24.)

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:20).

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:23).

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (Jn.17:23).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal.2:20).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph.3:17).

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:27).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him" (1 Jn.3:24).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

2. The purpose for a perfected unity is that the world may *know* that God sent Jesus into the world to save it. Now note a significant point: there is a difference each time Jesus prays for unity in this chapter. And each difference or point proclaims a strong message to the believer.

There is...

- the *unity of God's name*, of calling upon God's name to keep believers from a divided world and its divisive influence (v.11).
- the *unity of God's protective power*, of calling upon God's power to deliver believers from the evil of the world and the devil (v.15).

- the *unity of witness*, that the world may believe that God sent Christ (see notes—Jn.3:32-34; DEEPER STUDY # 1—3:34). They will believe through a unified witness (v.21).
- the *unity of love*, that the world may know that God sent Christ. They will know through a unified love (v.23).

There is a world of difference between a unity of witness and a unity of love. The world may come to believe the gospel by a unified witness for Christ, but the only way the world can ever know the gospel is by a *unified love* among believers. Note two things.

a. What the world needs more than anything else is love, a great demonstration of love from a massive multitude of people. (Cp. 1 Cor.13:4-7 for the behavior and acts of love, and think about the enormous impact we could make upon the world if we really were unified in love.)

b. The love needed among believers is a different love from the *so-called love* of the world. The love needed is a sacrificial love that will give all it *is and has* to minister to a world that is reeling under the weight of starving, diseased, and dying masses of people. (See notes, *Love*—Jn.13:33-35; 21:15-17.)

> **"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:34-35).**
>
> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).**

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(17:23) **Perfect—Perfected** (telelos): the idea of perfection is perfection of purpose. It has to do with an end, an aim, a goal, a purpose. It means fit, mature, fully grown at a particular stage of growth. For example, a fully grown child is a perfect child; he has reached the height of childhood, achieved the purpose of childhood. The word "perfect" does not mean perfection of character, that is, being without sin. It is fitness, maturity for task and purpose. It is full development, maturity of godliness. (See note—Eph.4:12-16; cp. Ph.3:12; 1 Jn.1:8, 10.)

The Bible reveals three stages of perfection.

1. Saving perfection. Christ's death has guaranteed forever the perfection and redemption of those set apart for God (Heb.10:14).
2. Progressive or maturing perfection. God reveals anything that is contrary to His purpose, and the believer is expected to clean it up (Ph.3:13-15, esp. 15). The believer's "perfect holiness" (2 Cor.7:1) is "now being made perfect" (Gal.3:3). As a member of the church the believer is experiencing "the perfecting of the saints" (Eph.4:12; Col.4:12; Heb.13:21; Jas.1:4; 1 Jn.4:17-18).
3. Redemptive or resurrected perfection. The believer's purpose and aim is to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead....[to be] perfect" (Ph.3:11-12).

The Lord's point is that the mature believer will do good and show kindness to all men, both good and bad men. He is mature in heart when he shows love to his enemies as well as to his friends. The love of God and of Christ are the believer's example of perfected love (see notes—Jn.13:33-35; 21:15-17).

4 (17:24) **Glory**: third, Jesus requested that believers may be with Him in glory. (See notes—Jn.17:5-8; 14:1-3; *Resurrection*—Jn.14:6 for discussion.)

> **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).**
>
> **"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (2 Cor.5:1-2).**
>
> **"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col.1:5).**
>
> **"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Rev.7:9).**
>
> **"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).**

5 (17:25-26) **Testimony**: the conclusion of Jesus' prayer is a striking testimony.

1. There is the testimony of the world. The world has not known God. Jesus was the revelation of God; therefore, all who saw Jesus saw God. Yet the world rejected Him, refusing to know Him (see note, pt.3—Jn.15:19-24 for discussion).

> **"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).**

"[Men] having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the LORD, nor the judgment of their God" (Jer.5:4).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).

2. There was the testimony of Jesus. He knew God. He was eternal and had always existed with God. He was the Son of God Himself. (See note—Jn.17:5-8 for discussion.)

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Mt.11:27).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying" (Jn.8:55).

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:25).

3. There is the testimony of believers down through the centuries. Believers know that God sent Christ. (See note, pt.2-3—Jn.17:5-8.)

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (Jn.17:21).

4. There is the testimony of the faithfulness of Jesus.
   ⇒ He declared and revealed God (see notes—Jn.14:6).
   ⇒ His purpose was that men might *know* the love of God and *have* the love of God dwelling "in" them. (See notes—Jn.17:23.)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment" (1 Jn.3:23).

	CHAPTER 18 **XV. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42** **A. The Arrest: Absolute Surrender, 18:1-11** (Mt.26:36-56; Mk.14:32-52; Lk.22:39-53)	ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.	b. A courageous confession & claim c. A miraculous blast of revelation: "I Am"
1 A devotion to God a. "Went forth" to prepare Himself spiritually b. "Went forth" to prepare the scene for God's will 1) Jesus went to a place known by Judas 2) Judas came forth with a large force to arrest Him[PS1]	When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. 2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. 3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.	7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. 10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.	**3 A protective or vicarious commitment** a. He gave Himself for His disciples b. His reason: To fulfill His Word **4 An unswerving obedience** a. Peter's loyal, but carnal zeal
2 A willing determination a. He "went forth"—voluntarily	4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek	11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?	b. Jesus' iron determination to obey God's will: To drink the cup[PS2]

DIVISION XV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42

A. The Arrest: Absolute Surrender, 18:1-11

(18:1-11) **Introduction**: Jesus Christ gives us an excellent picture of absolute surrender.
1. A devotion to God (v.1-3).
2. A willing determination (v.4-6).
3. A protective or vicarious commitment (v.7-9).
4. An unswerving obedience (v.10-11).

(18:1-11) **Another Outline**: Absolute Surrender—Jesus Went Forth.
1. Jesus went forth—devotionally (v.1-3).
2. Jesus went forth—willingly—confessing who He was (v.4-6).
3. Jesus went forth—vicariously (v.7-9).
4. Jesus went forth—purposefully—to die—to drink the cup (v.10-11).

1 (18:1-3) **Devotion**: there is the picture of devotion to God. Note the words "went forth" (exelthen, v.1; exelthon, v.4). The idea being conveyed is *purpose*. Jesus was going forth deliberately, for a specific purpose, knowing exactly what He was doing.

1. Jesus "went forth" to prepare Himself spiritually. He was facing *the hour* to which God had called Him, the hour of His death (see note, *Hour*—Jn.2:3-5; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:23-24). He knew that God's will was for Him to die for the sins of the world. He knew the awful separation from God that sin causes; therefore, He knew that He was to be cut off from God's presence, that God would have to forsake and turn His back upon Him because of sin. He was feeling the awful pressure of God's coming judgment upon sin which was to be exercised upon Him. In the flesh, He wanted to flee; He wanted another way to be chosen to save man (Mt.26:39, 42, 44). Yet He...
   - was committed to God.
   - was totally *devoted* to His Father.
   - *must* do God's will.

But to do God's will, He had to have God's help. He had to pray and seek God's face. He desperately needed God to meet His need in some special way. It was for this reason that He headed for the garden. He was seeking to be alone with His Father, to have His Father strengthen Him for the terrible ordeal and judgment of the cross.

The point tears at the heart of the believer, for Jesus knew He was to bear the sins of the world upon the cross, and the pressure was almost unbearable. Jesus could have fled; He could have turned away and insisted that the cup pass from

Him. But He did not. He was totally devoted to God, so He "went forth" deliberately—for the purpose of praying and seeking strength from God, for the strength to fulfill God's will. (See outline and notes—Mt.26:36-46 for discussion of the experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. John does not cover the actual agony Jesus experienced while in prayer. His purpose is simply to show the total devotion of Jesus to God's will. The other gospels cover the Lord's unbelievable agony.)

2. Jesus went forth to prepare the scene so that God's will would be done. He went to the Garden of Gethsemane probably to the very spot where He had often prayed and spent the night when in Jerusalem (cp. Lk.22:39). He did not have to go there. He could have chosen some other direction to go, some other place to seek God. But He went to the place Judas knew. He was totally devoted to God, so He "went forth" to set the scene for God's will to be fulfilled.

Note the large force that came forth to arrest Jesus (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.18:3).

Thought 1. Jesus is the believer's dynamic example. The believer must be devoted and totally committed to doing God's will. The believer should be *going forth* all the time...

- to prepare himself spiritually.
- to prepare the scene for God's will.
- to do God's will.

"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone" (Mt.14:23).

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk.1:35).

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Ro.8:26).

"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and ye shall hear my voice" (Ps.55:17).

"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" (Ps.73:28).

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him" (Ps.91:15).

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Is.26:3-4).

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" (Jer.33:3).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:3) **Band** (speira): this was a *cohort* of soldiers. A cohort was a tenth part of a Roman legion. It usually had 600 soldiers. On a rare occasion, the word *cohort* was used for a detachment of 200 soldiers. Note the authorities also had their temple police join the force. It was a large armed force of several hundred who came out to arrest Jesus. The rumor had been that the Messiah, the promised Jewish King, had come. Apparently, the Romans felt they had to make sure there would be no uprisings when they arrested Jesus. Note an interesting fact: they brought lanterns and torches. Passover was held during the days of full moon, so there would have been plenty of natural light. Why then, were lanterns and torches needed? They were probably expecting Jesus to flee and hide in the bushes and trees and dark spots of the garden.

2 (18:4-6) **Purpose—Determination—Jesus Christ, Deity**: there is the picture of willing determination. Note several significant points.

1. Jesus "went forth" voluntarily. Note the words "knowing all things that should come upon Him." He knew all the suffering and the pain of the judgment of God that was to fall upon Him. But He still went forth to meet the world that was rejecting Him and that was coming to arrest and kill Him. The point is this: He was willing and determined to die for the sins of men. He was voluntarily choosing to die for men. (See note, pt.2—Jn.10:17-18 for more discussion. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38.)

2. Jesus made a courageous confession and claim. Note: He did not flee from the world and its persecution.

⇒ He made a courageous confession: I AM. He did not flee into the bushes or caves of the garden, fearing the persecutors. He knew God's will, and He was determined to carry out God's will.

⇒ He made a courageous claim: I AM. This is the claim of deity. Imagine the scene. The soldiers had come out to arrest a peasant. They expected Him to flee and hide for His life. But there He was, a solitary man standing face to face with them, courageously proclaiming "I Am" (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.6:20).

Thought 1. What a dynamic example for believers! When the will of God is known, it is to be done courageously, no matter the opposition or threat.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor.16:13).

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Eph.6:10).

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim.2:1).

"For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Pt.2:15).

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1 Pt.4:1-2).

"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).

Thought 2. Jesus' claim "I AM" is definitely the word of deity. It must have struck Judas. We never know what effect a courageous confession has upon a soul. Our task is to confess and proclaim Christ before a lost and hostile world.

"I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim.6:13-14).

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb.11:13).

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (1 Jn.4:2-3).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

3. There was a miraculous blast of revelation in the words "I AM." As far as we know, there was no burst of majestic light that broke forth from Jesus. There was only the phenomenal statement, "I AM." This is the great claim of God. When Jesus made the claim, something happened. Apparently God miraculously struck the arresting party with the claim, although they did not understand. They were struck with the claim's...

- authority.
- power.
- presence, embodied in Jesus as He stood there.

Remember that Jesus is the "I AM," the Son of God Himself. The very nature of God was embodied in Him. When He made the claim, especially in the face of such an eventful situation, there was bound to be a blast of revelation.

Thought 1. This is critical. Men must heed the claim of Jesus Christ: the blast of revelation that He is the great "I AM." They must heed the claim while there is time. The arresting party, standing there facing Christ, still had time to confess Him. As long as a man is alive, he still has time (2 Cor.6:2).

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor.6:2).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (Heb.3:12-14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer.8:20).

3 (18:7-9) **Jesus Christ, Death**: there is the picture of protective or vicarious commitment. The disciples were in danger, but Jesus took the lead in saving them by offering Himself in their place. His protective love and vicarious suffering for man is clearly pictured.

⇒ He stepped forward in their place, to save them from suffering and death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.10:11).

⇒ He offered to bear death alone. There was no need for them to die. (Cp. Ro.5:8; 1 Pt.3:18.)

Note that Jesus' act fulfilled Scripture. He was not to lose anyone whom God had given Him (Ps.41:9; 109:4-13; see notes—Jn.17:1-4, pt.2; 17:9-11, pt.1 for discussion).

Thought 1. Note three significant points.

1) Note the glorious security of the believer. Jesus will lose no one whom the Father has given Him. Every person should ask God to take his life and to give it to Christ.

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (Jn.10:28-29).

2) Note the protection Christ has provided for man. He has died vicariously for man, but every man must accept His death as his own in order to be saved.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

3) Note the protective, vicarious commitment believers are to have to the world. They are to give themselves—all they are and have—to meet the needs of a desperate world which reels in pain, sin, and death (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

4 (18:10-11) **Jesus Christ, Obedience**: there is the picture of Jesus' unswerving obedience. Peter thought the Messiah's hour had come, that Jesus Christ was now ready to free Israel and establish the throne of David as the dominant nation in the world (see notes—Mt.1:1; DEEPER STUDY # 2—1:18; DEEPER STUDY # 2—3:11; notes—11:1-6; 11:2-3; DEEPER STUDY # 1—11:5; DEEPER STUDY # 2—11:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—12:16; notes—22:42; Lk.7:21-23). Peter drew his sword and struck, slashing off the ear of Malchus (note that Peter *had* a sword).

The picture painted by Peter's behavior is carnal commitment, the kind of commitment that acts and struggles in the flesh. Peter took his stand for Jesus *in the flesh*; therefore, he failed. Eventually, he deserted Jesus. Acting in the flesh will always result in failing and deserting Jesus.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Ro.8:5-6).

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Ro.8:13).

Peter misunderstood the Lord's Word. First, Peter thought Jesus was to establish an earthly kingdom. He thought in terms of the physical and material world. Therefore, he failed to grasp the spiritual and eternal kingdom (dimension of being) proclaimed by Jesus. Second, Peter never accepted the Lord's Word. Jesus had predicted His death and forewarned the apostles, giving them extensive training for months (see notes—Mt.16:13-20; 16:21-28; 17:1-13; 17:22; 17:24-27). However, Peter refused to give up his preconceived ideas and accept what Jesus was saying. Therefore, he did not see the eternal world of the Spirit nor the eternal salvation which Jesus was securing.

Note Jesus' iron determination to obey God's will (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.18:11 for discussion).

"And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt.26:39).

"Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand" (Mk.14:42).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence" (Jn.14:31).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(18:11) **Cup**: Jesus Christ was determined not to fear nor shrink from death. This is clearly seen in Jn.10:17-18. Death for a cause is not such a great price to pay. Many men have so died—fearlessly and willingly—some perhaps more cruelly than Jesus Himself. What was happening to Christ was not the experience of shrinking from betrayal, beatings, humiliation, and death (all increased by foreknowledge). As stated, some men have faced such circumstances courageously, even *inviting* martyrdom for a cause. The Lord knew He was to die from the very beginning, and He had been preparing His disciples for His death (see note—Mt.16:13-20). It was not just human or physical suffering from which Jesus was shrinking. Such an explanation is totally inadequate in explaining Gethsemane. The great cup or trial Jesus was facing was separation from God (see note and DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.26:37-38). He was to be the sacrificial "Lamb of God" who takes away the sins of the world (Jn.1:29). He is to bear the judgment of God for the sins of the world (see note—Mt.27:46-49; cp. Is.53:10). Jesus Himself had already spoken of the "cup" when referring to His sacrificial death (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Mt.20:22-23; note—Mk.14:41-42; DEEPER STUDY # 2—14:36; note—Jn.18:11).

Scripture speaks of the cup in several ways.

1. The cup is called "the cup of the Lord's fury" (Is.51:17).
2. The cup is associated with suffering and God's wrath (cp. Ps.11:6; Is.51:17; Lk.22:42).
3. The cup is also associated with salvation. Because Jesus drank the cup of suffering and wrath for us, we can "take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps.116:13). He bears the judgment of God for the sins of the world (Is.53:10).

	B. The Jews and Peter: The Cowardly Denial, 18:12-27 (Mt.26:69-75; Mk.14: 53-72; Lk.22:54-62)	themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.	
		19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.	**3 The world's unjust denial**
1 Jesus was arrested, taken & bound	12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,	20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.	a. Jesus was asked to incriminate Himself[DSI] 1) To prove His teaching, v.19 2) To incriminate His followers, v.19
a. He was led away to Annas	13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.	21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.	b. Jesus replied forcefully 1) His testimony was public knowledge 2) The world knew His testimony
b. His hour to die was rapidly approaching	14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.	22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?	c. Jesus was reacted against & mistreated
2 Peter's unnecessary denial: The denial of association a. Peter followed Jesus b. Another disciple also followed Jesus 1) He knew the officials of the palace	15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.	23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?	d. Jesus incriminated the world
	16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.	24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.	e. Jesus was shifted about by the world
2) He arranged for Peter to enter		25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples: He denied it, and said, I am not.	**4 Peter's cowardly denial: The denial of separation** a. Standing with the crowd, v.18 b. Denying unequivocally
c. Peter was innocently questioned by the door-keeper	17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.	26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?	**5 Peter's shattering denial: The denial of discipleship**
d. Peter denied being associated with Jesus			
e. Peter made a carnal attempt to be known as one of the crowd	18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed	27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.	**6 Conclusion: Jesus' Word was fulfilled**

DIVISION XV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42

B. The Jews and Peter: The Cowardly Denial, 18:12-27

(18:12-27) **Introduction**: this passage is a descriptive picture of cowardly denial—the cowardly denial of both the world and a close disciple of the Lord's. It graphically shows what the Lord faces day by day in too many lives.

1. Jesus was arrested, taken and bound (v.12-14).
2. Peter's unnecessary denial: the denial of association (v.15-18).
3. The world's unjust denial (v.19-24).
4. Peter's cowardly denial: the denial of separation (v.25).
5. Peter's shattering denial: the denial of discipleship (v.26).
6. Conclusion: Jesus' Word was fulfilled (v.27).

(18:12-27) **Another Outline**: Cowardliness

1. Cowardliness is unnecessary (v.15-18).
2. Cowardliness is unjust (v.19-24).
3. Cowardliness is worldly (v.25).
4. Cowardliness is habitual (v.26-27).
5. Cowardliness is running back and forth (v.18:28-19:15).

1 (18:12-14) **Jesus Christ, Arrested**: Jesus was arrested, taken and bound. There are two significant points here.

1. Jesus was led away to Annas. Annas had been the High Priest, but he was not now serving. His son-in-law Caiaphas was the present High Priest. (See note—Jn.11:49 for more discussion.) However, as noted by John, Annas still wielded great influence. The trial before Annas was an informal trial, and the sinister plot was being carried out under the shadow and secrecy of darkness.
2. The significant point is this: Jesus' hour to die was now beginning. It had even been predicted by the world itself, the corrupt leader of the religionists (see note—Jn.11:49-53 for discussion. Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Hour*—Jn.12:23-24.)

2 (18:15-18) **Denial**: there was Peter's unnecessary denial, the denial of association or pretension. Peter and some other disciple followed Jesus up to the gate of the High Priest. The other disciple was probably John, for the account reads like an eyewitness account (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:39; note—Mk.14:54). It was this disciple who knew the High Priest personally. John's father, a very successful businessman, apparently provided fish for the palace. John was therefore well-known to the palace employees. Note that he was allowed entrance into the palace and arranged for Peter to enter the palace (v.16. See DEEPER STUDY # 6—Mk.3:17.)

Note three points about Peter's unnecessary denial.

1. Peter was innocently questioned by the door-keeper. She knew John, that John was one of Jesus' disciples. Since Peter was associated with John, she assumed he was also a disciple of Jesus. She was either just carrying on conversation or else asking Peter for some identification. There seems to be no threat or danger to Peter whatsoever.
2. Peter denied any association with Jesus and gave an unequivocal denial: "I am not." The point is this: Peter was a close friend of John, for John had made a very special request for Peter to be admitted into the palace. The gate-keeper was bound to think such a close associate of John's was also associated with John's Master (Teacher). Peter very simply failed his Lord by denying any association with Him and pretending not to know Him.
3. Peter made an attempt to be known as one of the crowd. He joined the crowd, standing around with them and joining in their conversation and activities.

Thought 1. Too many deny being associated with Christ. People see us in church or associating with other believers—innocently see us—thinking nothing about it. But when and if asked, we deny any association with Christ.

Thought 2. Too many pretend not to know Christ when out in the world...

- at their employment
- at their school
- at their social functions
- among their neighbors
- among their friends
- among strangers

Thought 3. Too many try to fade into the crowd, trying to hide their faith by joining in with the crowd. Standing with and trying to blend in with the crowd will always cause a believer to deny his Lord.

"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:33).

"A false witness shall not be unpunished; and he that speaketh lies shall not escape" (Pr.19:5).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).

3 (18:19-24) **Jesus Christ, Rejected**: there was the world's unjust denial. There are five graphic scenes here.

1. Jesus was asked to incriminate Himself. He was asked about His disciples and asked to prove His doctrine and His claims. How much like the world. The world will ask about Jesus' doctrine, but their purpose is...
   - not to learn His doctrine.
   - not to allow Him to prove His claims.
   - not to justify His claims.
   - not to secure direction and wisdom from Him.

The world asks about His doctrine to disprove it and to incriminate Him and His followers (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.18:19). The world wants nothing to do with Him as the Son of God, for then the world would have to repent and subject itself to Him and His demands. Men have to surrender all they are and have to Him if they acknowledge Him to be Lord (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23).

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (Jn.6:63).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me" (Jn.14:24).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Is.55:7).

"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth" (Acts 8:32).

2. Jesus' reply was forceful: His doctrine and claim had been declared publicly. He had done nothing in secret. His doctrine was not a message of duplicity. He did not have one message for the public and another message which He followed in secret. He had openly and clearly proclaimed the truth, and the world knew exactly what He had taught and claimed.

Thought 1. The problem with the world is twofold.

1) The world refuses to believe Jesus' claim to be the Son of God.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (Jn.6:38).

"But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me" (Jn.7:29).

"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (Jn.8:42).

"Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (Jn.10:36).

2) The world seeks for some secret, symbolic meaning and doctrine in the Word of Christ.

"I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word" (Jn.8:42-43).

"He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God" (Jn.8:47).

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Ro.10:3).

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph.4:18).

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim.4:4).

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Rev.22:19).

"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it" (Jer.6:10).

"But they know not the thoughts of the LORD, neither understand they his counsel" (Mic.4:12).

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Dt.4:2).

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Dt.12:32).

"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Pr.30:5-6).

3. Jesus was reacted against and mistreated: He was slapped in the face. This is a picture of how the world mistreats Jesus. Throughout His whole ministry, Jesus had insisted time and again that He was the Revelation of God, the Son of God Himself. (Quickly refer back to the overall outline or glance quickly over chapters 5-6, 8-12 for a feeling of how forceful and rapidly Jesus was proclaiming His deity.) Yet, the world shut its ears and reacted. It wanted nothing to disturb it, not even its religion. It wanted no rebuttal and no other answer given to the High Priest of its religion.

Thought 1. The world's religion allows man to continue in his own way and do pretty much as he wishes and still feel acceptable to God. Just think for a moment! How few religions—how few churches—how few priests and ministers—proclaim the true doctrine of the *Lord* Jesus. So few are willing to sacrifice their lives for the world and all they are and have in order to reach a lost, starving, and diseased world.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross [die] daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23. See notes—Mt.19:21-22; 19:23-26 for more discussion.)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not

conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Ro.12:1-2).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor.6:17-18).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

4. Jesus incriminated the world. The world could not charge Jesus with evil. He was sinless, completely without fault. He had not lied; He had always told the truth. He was the *perfect Son of God* who had came to earth to proclaim the doctrine of God perfectly.

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" (Jn.8:46; cp. 2 Cor.5:21; Heb.4:15; 7:26; 1 Pt.1:19; 2:22).

However, the world stands incriminated, for the world has always rejected and mistreated the Perfect Man, the Son of God Himself. In its rejection, the world exposes itself as evil, and its most terrible evil is the rejection of the Perfect Man. (Note something: rejection of Jesus is unpardonable. The man who rejects Jesus will not be saved. A person must believe and accept the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.)

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:20-21).

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pt.1:18-19).

5. Jesus was shifted about by the world. This is a picture of men seeking help from others to disprove Jesus. Jesus (His life, doctrine, claims) was cast back and forth by the hands of men who were seeking evidence to prove that He was not the Son of God.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph.4:14).

"They [men] mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end" (Ps.107:26-27).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:19) **Jesus' Jewish Trial**: demanding that Jesus incriminate Himself was against the law of Jewish justice. Under Jewish law, a defendant was not required to admit any guilt; therefore, the Jewish trial of Jesus was a mockery of justice. Several facts show this.

1. They had hastily assembled the court *at night*, but it was illegal to try cases at night. All criminals had to be tried in the day.
2. They were meeting in Annas' palace (home), not in the official court. This, too, was illegal. All cases had to be tried in court.
3. Jesus was being tried during the Passover week, but no cases were supposed to be tried during that week.
4. The leaders had not met to try Jesus, but to secretly devise charges and to condemn Him to death.

4 (18:25) **Peter—Denial**: there was Peter's cowardly denial, the denial of separation. Peter had joined the crowd, attempting to become one of them. When asked about Jesus, he denied his separation from the world saying, "I am not" a disciple of His. I am one of you, just another man standing around and taking part in the significant events of the world (2 Cor.6:17-18).

Thought 1. Too many believers fear, and because they fear, they lose their testimony for Christ and the opportunity to witness and win others to Christ. Too many fear...

- embarrassment
- ridicule
- abuse
- loss of position
- worldly friends
- worldly neighbors
- business management
- loss of promotion

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk.8:38).

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim.1:8).

"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Dt.31:6).

5 (18:26) **Peter—Denial**: there was Peter's shattering denial, the denial of discipleship. This was the most serious denial of all: "Did not I see thee in the garden *with Him*?" Peter denied Jesus for two very basic reasons.

1. Peter *feared* man. When a quick response *was* called for, he *was not* strong and mature enough to stand for Jesus. He feared what the *crowd* might do to him: ridicule, abuse, arrest, and kill him. He feared that the crowd would do to him just what they were doing to Jesus.
2. Peter faltered, stumbled, and failed to die to self. He lacked love enough to deny himself for the sake of others. Jesus died on the cross for the sake of the men who stood at the foot of the cross railing and cursing Him. He willingly died for men that they might live. That is how much He loved. At that point in his life, Peter did not know such self-denying love. He did not know the love that denied and surrendered itself for the sake of others.

Thought 1. This is a strong warning to every believer.

⇒ Peter was a strong disciple.
⇒ Peter knew and had trusted Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.
⇒ Peter had a strong profession of loyalty to Jesus.
⇒ Peter had just partaken of the Lord's Supper; in fact, he had just been privileged to partake of the very first Supper.
⇒ Peter had left all to follow Jesus.
⇒ Peter had been taught about God, and he had been taught by Jesus Himself.
⇒ Peter had even been forewarned that the flesh was weak and that he would fail.

Thought 2. Every denial (in fact, every neglect) of Jesus downgrades the Lord. Denial and neglect ignore just who Jesus is, the Son of God in all His power and majesty and dominion. Denial shows that we fear men more than we fear and reverence God. Neglect of Jesus shows how little we fear and reverence Him. The Biblical exhortation always needs to be kept in mind: "The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb.10:30-31).

Thought 3. A crowd of unbelievers can put pressure upon any of us. Peter was where he did not belong. He was hanging around in the midst of a worldly crowd. He belonged in one of three places: by the side of Christ; alone with God, seeking answers and understanding; or with the other apostles, rallying them in prayer for understanding and direction.

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men" (Pr.4:14).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).

6 (18:27) **Jesus Christ, Predictions of**: the conclusion is that Jesus' word was fulfilled, and forgiveness was extended to Peter. This is implied in the rooster's crowing a third time, just as Jesus had predicted (Jn.13:38. See note—Mk.14:72 for discussion.)

C. The Trial Before Pilate: Indecisive Compromise, 18:28-19:15

(Mt.27:11-25; Mk.15:1-15 Lk.23:1-5, 13-25)

1 Jesus was led into the judgment hall
- a. It was early in the morning
- b. The Jews did not enter
- c. Pilate moved back & forth[DS1]

28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

2 Movement 1: To Jesus' accusers—to hear their charges
- a. The insolent charge: A criminal—a trial is not necessary (hatred & pride)

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

- b. Pilate refused the case (evading responsibility)

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

- c. The evidence of predetermined guilt: "Put...to death" (closed hearts)[DS2]
  - 1) The Jews stoned
  - 2) The Romans crucified

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

3 Movement 2: To Jesus—to hear His defense
- a. Pilate's scornful question

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

- b. Jesus' challenge to Pilate: A person is responsible for His own verdict

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

- c. Pilate's reaction: Contempt for the Jews

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

- d. Jesus' explanation: His Kingdom is not of this world

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

- e. Pilate's baffled question
- f. Jesus' claim: He is King—to be King was the purpose for His birth[DS3]

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answereed, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

- g. Jesus' subtle appeal

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

- h. Pilate's sincere question (truth)

4 Movement 3: Back to the people—to declare Jesus' innocence
- a. Pilate's first attempt to release Jesus: He offers a *substitute*

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

- b. The mob's choice (a man of the world)

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER 19

5 Movement 4: Back to Jesus—to scourge Him
- a. Savage, cruel scourging (persecution)[DS4]
- b. Crude mockery & scoffing (abused His name & person)
- c. Sham obedience (hypocrisy)

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

6 Movement 5: Back again to the people—to offer a compromise
- a. Pilate's second attempt to release Jesus by compromise: Sought the crowd's pity by presenting Jesus beaten & battered by scourging

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

- b. The mob's hatred (harsh, loud, hysterical shouting)
- c. Pilate's impossible dare: Angry, sarcastic contempt for the mob[DS5]
- d. The Jew's truthful charge[DS6]

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

7 Movement 6: Back again to Jesus—to investigate the possibility of a supernatural being
- a. Pilate's superstitious question: Jesus' origin

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

- b. Pilate's terrifying, frantic cry: Life is in the hands of earthly authority

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release

c. Jesus' revelation: There is a superior, higher authority d. Jesus' charge of guilt	thee? 11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.	Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. 14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!	**all—to give the verdict of crucifixion** a. Pilate's choice: Fear of Caesar greater than his fear of Jesus
8 Movement 7: Back again to the people—to release Jesus a. Pilate's successive attempts to release Jesus b. Pilate blackmailed: Jesus or Caesar	12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.	15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.	b. The Jew's frenzied madness c. Pilate's bitter question d. The Jew's fatal choice
9 Movement 8: To the Judgment Seat before	13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought		

DIVISION XV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42

C. The Trial Before Pilate: Indecisive Compromise, 18:28-19:15

(18:28-19:15) **Introduction**: the Roman trial of Jesus is a dramatic picture of indecisive compromise. The scene flows along with Pilate *moving* back and forth to Jesus and to His accusers or the people. The outline is adequate in carrying one through the passage. Therefore, the footnotes will not discuss each point. Notes and application are added where needed. (See outline and DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.27:11-25; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.15:1-15; note—Lk.23:1-25 for more detailed discussion.)

1. Jesus led into the judgment hall (v.28).
2. Movement 1: to Jesus' accusers—to hear their charges (v.29-32).
3. Movement 2: to Jesus—to hear His defense (v.33-38).
4. Movement 3: back to the people—to declare Jesus' innocence (v.38-40).
5. Movement 4: back to Jesus—to scourge Jesus (Ch.19, v.1-3).
6. Movement 5: back again to the people—to offer a compromise (v.4-7).
7. Movement 6: back again to Jesus—to investigate the possibility of a supernatural being (v.8-11).
8. Movement 7: back again to the people—to release Jesus (v.12).
9. Movement 8: to the Judgment Seat before all—to give the verdict of crucifixion (v.13-15).

1 (18:28) **Jesus Christ, Trials of**: Jesus was led into the hall of judgment. It was early morning. Note the Jews did not enter, for the hall was a Gentile judgment hall and it was the Sabbath of the Passover season. To enter the judgment hall would have polluted and contaminated them ceremonially. They would have been disallowed from participating in the Passover. It was a trifling, superficial concern in light of the trial for a man's life, especially the life of God's own Son.

> **Thought 1.** Too often men (religionists) attack others, arguing over their religion and church and its plans, over ceremonies, rituals, rules, regulations, and practices. They forget the *meat* of the truth: love, joy, peace, care, understanding, and ministry (cp. Jn.13:33-34).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(18:28) **Pilate**: the procurator of Judaea. He was directly responsible to the Emporer for the administrative and financial management of the country. A man had to work himself up through the political and military ranks to become a procurator. Pilate was therefore an able man, experienced in the affairs of politics and government as well as the military. He held office for ten years, which shows that he was deeply trusted by the Roman government. However, the Jews despised Pilate, and Pilate despised the Jews; in particular he despised their intense practice of religion. When Pilate became procurator of Judaea, he did two things that aroused the people's bitter hatred against him forever. First, on his state visits to Jerusalem, he rode into the city with the Roman standard, an eagle sitting atop a pole. All previous governors had removed the standard because of the Jews' opposition to idols. Second, Pilate launched the construction of a new water supply for Jerusalem. To finance the project, he took the money out of the temple treasury. The Jews never forgot or forgave this act. They bitterly opposed Pilate all through his reign, and he treated them with equal contempt (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mk.15:1-15). On several occasions, Jewish leaders threatened to exercise their right to report Pilate to the emporer. This, of course, disturbed Pilate immensely and caused him to become even more bitter toward the Jews.

2 (18:29-32) **Jesus Christ, Trial—Charges Against**: the first movement of Pilate was to Jesus' accusers—to hear their charges.

1. The insolent charge. The religionists were full of hatred and pride. They rejected and hated Jesus, and they set themselves up as His judges. They assumed the right to judge, feeling their verdict and judgment should not be questioned.

> **Thought 1.** Men may reject and hate Christ; they may judge Christ not worthy to be the Lord of their lives. They may try to get rid of Christ by pushing Him away and having nothing to do with Him. But they cannot change the fact: Christ still came to love and save men, and in the final analysis, men will be judged by Christ.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

2. Pilate tried to evade his responsibility.

Thought 1. We are often called upon to take a stand for Christ. It is our duty. Yet how many of us fear ridicule, abuse, and rejection and end up evading our responsibility?

3. The hearts of the religionists were closed; this was their problem. They were mentioning death even before the trial.

Thought 1. Religionists reject Jesus because they do not want to hear Him; they do not want anything to do with the demands He puts upon their lives. The only Lord they want is the *lord of self*.

"For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:27).

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas.4:4).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(18:31-32) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the Jews had to force the Romans to crucify Jesus, for the Jews were not allowed to execute a criminal on the Sabbath or on feast days. From God's perspective, it had been prophesied that the Christ was to be crucified, and crucifixion was the method of execution used by the Romans. Therefore, events had to be providentially shifted so there could be a Roman execution by crucifixion (cp. Jn.3:14; 8:28; 12:32; Lk.9:22-23).

3 (18:33-38) **Decision**: the second movement of Pilate was to Jesus in order to hear His defense. Note two points.

1. Jesus' challenge to Pilate (v.34). Jesus challenged Pilate to think through the issue himself. In judging Jesus, a person is responsible for his own verdict.

Thought 1. A person is personally responsible for his verdict about Jesus. Everyone *now* has to make a choice, for Jesus claims to be the Son of God, the only Savior of the world. We have to give our verdict: He either *is* or *is not* the King of the Jews.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (Jn.1:11-12).

Thought 2. People usually choose to follow the man of power and fame and wealth over the man of love and morality and peace. Just take a moment and think how true this is. The immoral emphasis of films and the violent emphasis of the news alone are prime examples. Is there any wonder man has never known a world of love and peace and true justice? The problem is the human heart, the problem which Jesus alone can solve.

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (Jn.5:43-44).

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt.15:18-19).

"A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Lk.6:45).

"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk.8:15).

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:10).

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Pr.4:23).

2. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world, not of the physical dimension of being. It is of heaven, of the spiritual dimension of being (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24; note—Jn.11:25-27, pt.2).

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (Jn.18:36).

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Ro.14:17).

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom" (Heb.1:8).

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Pt.3:13-14).

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev.11:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(18:37) **Jesus Christ, Claims**: there are several claims here.

1. His birth was a means to an end—to be King (Mt.2:2; Jn.1:49; 1 Cor.15:25).
2. He did preexist—He came out of heaven from the very presence of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:1-5; note—1:1-2).
3. He was the truth—absolute reality.
4. He revealed the truth (Jn.14:9-11).
5. He was heard by those of the truth (Jn.8:45-47).

4 (18:38-40) **Jesus Christ, Death**: Pilate's third movement was back to the people. He wished to clear Jesus' name and to declare His innocence. Pilate hoped to satisfy the Jews' cry for blood by substituting a real criminal and revolutionary for Jesus, but the Jewish leaders were determined to murder Jesus. Therefore, they chose a man of worldly power and fame over the Man of peace, the Son of God Himself.

Thought 1. Man chooses the path of power and fame, wealth and possessions. He rejects the path of peace if it means the sacrifice of self and possessions. Therefore, man never knows peace—not personal peace or world peace. The only way to peace is to surrender to the Prince of Peace.

"There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (Is.48:22).

"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace" (Is.59:8).

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk.2:13-14).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ro.5:1).

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:14).

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven" (Col.1:20).

Thought 2. Note how the people (the world) rejected Pilate's offer of a substitute for Jesus. God twisted the world's choice and made His Son the *substitute* for every man, even for those who were rejecting Him in this horrible scene.

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

5 (19:1-3) **Persecution**: Pilate's fourth movement was back to Jesus. He had Jesus scourged. Note how the world treated Jesus. The very same treatment is heaped upon Jesus by men of every generation.

1. Men persecute and attack, crudely mock and scoff at His name, His person, and His Word. They curse, abuse, ridicule, imprison, kill, and heap mistreatment upon His followers.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Mt.5:11).

"But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues" (Mt.10:17).

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (Jn.15:20).

"They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (Jn.16:2).

2. Men live hypocritical lives, professing to know and follow Him; but when out in the world, they live as the world.

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Mk.7:6).

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Tit.1:16).

DEEPER STUDY # 4
(19:1) **Scourging**: Jesus was stripped and beaten with a whip. This was a savage, excruciating punishment. The whip was made of leather straps with two small balls attached to the end of each strap. The balls were made of rough lead or sharp bones or spikes so that they would cut deeply into the flesh. Jesus' hands were tied to a post above His head, and He was scourged. It was the Roman custom for the prisoner to be lashed by the presiding centurion until He was near death (Jewish trials allowed only forty lashes.) The criminal's back was, or course, nothing more than an unrecognizable mass of torn flesh.

6 (19:4-7) **Compromise—Decision**: Pilate's fifth movement was back again to the people. He offered a compromise. Pilate was hoping the crowd would pity Jesus when they saw Him so beaten, battered, and bloodied. He hoped the scourging would serve as a compromise and satisfy them.

Thought 1. Compromise is not the way with Jesus. Pilate needed to declare Him innocent, for He was innocent. He was not guilty of any wrongdoing. Every man needs to declare Jesus innocent, for He was completely free of sin. He was the Son of Man Himself who stands before the world as its Savior (see note—Jn.1:51).

Note the truthful charge of the Jews: "He made Himself the Son of God" (v.7). Jesus did claim to be the Son of God (see note—Jn.1:34).

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Lk.11:23).

"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (Jn.5:23).

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Dt.30:19).

DEEPER STUDY # 5
(19:6) **Jews—Capital Punishment**: the Jews were not allowed the right of capital punishment by their Roman conquerors.

DEEPER STUDY # 6
(19:7) **Capital Punishment**: cp. Lev.24:16 for the law concerning capital punishment.

7 (19:8-11) **Sorcery**: Pilate's sixth movement was back again to Jesus. He investigated the possibility of a supernatural being. Note several things.

1. Pilate feared. History tells us that Pilate was an extremely superstitious man. When he heard that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, he thought Jesus was claiming to be the son of *a god*. The picture in his mind was that of a half-god and half-man, a god-like being that filled the popular literature and beliefs of that day. The possibility of his condemning a god struck fear in Pilate.

Thought 1. Men must not fear (reverence) the astrological charts and fortune signs and evil powers of this world. What men must fear is Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell (Mt.10:28). There is only one Truth and that is Jesus Christ Himself.

"There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer [one who calls up the dead]. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Dt.18:10-12).

"And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only" (2 Ki.17:17-18).

"But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments" (Is.47:9).

"Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you" (Jer.27:9).

"For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd" (Zech.10:2).

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that

oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal.3:5).

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries" (Acts 8:9-11).

"But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:8-10).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev.21:8).

2. Power is not in the hands of earthly authorities. It is in the hands of God (v.10-11).

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Ro.13:1).

8 (19:12) **Decision**: Pilate's seventh movement was back again to the people. He wished to release Jesus. Note that Pilate had to make a decision, choosing either Jesus or Caesar (the world). When the Jews cried out "Thou are not Caesar's friend," Pilate faced a serious problem. They were threatening to send a report to Caesar (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.18:28). He was now forced to choose, and he did. Tragically, he chose the world and its way.

Thought 1. Everyone is now forced to choose. Jesus Christ is unquestionably the Son of God; therefore, we choose either Him or this world.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

9 (19:13-15) **Decision**: Pilate's eighth movement was to the judgment seat before all. He gave the verdict of crucifixion.

1. Pilate's fatal choice. He feared Caesar more than he feared God. Note that he proclaimed the truth, but in ignorance and mockery: "Behold your King." Pilate feared...
   - losing the people's favor.
   - causing problems for himself.
   - losing his position and security (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.18:28).

"Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it" (Dt.1:17).

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Pr.29:25).

"I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass" (Is.51:12).

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Lk.12:4-5).

2. The Jews' fatal choice. They, too, chose the world, the way of Caesar. This was a shocking choice, for God had supposedly been the God of the Jews for centuries. He was said to be the sovereign Lord of their nation (Judg.8:23; 1 Sam.8:7; 12:12). But now, at this very moment, they were rejecting and repudiating God as their sovereign Lord. They were choosing Caesar and the way of the world—the world's...
   - security
   - position
   - power
   - acceptance
   - livelihood
   - honor
   - selfishness
   - friendship
   - religion

"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (Lk.19:14).

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (Jn.1:11).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jn.2:15-16).

	D. The Crucifixion: The Major Events at the Cross, 19:16-37 (Mt.27:26-56; Mk.15:16-41; Lk.23:26-49)	Magdalene.	
		26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!	b. Jesus "saw His mother"
1 **Event 1: Jesus' bearing His cross—willingly "went forth"** a. Pilate delivered Jesus b. They led Him c. He went forth, bore the cross d. He was the majestic victor, not the victim	16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.	27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.	c. Jesus demonstrated responsibility: Discharged His duty even in death
2 **Event 2: Jesus' being crucified between two sinners—the preeminent sacrifice**	17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: 18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.	28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.	6 **Event 6: Jesus' agonizing thirst & His deliberate effort to fulfill Scripture** a. Knew His purpose was achieved b. Was exhausted, He thirsted c. Was given hyssop: An act recalling the Passover
3 **Event 3: Pilate's writing the title on the cross** a. Pilate made an ironic announcement, cp. Jn.18:36; 3:5 b. The people were indifferent to the title	19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.	29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.	
		30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.	7 **Event 7: Jesus' great shout of victory—salvation & reconciliation**
c. The religionists objected to the title	21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews: but that he said, I am King of the Jews.	31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.	8 **Event 8: The spear's being thrust into His side** a. A religious request: Concern for trifles, cp. 18:28
d. Pilate: Sarcastically insisted the title stand	22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.	32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.	b. A brutal custom: Smashing the victim's legs to cause an earlier death
4 **Event 4: The soldiers' gambling for His clothes** a. The insensitive men: Jesus' mother was standing by, yet not given His clothes b. The seamless coat: Was the same as the High Priest's coat—the Mediator c. The fulfillment of Scripture	23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. 24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.	33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: 34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.	c. A strange fact: Jesus was already dead d. A proof of death: Blood & water
d. An eyewitness verification: John saw the event		35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. 36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.	e. An insistence upon the accuracy of the account 1) Purpose 1: To stir belief 2) Purpose 2: To fulfill Scripture
5 **Event 5: Jesus' great love for His mother** a. There were the women at the cross	25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary	37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.	

DIVISION XV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42

D. The Crucifixion: The Major Events at the Cross, 19:16-37

(19:16-37) **Introduction**: the most significant event in history is the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. We are saved by His death; because He died, we live. However, there is a condition. We must believe, and it is the necessity for belief that

John stressed. He was an eyewitness of the crucifixion, and he closed his account of the crucifixion by saying: "He that saw it bare record, and his record is true...*that ye might believe*" (Jn.19:35).

1. Event 1: Jesus' bearing His cross—willingly "went forth" (v.16-17).
2. Event 2: Jesus' being crucified between two sinners—the preeminent sacrifice (v.18).
3. Event 3: Pilate's writing the title on the cross (v.19-22).
4. Event 4: The soldiers' gambling for His clothes (v.23-24).
5. Event 5: Jesus' great love for His mother (v.25-27).
6. Event 6: Jesus' agonizing thirst and His deliberate effort to fulfill Scripture (v.28-29)
7. Event 7: Jesus' great shout of victory: salvation and reconciliation (v.30).
8. Event 8: The spear's being thrust into His side (v.31-37).

(19:16-37) **Another Outline**: The Crucifixion—the Picture of Jesus Symbolized.

1. Picture 1: Jesus—the Victor (v.16-17).
2. Picture 2: Jesus—the Preeminent Sacrifice (v.18).
3. Picture 3: Jesus—the Proclaimed King (v.19-22).
4. Picture 4: Jesus—the High Priest, the Mediator (v.23-24).
5. Picture 5: Jesus—the Responsible Son of Man (v.25-27).
6. Picture 6: Jesus—the Passover Lamb (v.28-29).
7. Picture 7: Jesus—the Triumphant Messiah (v.30).
8. Picture 8: Jesus—the Lord of the Sacraments, of the Church (v.31-37).

1 (19:16-17) **Bearing the Cross**: the first event of the cross was that of Jesus' bearing His cross. He *willingly* "went forth." Note:

⇒ Pilate delivered Him.
⇒ The soldiers took and led Him.
⇒ It was Jesus, however, who *bore* the cross and *went forth*.

Jesus Christ was the *majestic victor*, not the victim. He was bearing the cross and going forth for a specific purpose—to save man. (See notes—Jn.10:17-18, pt.2; 12:27-30.)

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:14-15).
"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11).
"I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:15).

2 (19:18) **Crucifixion Between Thieves**: the second event of the cross was Jesus' being crucified between two sinners, two unjust thieves. This is a picture of two things.

1. It is a picture of the preeminence of His sacrifice. He was surrounded by a world of unjust men, yet He was dying for them.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Pt.2:24).
"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

2. It is a picture of preeminent guilt. Jesus Christ was being counted as the King of Sinners.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is.53:6).
"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:21).

3 (19:19-22) **Title on Cross**: the third event of the cross was the title on the cross. Note three simple facts.

1. The people read the title but were indifferent to it. It had no effect upon them. There was no mass movement of sorrow and repentance, no final acceptance of Him.
2. The religionists objected to the title. However, they did not ask that it be removed. They asked that the wording be changed to read "*He said*, 'I am the King of the Jews.'" Their unbelief was foul and obstinate.
3. Jesus claimed to be "the King of the Jews," the promised Messiah.
4. The title "King of the Jews" was written in the three great languages of the world. This providentially symbolized His rightful rule as King of the universe.

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:8-11).
"That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man

can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (1 Tim.6:14-16).

4 (19:23-24) **Coat—Gambling for Clothes**: the fourth event of the cross was the soldiers' gambling for His clothes. Note several points.

1. The insensitive, worldly-minded men were void of compassion. Jesus' mother Mary was standing by the cross, yet the soldiers showed no compassion whatsoever in sharing His belongings with her. (Cp. Ps.22:28.)

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk.8:36).

2. The seamless coat was one piece of cloth, woven from the top to the bottom. The coat or robe was identical to the robe of the High Priest. It symbolized Christ, the *Mediator*, the Pontifex, which in Latin means the bridge-builder between God and man. (See note—Jn.12:44; cp. Ps.22:18.)
3. The event fulfilled Scripture (Ps.22:18). God was in charge of the cross, for it was the fulfillment of His purpose, of His great plan of salvation for man.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim.2:5-6).

"For this cause, He is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death...they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).

"Christ is not entered into the Holy places made with hands...but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).

5 (19:25-27) **Caring for His Mother**: the fifth event of the cross was Jesus' great love for His mother. There are two touching scenes here.

1. The women at the cross. They were there at great risk. Jesus was...
   - a revolutionary in the eyes of Rome.
   - a heretic in the eyes of the religionists.

Any supporter of Jesus who stood at the cross ran the risk of ridicule and arrest. Nevertheless, the women stood there. Why? They loved Him. There is no other explanation: they simply loved Him. He had done so much for them that they were willing to stand by Him no matter the cost.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:14-15).

"Let us go forth" (Heb.13:13).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

2. Jesus' *care* of His mother. His thoughts were on others, not on Himself. Every fiber of His being existed for others, not for Himself. Even in death, His mind and being were set on taking care of others.
   ⇒ He was touched with the feelings of Mary's hurt and pain. In the last moments of His life upon earth, He made arrangements for her care.
   ⇒ He is touched with the feeling of our hurt and pain, so he takes care of us.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:15-16).

6 (19:28-29) **Thirst**: the sixth event of the cross was Jesus' agonizing thirst and deliberate effort to fulfill Scripture.

Jesus said, "I thirst." It had been hours since He had had a drink of water. But note: the stress of Jesus' words was not that He was physically thirsty. He was not complaining of thirst, not even asking for a drink. The stress was upon His fulfilling Scripture (Ps.69:21)...

- to show that Jesus *was truly* the Promised Messiah, the One who fulfilled Scripture.
- to show that Jesus' mind was *set on* fulfilling the Scriptures of the promised Messiah.
- to show that Jesus had come as the Promised Messiah to do the will of God, dying as the sacrifice for man. He refused to do God's will unthoughtfully, with deadened senses and a semi-conscious mind. He had work to do in sacrificing His life for man: He was to taste death for all men, and He would taste it in full consciousness, being as mentally alert as possible.

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb.2:9).

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God....By the which will we are sacrificed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb.10:6-7, 10).

"Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

7 (19:30) **Jesus Christ, Death**: the seventh event of the cross was Jesus' great shout of victory. Salvation and reconciliation were now possible for man. Note two points.

1. Jesus cried, "It is finished." The Greek word (tetelestai) is the shout of victorious purpose. Jesus had completed His work, His mission, and His task. He was not crying the cry of a defeated martyr. He was crying the cry of a victorious conqueror.

2. "Gave up the ghost" means that He gave up His spirit. It must always be remembered that Jesus *willingly* died. He willingly came to this moment of yielding and giving up His spirit unto death. Both Paul and Peter cover the Lord's work during the three days immediately following His death until the resurrection.

a. Paul says that on the cross this happened:

"[He] spoiled principalities and power, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it [the cross]" (Col.2:15. Cp. Eph.6:12.)

b. Peter says that on the cross and after death this happened:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (1 Pt.3:18-20. See note—1 Pt.3:18-22; Deeper Study # 1—3:19-20.)

c. Paul says that after death this happened:

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)" (Eph.4:8-10. See note—Eph.4:8-10.)

8 (19:31-37) **The Spear**: the eighth event of the cross was that of the spear's being thrust into Jesus' side.

1. The religionists' concern for trifles was somewhat shocking. Note how religious ceremony and ritual consumed the mind of the religionists and actually became more important than the suffering of a man. But not so with Christ: He was hanging there because He was concerned for man. He felt for the suffering of man, so He had given His life for man.

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham [the flesh of man]. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb.2:16-18).

2. Christ died prematurely, much sooner than a man was supposed to die from crucifixion. One of the reasons Rome chose crucifixion as the State's method of execution was its slow, lingering death. By law the criminal was to hang upon the cross until he died from thirst, hunger, and exposure. Sometimes a man lingered for days under the heat of the broiling sun or the cold of the winter nights. Such suffering struck fear into the hearts of the captured populace and restrained severe crime. Because Jesus died so quickly, He probably died from the pressure of a broken heart and of being separated from God in behalf of mankind (1 Pt.2:24; 3:18). Apparently His heart burst, and the blood mingled with the water-fluid of the pericardium surrounding the heart. The spear pierced the pericardium causing the blood and water to flow. Perhaps John stressed this incident because he saw the symbol of the two ordinances pictured: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

a. The water symbolized baptism, the washing of regeneration which Jesus was to bring.

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Tit.3:4-5).

b. The blood symbolized the Lord's Supper, the partaking of the blood of Christ which cleanses men of their sins.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 Jn.1:7).

3. John insisted upon the accuracy of his account. He said, "I saw it and bare record; my record is true." Note: He also said that God knew he was telling the truth. Why was this stressed? John told us: he stressed his truthfulness that "ye might believe" (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

Note another point. John said we are without excuse if we fail to believe. Why? Because the crucifixion and its events were a fulfillment of Scripture. (Cp. Ex.12:46; Num.9:12. Ps.34:20 predicts that not a bone of His body would be broken. Cp. Zech.12:10 which predicts the spear. Also cp. Is.53 which predicts so much of the crucifixion.)

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

1 Jesus' death conquered fear in a secret disciple: Joseph of Arimathaea a. He had feared the Jews b. He was now changed by Jesus' death: He boldly requested the body **2 Jesus' death conquered fear in a cowardly disciple: Nicodemus**	**E. The Burial: The Conquest of Fear, 19:38-42** (Mt.27:57-66; Mk.15:42-47; Lk.23:50-56) 38 And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. 39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and	brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. 40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. 41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.	a. He had come by night b. He was changed by Jesus' death: Helped in the burial **3 Jesus' death stirred open commitment** a. Openly took the body b. Openly cared for the body c. Openly gave the best 1) A new tomb, never before used 2) The tomb was close to Calvary d. Openly buried Jesus—just before the Sabbath[DSI]

DIVISION XV

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SUFFERING SAVIOR, 18:1-19:42

E. The Burial: The Conquest of Fear, 19:38-42

(19:38-42) **Introduction**: Jesus' death conquers fear for the genuine believer.

1. Jesus' death conquered fear in a secret disciple: Joseph of Arimathaea (v.38).
2. Jesus' death conquered fear in a cowardly disciple: Nicodemus (v.39).
3. Jesus' death stirred open and unashamed commitment (v.40-42).

1 (19:38) **Joseph of Arimathaea—Jesus Christ, Death—Confession**: Jesus' death conquered fear in a secret disciple, Joseph of Arimathaea. A revealing picture of Joseph is given in Scripture.

1. He was a counsellor, a senator, a member of the Sanhedrin, which was the ruling body of Israel. He was apparently...
   - highly educated
   - highly esteemed
   - well liked
   - very responsible
   - capable of leadership
2. He was a "good and just" man. He was a man...
   - of good quality
   - of high morals
   - of feelings
   - of compassion
   - of justice
   - of decision
   - of truth
   - of law
3. He was a man looking for the Messiah and the Kingdom of God (see notes—Lk.2:25-27; DEEPER STUDY # 3—Mt.19:23-24).
4. He was, however, a man who feared to stand up for Jesus. John said he was "a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews" (Jn.19:38). Joseph probably had met Jesus and arranged meetings with Him when the Lord had visited Jerusalem, but he feared making a public profession. His position and prestige were at stake. His peers, the other rulers, opposed Jesus. He believed in Jesus, but out of fear he kept his discipleship a secret. Note: when the vote was taken to put Jesus to death, Joseph did abstain from voting, but he did not stand up for Christ. He did not participate; he simply remained silent.

Thought 1. How many are as Joseph was?

⇒ They are good people and just people.

⇒ They are believers.

⇒ But they fear what their friends and fellow workers will say. They fear the loss of position, prestige, promotion, acceptance, popularity, friends, job, income, livelihood.

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Lk.9:26).

"And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear not" (Lk.12:4-5).

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim.1:7).

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Pr.29:25).

"I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass" (Is.51:12).

5. He was a man changed by the death of Jesus. This is seen in two facts.
   a. Joseph actually "went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." This was a tremendous act of courage. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. The latter served as an example of criminal punishment to the public. Joseph also braved the threat of Pilate's reaction. Pilate was fed up with the *Jesus matter*. Jesus had proven to be very bothersome to him. He could have reacted severely against Joseph.
   b. Joseph risked the disfavor and discipline of the Sanhedrin. They were the ruling body who had instigated and condemned Jesus, and Joseph was a member of the council. There was no question, he would face some harsh reaction from some of his fellow Sanhedrin members and from some of his closest friends.

The thing that turned Joseph from being a secret disciple to a bold disciple seems to be the phenomenal events surrounding the cross (the behavior and words of Jesus, the darkness, the earthquake, the torn veil). When Joseph witnessed all this, his mind connected the claims of Jesus with the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. Apparently Joseph saw the prophecies fulfilled in Jesus; therefore, he stepped forward braving all risks and taking his stand for Jesus. A remarkable courage stirred by the death of Jesus!

Thought 1. Every secret believer needs to study the cross of Christ. Really seeing the cross will turn any secret believer into a bold witness for Christ.

Thought 2. Joseph courageously asked to take care of the physical body of Christ. Today, the body of Christ is the church. We are to boldly step forward and take care of the church. There are times within the church when special needs demand that men be courageous and step forward to show care. In those times a fresh look at the cross will be helpful and can be used of God to stir us.

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor.2:2).

"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many rebound to the glory of God" (2 Cor.4:14-15).

"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15).

6. He was a man who cared deeply for Jesus. The words and acts of these two verses express care and tenderness and love and affection as well as courage and boldness. Joseph...
   - took the body down from the cross.
   - wrapped the body in linen.
   - laid the body in a tomb wherein no man had ever been laid.
   - acted quickly, before the Sabbath began. Jesus died at 3 p.m. Friday afternoon (cp. Mk.15:33-34, 37). Friday was the day of preparation for the Sabbath. Work was forbidden on the Sabbath, so if anything was to be done with Jesus' body, it had to be done immediately. Only three hours remained for work. (See note—Mk.15:42 for more discussion.)

This act alone would leave no doubt about the effect of the cross upon Joseph. The cross changed his life. He was no longer a secret believer; he now demonstrated a public stand for Jesus.

Thought 1. Position, power, wealth, fame—none of these make us bold for Christ. Only true affection for Christ will make us bold, and only as we see the cross of Christ will affection for Christ be aroused.

Thought 2. Christ identified with men perfectly.
   ⇒ He lived as a man, but perfectly.
   ⇒ He died as a man, but perfectly (as the Ideal Man).
   ⇒ He was buried as a man, but perfectly.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth" (Is.53:9).

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:17).

Thought 3. God's own Son possessed nothing when He was on earth. Note two things.
   ⇒ Christ is the Savior of the poorest. He was born in a stable, and throughout His life He had no place of His own to lay His head (Mt.8:20; Lk.9:58). Even His tomb was a borrowed tomb.
   ⇒ The rich, nonetheless, can serve Him just as Joseph of Arimathaea did.

"And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Lk.9:58).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" (Lk.12:33).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor.8:9).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

2 (19:39) **Nicodemus—Testimony—Jesus Christ, Death**: Jesus' death conquered fear in a cowardly disciple, Nicodemus. (See note—Jn.3:1-2 for discussion of Nicodemus.) Nicodemus was the leader who came to Jesus by night. He was probably the *Master Teacher*, the leading teacher of all Israel. Holding such a high position in the nation, he feared the leaders of Israel who opposed Jesus. The same fear that was in Joseph was in him: his position, authority, livelihood, and security were at stake; so he kept quiet, refusing to openly confess and take a stand for Jesus.

However, the cross apparently changed Nicodemus just as it had changed Joseph. Being the *Master Teacher* of Israel, Nicodemus, above everyone else, knew the prophetic Scriptures. Apparently, the events of the cross stirred him to begin making connections between the prophecies and Jesus' death. He had already been making connections between the prophecies and the words and works of Jesus. He did not fully understand, but the thoughts that were connecting Jesus and the prophecies would not leave his mind. At some point Nicodemus, although not understanding, knew that Jesus was the Messiah. He, Nicodemus, had failed the Lord when He was alive. He would not fail Him in His death. Perhaps not understanding the movement of his own heart toward Jesus, he boldly and courageously stepped forward to proclaim that He now believed and wanted all to know it. He walked into the stores that sold spices and bought huge amounts, the poundage fit for a king. The spices weighed about seventy pounds, an amount that only royalty could afford and use. Nicodemus wished to give the honor to his Lord which he should have given when his Lord was alive. He had been a proud man, but now he was a broken man. He had been a worldly man, a man who had chosen the world over the Lord, but no more. Broken in heart over his Lord's death, he would now step forth in faith and love to do what he could.

Thought 1. By purchasing the spices for the Lord's body and helping in the burial of Jesus, Nicodemus took his stand for Christ. From that point on, everyone knew he cared for and loved Jesus. What a living example of courage for us as we move about the business establishments of the world.

"But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me" (Mk.9:34-37).

3 (19:40-42) **Decision—Commitment**: Jesus' death stirred open and unashamed commitment. Both Joseph and Nicodemus had hesitated in trusting Jesus Christ as their Savior. Out of fear they had acted cowardly, keeping their thoughts about Jesus to themselves. But now they showed a courage and a boldness unmatched by all others. They alone demonstrated an open, unashamed commitment to Jesus, and they did it when the apostles themselves deserted Jesus.

1. They openly took the body of Jesus from the cross. In doing so, they risked the disfavor of the Sanhedrin who had instigated and condemned Jesus. Both Joseph and Nicodemus were opposing their fellow members of the council. There was no question that they would face some harsh reaction from some of their fellow Sanhedrin members and from some of their closest friends.
2. They openly cared for Jesus' body. They wound it in linen clothes with the spices.
3. They openly gave Jesus the best. They gave Him a tomb never before used. Apparently it was in a cemetary on Mount Calvary, the mountain where Jesus was crucified. The tomb had been bought by Joseph for his own use (Mt.27:60). This act alone would leave no question about the two men's taking their stand for Jesus.
4. They openly buried Jesus just before the Sabbath. This eliminated them from taking part in the great Passover Feast, and this was never done, even for the most serious reasons. Joseph and Nicodemus, by handling Jesus' body, were considered defiled for seven days for having come in contact with a corpse. Once defiled, Jewish law forbade a person from taking part in Jewish ceremonies.

Simply stated, Joseph and Nicodemus, who had been secret disciples, now stepped forward making an unashamed commitment to Jesus. Everyone would know that they stepped forward and took care of Jesus' body. Joseph even gave his own tomb to Jesus. They were risking their positions, esteem, wealth, and even their lives by making such a pronounced commitment to the affairs of Jesus.

Note the strength of their commitment: no one from Jesus' family or from among His own disciples had stepped forward to claim the Lord's body—but these two men did.

Thought 1. The courage demonstrated by Joseph and Nicodemus is desperately needed by all.

1) The courage to make an unashamed commitment to Christ.
2) The courage to risk all for Christ, even if it does cost us our position, esteem, wealth, and life.
3) The courage to unashamedly care for the body of Christ, His church and its affairs.
4) The courage to be an unashamed witness for Christ, no matter the cost.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32-33).

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Ro.10:9-10).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Tim.2:12).

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(19:42) **Sabbath—Jesus Christ, Burial**: the need for haste was threefold.

1. The Sabbath or Saturday, the day of worship for Jews, began at 6 p.m. (Jewish days began at 6 p.m. and ran until 6 p.m. the next night, that is, from sundown to sundown.) Strict Jewish law said that once the Sabbath began, no work could be done including the burial of the dead.

2. Jesus died at 3 p.m. in the afternoon (cp. Mk.15:33-34, 37). Therefore He died on Friday, the day of preparation for the Sabbath. If anything was to be done with Jesus' body, it had to be done immediately and quickly. Only three hours remained for work.

3. The Romans either dumped the bodies of crucified criminals in the trash heaps or left the bodies hanging upon the cross for the vultures and animals to consume. The latter served as an example of criminal punishment to the public. If Jesus' body were not removed quickly, within these three hours, the fate of His body was set. The Romans would not care what happened to Him, and no Jew could remove Him until the Sabbath was over.

	CHAPTER 20	came to the sepulchre.	a. They went forth
	XVI. THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23	4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.	
	A. Event 1: The Great Discovery—The Empty Tomb, 20:1-10	5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.	b. John glanced in: Saw the clothes
		6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,	c. Peter entered: Saw the linen clothes
1 **Mary's unquestioning discovery: The unsealed tomb**[DSI] a. She visited early b. She saw the stone rolled back c. She ran to Peter d. She revealed an unquestioning love: "They have taken away the Lord"	The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.	7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.	3 **John's thoughtful discovery: The undisturbed linen clothes** a. The linen clothes 1) They were lying "undisturbed" 2) The head wrapping was still folded b. The immediate belief 1) He saw & believed 2) He finally understood the Scripture
	2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.	8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.	
		9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.	
2 **Peter & John's shocking discovery: The linen clothes**	3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and	10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.	

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

A. Event 1: The Great Discovery—The Empty Tomb, 20:1-10

(20:1-10) **Introduction—Resurrection, Evidence of**: in studying John's account, it must be remembered that John was writing an historical account. He was not interested in giving insurmountable evidence for the resurrection. His interest was twofold: (1) to give the evidence that led him to immediately understand and believe, and (2) to give enough evidence to lead anyone to immediate belief—if a person is willing to believe. He was interested in giving enough evidence to make anyone's faith viable and respectable. Now having said this, John's record of Jesus' resurrection is a strong historical account of the event. To an honest, objective, and good heart, the evidence is convincing (Lk.8:15).

1. The fact that morality is the point of John's gospel eliminates any possibility of his fabricating a lie, especially a lie of such immoral proportions.
2. The description of so many little details, details that are so human, says that the phenomenal event is an event that actually took place. Such human-like details could never be built around an event whose main point was a fable. For instance, Peter and John's running and John's outrunning Peter; Mary's human response of frantic bewilderment; the young author's fearing and hesitating to enter a tomb; the author's believing without physical fact and admitting that his belief was not based upon an understanding of Scripture. There are, of course, many other examples that point to the event actually taking place.
3. The head wrapping is strong evidence for the resurrection. Only the head piece is actually said "to be still in its fold." The other pieces are assumed "to be still in their fold" because of the phrase "not lying with the linen clothes." Although the phrase substantially supports the assumption, it is only an assumption. The point is this: if John or any other author were fabricating a case for such a phenomenal event as the resurrection, He would state explicitly that the body wrappings along with the head wrappings were "still in their fold"—building evidence upon evidence.
4. The changed lives of the Lord's disciples are indisputable evidence. It is psychological evidence. From seemingly *irreversible despondency* and from *being hunted down* like insurrectionist dogs, they became new creatures of enthusiasm and motivation. They were propelled by a dynamic power and bold courage. Within thirty days they were seen proclaiming a risen Christ from the very spot where their lives were being threatened. They were preaching to the very people who were seeking to arrest and execute them. Only one thing could cause them to adopt this strategy: the Lord had indeed risen, and He had implanted within them a dynamic new power never before experienced by man.

In discussing evidences, we must remember that God *through inspiration* has not formulated the Scripture to prove anything. God proclaims in Scripture that He *is* (exists), that He is love, and that He has shown His love supremely by sending His own Son to save a lost and dying world. What God wants from us is love and belief, love for the Lord Jesus and belief in the supreme power of a loving God. This is just the point of the resurrection account. We are to believe because we love even as Mary and John loved. (See note 2—Mt.28:1; Jn.20:7-10; cp. Heb.11:6; 1 Jn.3:23.)

1. Mary's unquestioning discovery: the unsealed tomb (v.1-2).
2. Peter and John's shocking discovery: the linen clothes (v.3-6).
3. John's thoughtful discovery: the undisturbed linen clothes (v.7-10).

1 (20:1-2) **Mary Magdalene**: Mary's unquestioning discovery, the unsealed tomb. Note four facts.

1. Mary visited the tomb early when it was still dark. Matthew actually says it was "the end of the sabbath," meaning between 3-6 a.m. (Mt.28:1). This reveals three significant facts.
   a. Jesus arose before dawn, before the sun arose on Sunday morning. This was significant to the early Christian believers, so significant that they broke away from the common division of the week which began with the Sabbath or Saturday. They began to count their days beginning with Sunday, the day of the resurrection of their Lord (cp. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor.16:2).
   b. Jesus arose on the first day of the week, on Sunday morning. This means that He had been in the grave for three days just as He had said (Mt.12:40; 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mk.9:31; 10:34; Lk.9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 46). His arising from the dead was a triumph, a conquest over death. Death reigns no more. Its rule has been broken (1 Cor.15:55-56; 2 Cor.1:9-10; 2 Tim.1:10; Heb.2:9, 14-15).
   c. Again, Jesus arose on the first day of the week, Sunday morning. He was in the grave on the Sabbath, unable to observe the laws governing the great season of the Passover and the Sabbath. He was dead to the law and its observances. This is symbolic of the *identification* believers gain in Christ. *In Christ's death* believers become dead to the law (see note—Ro.7:4; Mt.5:17-18).
2. Mary saw the stone rolled back from the tomb (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.20:1 for discussion).

Thought 1. This is strong evidence for the resurrection. The stone was not rolled back for the benefit of Christ, but for the witnesses to the resurrection. When Christ arose, He was in His resurrection body, the spiritual body of the spiritual dimension which has no physical bounds. He did not need the stone rolled back to leave the tomb, for material substance has no bearing on spiritual substance. However, the witnesses needed to enter the tomb to see the truth (see outline and notes—Jn.10:1-10).

3. Mary ran to Peter. This is important, for it shows that Peter was still the accepted leader. What a man of courageous stature and moral strength! Surely his cowardice had been broadcast and well-rumored, yet he repented and picked himself up to resume his task.
4. Mary revealed an unquestioning love: "They have taken away the Lord." Mary is a supreme example of one who loves and believes, although she did not understand. She was one of the last to leave Jesus at the cross (cp. Mk.15:40, 47); one of the first to attend the tomb; and one who still called Him "Lord." Her belief was a belief of love—not a belief based upon intellect or understanding. She knew what Jesus had done for her, and she loved Him for it. Jesus was her Lord, dead or alive (cp. Jn.20:13f).

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love" (Jn.15:9).

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn.20:29).

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:5).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(20:1) **Tomb**: In Jesus' day tombs were closed by rolling a huge cartwheel-like stone in front of the entrance. They were almost impossible to remove. A deep slanting groove was hewn out of the rock at the base of the entrance for the circular stone to rest in. The stone usually weighed several tons. Such precautions were essential because there were so many tombs ransacked in those days of poverty.

The tomb was further secured by being sealed. When it was necessary to seal a tomb, the huge stone was cemented to the entrance walls or else some type of rope or binding was wrapped around the entrance stone and fastened to both sides of the tomb. Then the binding was cemented with a hardening clay or wax-like substance. In the case of some burials, usually political figures, the seal of the Emperor was also attached to the walls of the entrance. This was to strike fear of Roman retaliation against any intruder. (Cp. Mt.27:66.)

In the case of Jesus' tomb, further precautions were taken by placing a patrol to guard against any foul play. This guard consisted of a *large number* of men (Mt.28:4, 11f).

2 (20:3-6) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection of**: Peter and John's shocking discovery. They discovered the empty tomb *and the linen clothes*. They "went forth" to the tomb. John outran Peter. When John arrived at the tomb, he just glanced in and noticed the linen clothes. Peter actually entered the tomb. He, too, noticed the linen clothes. They both knew the significance. If the body had been removed by the authorities or stolen by someone, the linen clothes would have been taken with the body or left in a dishevelled mess, thrown someplace on the floor. From the description and the impact of the event upon the two disciples, neither one discussed his thoughts with the other, not while standing there at that time.

Thought 1. Note a critical point. If a man wishes to discover the empty tomb, he must get up and "go forth" to look at it. He must investigate, and then he will see. Getting up and "going forth" is the only way a man can ever discover the risen Lord. Resting in the comforts and lethargy of this world will never help a man find Jesus.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me" (Jn.5:39).

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

"For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (Acts 18:28).

"[The gospel] which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:2-4).

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Ro.13:11-12).

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3-4).

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb.6:11-12).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness" (2 Pt.3:17).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccl.9:10).

3 (20:7-10) **Resurrection—John—Linen Clothes**: John's thoughtful discovery. He discovered the undisturbed linen clothes. Note two significant points.

1. Note the linen clothes. Standing outside while Peter was inside the tomb, John's mind was apparently whirling, pondering, wondering, and thinking. Then suddenly it dawned upon him: the linen clothes were lying undisturbed. The Greek word "wrapped together" (entetuligmenon) is the verb which is used for actually winding the linens around a body for burial. The Greek word is saying that the linens were "still in their fold," wrapped just like they would be wrapped around a body—as if the body had just evaporated. They were not dishevelled or disarranged. This says at least four things.
   a. It would be impossible to extract a body from its wrappings and leave them in such good order.
   b. The wrappings would have been taken with the body if the body had been removed.
   c. The wrappings would have been dishevelled and disarranged and scattered if thieves had ransacked the tomb.
   d. The wrappings (under any circumstances that might be conceived in removing the body) could never be placed in the exact spot on the rock slab where the body lay. Yet, this is just how they were lying according to the Greek text. It was this that led John to an immediate belief.
2. Note John's immediate belief. John did not believe because of insurmountable evidence but because he loved Jesus. Seeing the linen clothes penetrated John's mind, and he remembered Jesus' prophecy that He would arise. John realized what had happened and he believed.

This is the point of this account of the linen clothes and of the way the account is recorded. This is also the point of the resurrection account. A loving God wants love—a heart full of love. He wants a person to simply believe that God *is* (exists) and that God is a rewarder of them that love Him (Heb.11:6).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb.11:6).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 Jn.3:16).

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jn.4:16).

"We love him, because he first loved us" (1 Jn.4:19).

	B. Event 2: The Great Recognition—Jesus Appears to Mary, 20:11-18 (Mt.28:1-15; Mk.16:1-11; Lk.24:1-49)	15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.	b. A startling question: Why weep? Whom seekest thou? c. A false identity 1) Because of her tears 2) Because she faced in the wrong direction—into the grave
1 Mary returned to the tomb a. Weeping convulsively b. Stooping, she looked in	11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,	16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith Rabboni; which is to say, Master.	d. The great recognition
2 The first startling sight: Two angels *DSI*	12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.	17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.	**4 The third startling sight: The new commission** a. Stop clinging to me—selfishly b. Go—tell your great discovery
a. The question of the angels b. Mary's loving devotion & confession: "My Lord"	13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.	18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.	
3 The second startling sight: Jesus Himself a. Mary's sense of another person—turned to see	14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.		

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

B. Event 2: The Great Recognition—Jesus Appears to Mary, 20:11-18

(20:11-18) **Introduction**: this is one of the most precious events in history. It was our Lord's first appearance after His resurrection; it was an appearance to a woman who had been saved from the depths of human depravity. It was the appearance to Mary Magdalene, one who loved Jesus with the deepest of loves because of what He had done for her.

1. Mary returned to the tomb (v.11).
2. The first startling sight: two angels (v.12-13).
3. The second startling sight: Jesus Himself (v.14-16).
4. The third startling sight: the new commission (v.17-18).

1 (20:11) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Mary Magdalene**: Mary returned to the tomb. Just when is not known, but she probably followed immediately behind Peter and John as they ran to the tomb. When they left, she remained behind. She was weeping convulsively. Seeing Peter and John enter the tomb gave her courage to finally stoop down and look in. What Mary began to experience would revolutionize her life. She could not ask for more.

Thought 1. Two things can revolutionize a man's life.

1) Lingering at the empty tomb of Jesus. Too many rush by His tomb, never thinking, never giving any thought to its meaning.
2) Seeking the truth of the empty tomb, what it means to life and to the world in all its corruption and need.

2 (20:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Angels**: Mary's first startling sight—she saw two angels. Note two points. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1, *Angels*—Heb.1:4-14.)

1. The two angels were sitting right where Jesus' body had been lying. Angels are messengers of God; they are the ministering spirits of God, servants sent from heaven to carry out His will. On this particular occasion, they were sent to add to the spectacular significance of the resurrection and to comfort Mary in her grief. They had been sent to her in particular, for they had not been in the tomb when Peter and John looked in. They were clothed in white. Matthew added...
   - like "lightning" (visible, quick, startling, striking, frightening, brilliant)
   - like "snow" (white, pure, glistening)

The fact that they were dressed in white apparently symbolizes the holiness and purity of God from whose presence they had come.

"Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy" (Ps.99:9).

"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Is.6:3).

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab.1:13).

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor.7:1).

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb.12:14).

"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pt.1:16).

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness" (2 Pt.3:11).

2. Mary's loving devotion and confession should touch the heart and life of every believer. (See note, *Mary Magdalene*, pt.4—Jn.20:1-2 for discussion.)

"For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God" (Jn.16:27).

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity" (Eph.6:24).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt.6:5).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(20:12) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection—Linen Clothes**: the two angels were sitting, one where the head of Jesus had lain and the other where his feet had lain. Now note a question. How did Mary know where the feet and head had lain? There were two possible ways.

1. She was possibly one of the women who had followed Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus when they buried Jesus (Lk.23:55).
2. She could see the linen clothes lying "in their fold" just as they had been when they were wrapped around Jesus (see note—Jn.20:7-10).

3 (20:14-16) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the second startling sight. Mary saw Jesus Himself. Note four significant events.

1. There was a startling sense. While Mary was still speaking to the angels, she sensed another presence behind her. She immediately turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus.
2. There was a startling question: "Why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" Now note: a graveyard is where one weeps and seeks for a grave.

The point is this: Mary was seeking a dead Savior, a Savior who was as all other men are, frail and powerless to do anything about life and death, eternity and heaven. Her whole being was focused upon a grave where her dead Savior was lying. Mary was living as the world lives, as a "stranger from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Th.4:13).

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me" (Ps.42:6).

"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me" (Ps.69:2).

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps.73:16).

"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all" (Eccl.11:5).

3. There was the false identity. Mary thought the man was the gardener and that perhaps he had removed the body for some reason. Note why she had not yet recognized Jesus.

⇒ Mary's eyes were full of tears and her head was bowed low in the normal shyness that arises in such scenes.

⇒ Mary was facing in the wrong direction—into the grave. She had turned back around to face where the body had been lying (v.14, cp. v.16).

Thought 1. There is a message here for everyone. We need to fix our eyes upon Jesus in confronting death. Too often, we see the dead and become so wrapped up in grief that we forget the risen Lord and the great hope He gives us (Jn.3:16; 5:24; 14:2-3). There is no question about Jesus' emphasis here. This is the message He was wishing to convey to Mary. There was no need for such convulsive weeping. Weep and grieve, yes, but there is a limit. Mary could have and should have seen Him sooner.

"He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it" (Is.25:8).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor.15:54).

"[God's purpose and grace] is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev.21:4).

4. There was the great recognition. This was one of those dramatic moments that exceeds the ability of words to express. Only two words were spoken:

⇒ "Mary"

⇒ "Rabboni"

Note three points.

a. Mary recognized Jesus not by sight, but by His voice and the word spoken by Him. So it is with us today: we know the Lord by His Word and His Spirit.

"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37; cp. Jn.17:17).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor.6:17).

"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor.1:22; cp. 2 Cor.5:5).

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph.2:18; cp. Eph.1:13-14).

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (1 Jn.4:13).

b. Jesus called Mary by name; she was one of His sheep. He knows His sheep by name and His sheep know the sound of His voice (His Word).

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" (Jn.10:4).

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14).

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (Jn.10:16).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (Jn.10:27).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev.3:20).

c. Mary called Jesus "Rabboni," *My Master*, not "Rabbi" (Master or Teacher). Rabboni (Rabbounei), My Master, was a title of more respect and honor than just Rabbi. She was acknowledging Him to be her supreme Teacher, the One who was due all her honor and respect, loyalty and allegiance. She was acknowledging that He was her Master and she was His humble follower (disciple).

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

4 (20:17-18) **Commission—Witnessing**: the third startling sight was Mary's new commission. Apparently Mary was so full of joy and excitement that she just reached out to embrace Jesus. Immediately Jesus fired the command: "Touch me not" (me mou haptou).

The words are present action, *stop clinging to me*. Mary's great love seemingly had one flaw. She wanted to revel in her love for the Lord and in the fellowship that that love brought her. She was reaching out to clutch and to cling to His body (physically), but in doing so, she was missing the point: His cross and resurrection had created a totally new relationship. He was no longer just her Rabboni, her Master. He was her Lord and God (cp. Jn.20:28). He was soon to ascend back to the Father, so she must not waste time clutching and clinging. She must run and tell her great discovery. The Master was now her Lord and God, for He had created a new spiritual relationship with men.

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yea now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor.5:16-17).

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:19-21).

	C. Event 3: The Great Charter of the Church—Jesus Appears to the Disciples, 20:19-23 (Mk.16:14; Lk.24:36-49)	said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.	c. His effect: Unbelievable joy & gladness[DS2,3]
1 The disciples were hiding in fear a. Was the same day: At night b. Discussed reports[DS1] c. Jesus appeared suddenly	19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.	21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.	**3 Subject 2: The great commission**
2 Subject 1: The risen Lord—His presence was very real a. His message: Peace b. His wounds: Evidence	20 And when he had so	22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: 23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.	**4 Subject 3: The Holy Spirit** a. The endument or giving of the Spirit[DS4] b. The authority[DS5]

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

C. Event 3: The Great Charter of the Church—Jesus Appears to the Disciples, 20:19-23

(20:19-23) **Introduction**: this was the first appearance of Jesus to His disciples as a group after His resurrection. What would He say and talk about? What would be the topic of conversation and the subjects covered? Whatever He chose to say would be of critical importance. It is this that John focuses upon: the subjects and the topics discussed when Jesus first appeared to the disciples.

1. The disciples were hiding in fear (v.19).
2. Subject 1: the risen Lord—His presence was very real (v.19-20).
3. Subject 2: the great commission (v.21).
4. Subject 3: the Holy Spirit (v.22-23).

1 (20:19) **Disciples, Fear of—Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the disciples were hiding for fear of the Jews. They were behind locked doors, probably in the upper room of the same house where Jesus had met with them just a few days earlier. They were scared and fearful of the authorities who had vented so much wrath and vengeance upon their Lord. There was the imminent danger they could be arrested and imprisoned or executed as revolutionaries just as Jesus had been.

Note that it was Sunday, the very day that Jesus had arisen, and it was nighttime. Luke tells us there were numerous reports that Jesus had been raised from the dead. (See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.20:19.)

Remember: the doors were locked. Suddenly, unexpectedly, Jesus stood before them—right in their midst. He immediately began to discuss the three subjects of the outline.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(20:19) **Jesus' Resurrection—Reports**: the reports would be about the empty tomb and linen clothes discovered by Peter and John (Jn.20:6f), the appearances to Mary Magdalene (Jn.20:14f), Peter (1 Cor.15:4), the women (Mt.28:1; Mk.16:1f), and the two walking to Emmaus (Lk.24:1).

2 (20:19-20) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: the first subject was the risen Lord Himself. His presence was very real. His sudden appearance shook and frightened the disciples. They thought they were seeing a vision or a spirit (Lk.24:36-37). The first thing Jesus did was prove that it was really He. He did this by doing two things. (Also see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.21:1 for more discussion.)

1. He used the simple day-to-day greeting that was common among Jews, "Peace be unto you." Using the greeting so familiar to the disciples would help to put them at ease. The fact that He spoke just as He had always spoken would give them some indication that it was really He and not just a vision or a spirit.

> **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph.2:13-14).**
>
> **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn.14:27).**
>
> **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (Jn.16:33).**

2. He showed them His wounds. This must have been a dramatic and touching moment, a moment that just exploded the minds of the disciples. Jesus probably moved around to each of them, allowing each one to see the wounds. This convinced the disciples. They knew for sure...

- that they were not seeing a vision or a spirit.

- that this was His body, the body of their wonderful Lord, the very same Jesus whom they had known before His crucifixion.

> **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)" (1 Jn.1:1-2).**
>
> **"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).**

3. The effect upon the disciples was unbelievable joy and gladness (cp. Lk.24:41). Their spirits and attitudes were charged with joy and were transformed from the lowest point of dejection to the highest point of triumphant conviction. They now knew what Jesus meant, that He was truly...
   - the Way to God.
   - the Truth of God.
   - the Life of God.

In Him was life—His words were *literally* true. He had meant exactly what He had said. They had just spiritualized His words, twisted them to mean what they had wanted. But now they knew.

⇒ When He had said that He was going to die, He meant He was going to die.

⇒ When He had said that He was going to arise, He meant He was going to arise.

And here He was standing before them, revealing the most glorious truth in all the universe. Man could now conquer sin and death and live forever. He had actually come "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10. Cp. Jn.10:38.) They now saw and understood (see DEEPER STUDY # 2, *See*—Jn.20:20).

DEEPER STUDY # 2

(20:20) **See** (eido): means more than mere sight. It is seeing with understanding. It is the very same word used of John when he *saw and believed* (cp. Jn.20:8).

DEEPER STUDY # 3

(20:20) **Prophecies**: the disciples finally understood that Jesus had meant exactly what He was saying. When He had said that He was going to die and arise from the dead, they had spiritualized His words. But Jesus had meant exactly what He was saying: He was to literally die and arise from the dead and by such He was to usher in the Kingdom of God. Of course, this was far more meaningful than the earthly kingdom they had desired. It was the most glorious news in all the world, for man could now live beyond a few short years in an earthly kingdom; man could live in the very presence of God forever. Sin, death, and hell were now conquered.

Jesus constantly shared His death and resurrection. This fact is often overlooked. The predictions in just the Gospel of John are given here.

1. The prophecies concerning His death alone.

> **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn.10:11, 15).**
>
> **"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour....Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (Jn.12:27, 31-33).**
>
> **"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you....Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards" (Jn.13:33, 36).**
>
> **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn.15:12-14).**
>
> **"But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you" (Jn.16:5-7).**
>
> **"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (Jn.16:28).**
>
> **"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee....And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (Jn.17:11, 13).**

2. The prophecies concerning the resurrection alone.

> **"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" (Jn.6:62).**

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go" (Jn.8:14).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25-26).

3. The prophecies concerning both His death and resurrection.

"Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?" (Jn.7:33-36).

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (Jn.7:37-39).

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (Jn.8:21-29).

"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn.10:17-18).

"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn.12:23-24).

"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him" (Jn.13:31-32).

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (Jn.14:2-3).

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (Jn.14:19-20).

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (Jn.14:28-30).

"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (Jn.16:16-22).

3 (20:21) **Commission—Witnessing**: the second subject was the great commission. Note two critical points.

1. There is one great qualification for being commissioned: receiving, possessing, and knowing the peace of Christ (see note—Jn.14:27). Unless a person has been reconciled to God *by Christ*, unless he has really made peace with God, he cannot represent God before the world.

2. There is the great link between the mission of Christ and the disciple. The disciple is sent on the very *same* mission as Christ.

⇒ God sent Christ on a specific mission.

⇒ Christ sends His disciple on the very same mission.

What is the mission?

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:17).

"I am come...that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).

"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (Jn.12:47).

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice" (Jn.18:37).

The disciple is sent forth to proclaim and bear witness to the salvation of God. The disciple is the prophet and witness of the living Lord.

⇒ Christ is the Way; the disciple *points* the Way.

⇒ Christ is the Truth; the disciple *proclaims* the Truth.

⇒ Christ is the Life; the disciple *shares* the Life.

3. The great words "sent" (apestalken) and "send" (pempo) are different in the Greek. The Father's sending Christ is *apostello*, which means first of all, *a setting apart and sending forth with delegated authority*. There are only four chapters in John where Christ does not claim to have been sent. Christ's sending the believer is *pempo*, which never means delegated authority. It always means to *dispatch under authority*.

God sent Christ and delegated all authority to Him. Christ delegates no authority to the believer. He dispatches messengers.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5:20-21).

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (Jn.15:16).

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (Jn.1:6).

4 (20:22-23) **Holy Spirit**: the third subject was the Holy Spirit. Christ had just commissioned His disciples. He now gave them the power to carry out His orders.

1. There was the endument or giving of the Spirit (see DEEPER STUDY # 4, *Holy Spirit*—Jn.20:22).
2. There was the authority (see DEEPER STUDY # 5—Jn.20:23).

DEEPER STUDY # 4

(20:22) **Holy Spirit, Coming**: Jesus' breathing on the disciples was a prophetic sign of the Spirit's coming and a spiritual quickening for the disciples. It was both a symbolic and a spiritual preparation. Jesus was showing His followers that the Spirit's very special presence and power was to indwell both believers and the church as the temple of God. The Spirit, of course, was not to come until Christ's ascension. (See notes—Jn.14:28-29; 16:7; DEEPER STUDY # 1—Acts 2:1-4; DEEPER STUDY # 2—8:14-17; note—10:44-48.)

Note several things.

1. Christ breathed on each individual. He was symbolizing that the Holy Spirit was to indwell each believer in a very special way.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (Jn.14:16-18).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (Jn.14:21).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor.2:12).

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph.3:20).

2. Christ breathed on the whole group—"on them all." He was symbolizing that the Holy Spirit was to indwell the corporate body, the church as a whole in a very special way. This broader picture is further emphasized by Luke when he says there were others present with the apostles on this occasion (Lk.24:33, 49). (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.14:20; notes—1 Cor.3:16; 6:19; Eph.3:6; Col.1:26-27.)

"Ye [the church] are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (1 Cor.3:16).

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

DEEPER STUDY # 5

(20:23) **Forgiving Sins—Ministers, Authority**: this is a disputed passage. There are two things we can know for sure about its meaning.

⇒ No man can forgive another man's sins.

⇒ Believers *can proclaim* that a man's sins are forgiven *if he receives Christ* (Jn.1:12). Believers can also proclaim that a man's sins are not forgiven if he does not receive Christ.

There is only one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus (1 Tim.2:5-6). No other man has ever been worthy to give His life as a ransom for others. No other ransom has ever been acceptable to God. Christ Jesus alone is worthy and acceptable to die as a ransom for someone else. He alone is the Perfect Man. Therefore...

- only Christ can forgive and judge sins.

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn.5:22).

"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (Jn.5:27).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn.12:48).

"And when he [the Holy Spirit] is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn.16:8).

- only representatives of Christ (believers) can say that a man is forgiven by Christ or not forgiven by Christ.

by hearing, repenting, believing

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt.16:19).

"Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt.18:18).

"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (Jn.20:23).

	D. Event 4: The Great Conviction—Thomas' Confession, 20:24-29	again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.	doubt for eight days
1 Thomas' frustrated, reactionary spirit	24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.	27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.	**3 Thomas' critical confrontation & confession: Jesus appeared & challenged & convicted him**
a. The disciples testified; Thomas argued	25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.	28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.	a. The confrontation
b. The reason: Guilt—he had forsaken & withdrawn from them			1) Jesus was aware of Thomas' demands
2 Thomas' false picture of Jesus			2) Jesus warned & called for belief
a. He was just an earthly deliverer			b. The strong confession
b. He was now dead			
c. Result: Persistent	26 And after eight days	29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.	**4 Thomas' great lesson for all men**

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

D. Event 4: The Great Conviction—Thomas' Confession, 20:24-29

(20:24-29) **Introduction**: this is an excellent study on conviction and confession. It is the great conviction and confession of Thomas.

1. Thomas' frustrated reactionary spirit (v.24-25).
2. Thomas' false picture of Jesus (v.25-26).
3. Thomas' critical confrontation and confession—Jesus appeared and challenged and convicted him (v.26-28).
4. Thomas' great lesson for all men (v.29).

(20:24-29) **Another Outline**: Conviction—its signs, results, or reactions.

1. A frustrated reactionary spirit (v.24).
2. A false picture of Jesus (v.25).
3. A persistent doubt (v.26).
4. A critical confrontation (v.27).
5. A strong confession (v.28).
6. A great lesson for the church (v.29).

1 (20:24-25) **Unbelief, Cause of—Thomas**: Thomas' frustrated, reactionary spirit. Thomas had not been with the disciples when Jesus first appeared to them. Like so many today, he staunchly refused to believe that Jesus had actually risen from the dead. The disciples *testified* and *bore witness* to the glorious truth. The Greek means they "kept on telling him," but Thomas became stiffnecked and obstinate in his unbelief. He even argued against their testimony, and he argued with deep intensity. He was deeply aggravated and frustrated, feeling great disappointment and guilt. The depth of his aggravation and guilt is seen in his repulsive shout, "Except I shall see...put my finger...[and] thrust my hand into his wounds, I will not believe" (Jn.20:25).

What was it that frustrated Thomas so much and caused him to sense such intense guilt and react the way he did? Evidently...

- Thomas *had forsaken* the Lord, and that was enough to frustrate any man's spirit.
- Thomas had also *withdrawn* from the disciples; consequently, he was *not present* when the Lord first appeared (Jn.20:24). He missed another opportunity to be identified with Christ.

Of course, this caused Thomas to become aggravated with guilt all over again. He became critical of the body of believers. It was his own fault, but as human nature so often reacts, he blamed others through his aggravated spirit. He argued against their experience with the resurrected Lord. Having taken all he could bear, in utter frustration he shouted out, "Except I shall see..put my finger...[and] thrust my hand into his wounds, I will not believe" (Jn.20:25). It was eight days more before the Lord ever appeared to Thomas (Jn.20:26). What a loss he experienced!

Thought 1. Persistent doubt always delays the blessings.

Thought 2. Guilt, frustration, disappointment, and exclusion often result in a...

- haughty spirit
- reaction
- denial of facts
- fierce outburst

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (1 Jn.3:20).

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful: how is it that ye have no faith?" (Mk.4:40).

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Lk.24:25).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb.10:38).

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev.2:4).

"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways" (Pr.14:14).

2 (20:25-26) **Jesus Christ, Misconceptions**: Thomas' false picture of Jesus. Thomas had always thought in terms of an earthly Messiah or Savior who would make things better upon this earth and in this life. He had become a follower of Jesus thinking that an earthly kingdom was to be set up and that he was to be a leader in that kingdom. He saw Jesus as the promised Messiah who was to be the Son of David, that is, to come from David's roots. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20; note—1:23; DEEPER STUDY # 4—1:49.) He refused to see beyond the human and physical things of this world. Therefore, he could see Jesus only as the man who was nailed to the cross and had a spear thrust into His side and was now dead. (See notes—Jn.13:1-17; Lk.22:24-30 for more discussion.)

Thought 1. False pictures of Jesus lead to unbelief. Jesus is more than...

- a great teacher.
- a great prophet.
- a great man.
- a great founder of a religion.

He is even more than the greatest man who ever lived. All such beliefs—no matter how highly they esteem Jesus—are false beliefs, for they see Jesus only as a man. They see Him as one of the greatest men who ever lived, but they still see Him only as a man.

Thought 2. Men prefer to see Jesus only as a man because it brings Him down to their level. It makes Him less than Lord. They believe it means...

- that man is not totally depraved, not wicked through and through; that man is not so bad that Jesus had to sacrifice His life for them.
- that man can do what Jesus did, the best he can, and God will accept him.
- that man does not have to follow Jesus in every little detail and teaching. Why? Because as man, they believe that Jesus was not absolutely perfect. He was wrong in some things. Where? Each person has to decide the best he can where Jesus was right and wrong. Then that person must do the best he can to follow Jesus where Jesus was right. Men believe it is doing the best they can that God accepts. (Note how this allows each man to *form* God in his own mind and after his own likeness. Man can make God as he wishes God to be. Man can do what he wishes and then say that it was allowed by God.)

"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets" (Mt.16:13-14).

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him" (Mk.6:3).

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Ro.1:21-23).

"[Men] who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever" (Ro.1:25).

3 (20:26-28) **Confession**: Thomas' critical confrontation and conviction. Jesus appeared and challenged and convicted Thomas.

1. Note the confrontation. The doors were again shut and locked (see note—Jn.20:19). Suddenly, unexpectedly, without notice, Jesus stood in the midst of the disciples. Again He eased their shock by giving the normal greeting: "Peace be unto you." But then note what He did: He turned immediately to confront Thomas.
   a. Jesus revealed that He knew all about Thomas' unbelief and demands. He used the very same words that Thomas had demanded: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (v.27).

Thought 1. Jesus knows every man's heart: his despair, doubts, fears, hope, love. He knows where and when to strike at a man's heart. However, note a crucial factor: Thomas was where Jesus could reach him. He was in the presence of believers listening to their testimony. He had not shut them out despite his questions.

"And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man" (Jn.2:25).

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (1 Cor.3:20).

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam.2:3).

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness" (Dan.2:22).

b. Jesus warned and called for belief. Thomas had been walking down a dangerous road. The disciples had witnessed to him time and again, but he had refused time and again to accept their testimony.

⇒ "Be not faithless" (me ginou apistos): stop becoming an unbeliever. You are running the risk of *becoming faithless* and unbelieving, beyond the point of believing. You have carried your unbelief too far. It is now time to stop the foolishness. The others have been repeatedly witnessing the truth to you. Stop the stiffnecked, obstinate unbelief. You are in danger.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn.3:18).

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn.3:36).

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn.8:24).

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him" (Heb.2:3).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (Heb.3:12).

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

⇒ Believe (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.2:24).

"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn.3:15).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn.11:25).

"I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (Jn.12:46).

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

Thought 1. To be faithless is to be Christless, "without Christ...having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph.2:12).

2. The strong confession. This is one of the great confessions in Scripture. Most likely dropping to his knees, Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord, My God." He now knew five great things.

a. That Jesus is truly the risen Lord. All that Jesus had said was true (see DEEPER STUDY # 3—Jn.20:20).

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Ro.1:4).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor.1:9).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor.8:6).

b. That Jesus is both Lord and God, the Sovereign majesty of the universe (see note—Jn.1:1-2).

"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col.2:9-10).

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim.3:16).

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb.1:3).

c. That Jesus is the One who has come to truly reveal God, that He is the Mediator between God and man (see note—Jn.14:6; DEEPER STUDY # 1—3:31; DEEPER STUDY # 3—3:34; cp. 1 Tim.2:15).

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn.14:6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim.2:5).

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb.8:6).

"And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb.9:15).

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb.9:24).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn.2:1).

d. That Jesus accepts no half-way commitments. Jesus expected to be his Lord and his God: "*My* Lord, *My* God." Therefore, he must personally bow and worship Jesus as his Lord and his God.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Ph.2:9-11).

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Ro.14:9).

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18).

"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev.5:12).

e. That Jesus expected an open and public confession of Him as Lord and God (Mt.10:32; Lk.12:8).

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt.10:32).

"Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Lk.12:8).

"Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 Jn.2:23).

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 Jn.4:15).

4 (20:29) **Belief**: Thomas' great lesson for all men. What is the lesson?

⇒ To believe without having to see evidences and proof.

"Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (Jn.20:29).

⇒ To believe because of tenderness and warmth.

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are

saved)....For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph.2:4-5, 8-9).

⇒ To believe because of love and care and because of the need and nature of the human heart.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:8).

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Ro.3:23).

⇒ To believe because of the need for morality and godly character.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22-23; cp. v.19-21).

⇒ To believe because godly witnesses say so.

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jn.20:21).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk.16:15).

⇒ To believe because of the inner witness of the heart.

"Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Ro.2:15).

⇒ To believe because of the outer witness of nature.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Ro.1:20).

(See DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.2:23; DEEPER STUDY # 1,2,*3*—Mt.4:1-11 for more discussion.)

Note that Thomas ceased being obstinate and rebellious when he saw Jesus and after Jesus had rebuked him. Thomas had been at fault; he had been faithless, and his unbelief was inexcusable. The men who had proclaimed the truth to him were not liars. Neither could they all have been deceived. Thomas had just refused to believe because he did not want to believe. He had acted intellectually superior and had been about to lose his soul.

The point is this: the person who believes without seeing demonstrates...

- a strength of character.
- a tenderness and warmth of heart.
- a sensitivity to the witness of the Holy Spirit.
- an awareness to the order and beauty of all the world.

Therefore, that person will be blessed with a very special joy, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pt.1:8).

Thought 1. When a man truly sees what Jesus has done for Him, or when a man is rebuked by the Spirit of Christ, he must cease his unbelief. He must turn to Christ, for the Lord's Spirit will not always strive with men.

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen.6:3).

"Happy is the man that feareth always: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief" (Pr.28:14).

"He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Pr.29:1).

	E. Event 5: The Great Purpose of the Signs (Wonderful Works) of Jesus, 20:30-31
1 The great fact: Jesus did many signs a. In the presence of the disciples b. Not recorded by John **2 The great purpose: To select a few signs that would lead to belief** a. Jesus is the Messiah b. Jesus is the Son of God **3 The great result: Life**	30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

E. Event 5: The Great Purpose of the Signs (Wonderful Works) of Jesus, 20:30-31

(20:30-31) **Introduction**: note two significant facts as an introduction to this passage. First, it is quite clear that the gospel writers did not include all that Jesus did in their gospels. In fact, they recorded very few of the signs. Contrary to what is usually thought, Jesus was apparently ministering and meeting the needs of multitudes every day—from sunrise until sundown.

Second, note the use of the word "signs." In talking about Jesus' life, the word "signs" is chosen by John. All that Jesus was and did were signs—signs demonstrating that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. In these two verses, John gives the great purpose of the signs.

1. The great fact: Jesus did many signs or wonderful works (v.30).
2. The great purpose of John in his Gospel: to select a few signs that would lead to belief (v.31).
3. The great result: life (v.31).

1 (20:30) **Jesus Christ, Works—Ministry—Gospels, Writing of**: the great fact, Jesus did many other signs that are not recorded in this gospel by John. He did many wonderful things. He was busy every day, actively involved either in worshipping God alone or in teaching and ministering to people. For about three years, Jesus was constantly demonstrating that He was the Messiah, the Son of God. He gave all the evidence in the world:

⇒ acts of love and purity
⇒ acts of righteousness and justice
⇒ works of mercy and compassion
⇒ works of miracles and power
⇒ works of godliness and sovereignty

⇒ words of truth and salvation
⇒ words of peace and faith
⇒ words of hope and joy
⇒ words of morality and discipline
⇒ words of commitment and self-denial

The point is that Jesus' life—His character and behavior, His preaching and teaching, His miracles and power—proves that He is the Messiah, the Son of God. No man could do the things He did unless He were the Son of God. Who He was and what He did prove it.

Note that Jesus did not do the signs in secret, that is, out in a desert or off in a corner of the world. He did them out in the open, publicly. John said He did the signs in the presence of His disciples. They witnessed the signs, for Jesus saw to it that there was adequate witness and testimony. Note what John says in his epistle:

> **"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (1 Jn.1:1-4).**

Note one other fact: John says that he has been highly selective in the signs he has chosen to record in his gospel. There were "*many*" signs which Jesus gave; so many in fact, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (Jn.21:25). John selected only a *few* signs to record. He had a specific purpose in mind, so he chose a few signs that would help meet that purpose.

2 (20:31) **Gospel of John, Purpose**: the great purpose of John was to select a few signs that would lead men to believe. (See DEEPER STUDY # 2, *Believe*—Jn.2:24 for discussion.) Every point in John's purpose is already footnoted and covered in John's gospel. Referring to these notes will give the discussion of this passage.

1. Jesus is the Messiah (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:20; note—1:23; DEEPER STUDY # 4—1:49; notes—3:27-28; 12:12-19; 13:36-38; 20:25-28 for discussion).
2. Jesus is the Son of God (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.1:1-5; notes—1:1-2; 1:30-31; 1:34 for discussion).

3 (20:31) **Life**: the great result is life through Jesus' name (see DEEPER STUDY # 2—Jn.1:4; DEEPER STUDY # 1—10:10; DEEPER STUDY # 1—17:2-3 for discussion).

	CHAPTER 21		
	F. Event 6: The Great Reality of Jesus' Resurrection Body, 21:1-14		
1 Jesus showed Himself DSI a. After these things: Proofs of the resurrection, 20:1-31	After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed he himself.	7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.	b. He was identified: "The Lord" c. Peter accepted John's word as proof & He responded
b. To seven disciples who were together: Hiding for fear of the authorities	2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.	8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.	d. The other disciples responded and followed
		9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.	**4 Jesus showed the reality of the surroundings** a. The land & fire b. The fish & bread
c. Peter went fishing: To meet the need for food d. A needed lesson: Self-sufficiency is inadequate—must know & depend upon the risen Lord	3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.	10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.	**5 Jesus showed that He could see, speak, hear, & feel** a. He instructed the disciples b. Peter obeyed c. The catch of fish was counted
2 Jesus stood on the shore—bodily a. An immediate presence b. A bodily presence	4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.	11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.	**6 Jesus showed that His body was real** a. He invited them to eat
3 Jesus possessed supernatural knowledge a. He acted on His supernatural knowledge	5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.	12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.	b. He was the Lord c. He Himself ate
	6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.	13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.	
		14 This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.	**7 Conclusion: Jesus' resurrection was affirmed**

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THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

F. Event 6: The Great Reality of Jesus' Resurrection Body, 21:1-14

(21:1-14) **Introduction**: Jesus proved the great reality of His resurrection body. He showed that He really did arise from the dead. Death had been conquered and men could now live forever.

1. Jesus showed Himself (v.1-3).
2. Jesus stood on the shore—bodily (v.4).
3. Jesus possessed supernatural knowledge (v.5-8).
4. Jesus showed the reality of the surroundings (v.9).
5. Jesus showed that He could see, speak, hear, and feel (v.10-11).
6. Jesus showed that His body was real (v.12-13).
7. Conclusion: Jesus' resurrection was affirmed (v.14).

1 (21:1-3) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus showed Himself (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Jn.21:1). Note four things.

1. The words "after these things" refer to the proof of Jesus' resurrection already recorded (Jn.20:1-31).
2. Seven disciples were together. They were apparently in some home continuing to hide for fear of the authorities (see note—Jn.20:19).
3. Peter went fishing to meet the need for food. Note that the others decided to join him and that they went under the cover of darkness and off on some lonely strand of beach (v.3, 9-14). In the sovereignty of God, the small band of men needed to learn a glorious lesson, so God was setting the stage for them to receive the lesson.
4. They caught nothing, and it was in this that they were to learn the much needed lesson: self-sufficiency is inadequate. They could no longer do anything on their own. They must know the risen Lord, and they must depend upon the risen Lord. They could not provide for themselves in their own strength; they must know that the Lord is really risen, and they must learn to depend upon Him.

Jesus used this experience of catching nothing to teach the disciples that He had truly risen. It was He in the resurrected body. He was truly the Risen Lord, and it was He upon whom they must depend from now on.

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(21:1) **Body, Resurrected—Jesus Christ, Resurrection; Shows Himself**: it is said twice in one verse, "He showed Himself." The purpose of these appearances was to prove that Jesus was not a spirit, vision, phantom, hallucination, or any other figment of man's imagination.

He was the risen Lord—bodily. He was not someone else. His body was none other than the body of Jesus, the Carpenter from Nazareth. He had been raised from the dead—physically raised. His body was real. It differed, yes; but it was His body—perfected, no longer subject to the limitations and frailties of the physical universe and its laws. It was His body which was now transformed into a spiritual body by the power of God's Word (cp. Ro.1:3-4).

How did the Lord's body differ since His resurrection? Some idea can be gleaned by looking both at His resurrection body and at the glorified body promised to the believer.

1. The resurrected body of the Lord was His body, but it was radically changed. It had all the appearance of His physical body, yet it was not bound by the physical world and its material substance.
   a. It looked like the same material body, the same "flesh and bones," not some other body. It was a body that bore the marks of the nails in His hands and feet (Jn.20:20, 27). It was a body that appeared and looked like a body and that occupied space.
   b. It was a body that could travel and appear any place at will or by thought, a body unhampered by space, time, or physical substance. When He appeared, it was suddenly, even behind locked doors (Lk.24:36; Jn.20:19).
   c. It was a body that differed enough from the earthly body that it was not clearly recognized, not at first, not until it was closely observed.
      ⇒ Mary Magdalene thought He was the gardener (Jn.20:15).
      ⇒ The two disciples walking toward Emmaus thought He was a traveller (Lk.24:31).
      ⇒ The disciples who were fishing did not recognize Him standing on the seashore (Jn.21:4).

   However, after close observation, the Lord was recognized in all these instances. This probably indicates that our heavenly bodies will look like our earthly bodies, differing only in that they are perfected.

2. The resurrected and glorified body that is promised to the believer gives some additional insight into the kind of body Jesus now has. One of the most wonderful promises ever made to man is given in the words:
   ⇒ "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Ph.3:21; cp. Mt.13:43; Ro.8:17; Col.3:4; Rev.22:5).
   ⇒ We shall be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Ro.8:29. Cp. 1 Cor.15:49; 2 Cor.3:18.)
   ⇒ "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 Jn.3:2).

The body of the believer is to undergo a radical change just as the Lord's body was radically changed. Several changes are promised the believer.

a. The believer will receive a spiritual body.

   "There is a natural body [soma psuchikon] and there is a spiritual body [soma pneumatikon]" (1 Cor.15:44).

   Note that the *spiritual body* (*soma*) is still a body just like the *earthly body* (soma). The spiritual body still retains the qualities of the earthly body. The difference lies in its nature: it will no longer be a natural (soulish) body; it will be spiritual. What does this mean? In essence, the body will be perfected and glorified: no longer subject to aging, deterioration, death, decay, pain, tears, sorrow, or crying (Rev.14:4).
   ⇒ "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."
   ⇒ "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory."
   ⇒ "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."
   ⇒ "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

   Note the strong, emphatic declaration: "*There is* a natural body, and *there is* a spiritual body" (1 Cor.15:42-44).

b. The believer will receive a body that is *not flesh and blood.* Flesh and blood are corruptible, they age, deteriorate, die, and decay.

   "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor.15:50).

   "Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days" (Jn.11:39).

   "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption" (Acts 13:36-37).

   "All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccl.3:20).

   "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor.15:42).

   "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor.5:1-2).

c. The believer will receive a body that will be radically changed.

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor.15:52-53).

d. The believer will be given a body that will not need reproduction for continuing the (redeemed) human race.

"In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" (Mt.22:30).

2 (21:4) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus stood on the shore—bodily.

1. His presence was immediate, sudden, unexpected.
2. His presence was bodily, that is, His body stood there. It was morning, and the disciples saw a person just as they would see any other person standing on the seashore. There was no thought of a vision, hallucination, or spirit. They saw a person on the seashore and thought nothing strange about it. Note: they did not know it was Jesus, not at first sight.

3 (21:5-8) **Jesus Christ, Knowledge of**: Jesus possessed supernatural knowledge. Jesus knew where the fish were. Remember the disciples had been commercial fishermen before their call to serve the Lord. Jesus was teaching that He, the risen Lord, was the same Lord who took care of them before the crucifixion; therefore, He would take care of them now. But there was one significant difference that they must learn. The resurrection increased His care and added much more to their salvation. He, the risen Lord, was the sovereign majesty of the universe who could use His sovereign knowledge to provide all things for His dear children (cp. Mt.6:25-34).

Now note: John knew immediately that it was the Lord. However, it was the miracle of knowing where the fish were, the Lord's supernatural sovereign knowledge, that told John.

"Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God" (Jn.16:30).

The response was exactly what it should have been. Peter clothed himself and jumped into the lake and swam to shore. The other disciples followed in the boat.

Thought 1. When men hear that Jesus is really alive—that He is the Sovereign Majesty of the universe—they should do just what these men did: rush to Him as quickly as possible.

"[Jesus Christ] whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:24).

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Ro.4:25).

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Ro.10:9).

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him" (1 Th.4:14).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pt.1:3-4).

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Pt.3:18).

Thought 2. Every genuine believer experiences the supernatural care of the risen Lord. The believer knows the sovereign knowledge and care of the Lord in his own life (Mt.6:25-34).

4 (21:9) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus showed the reality of the surroundings. Note the land and fire, the fish and bread. He was showing that He was the same Jesus who had always been with them. He was not a figment of their imagination, not a vision, not even a spirit. He was in a body just like the body they had always known.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Mt.14:27).

5 (21:10-11) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus showed that He could see, speak, hear, and feel. He instructed the disciples to gather in the fish, instructing them just as He always had. They obeyed, even to the point of counting the fish. Jesus was heaping proof upon proof, giving the disciples indisputable evidence of His resurrection.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was

manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn.1:1-3).

6 (21:12-13) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus showed that His body was real. He invited them to eat and He ate with them, just as He always had. Again, the point is that they must *know* it was Jesus. The risen Lord was the same Jesus who had walked and lived with them, the only difference was that He had risen from the dead in a perfected and glorified body.

Note: the disciples knew beyond question that it was the Lord. Humanly, it was not supposed to be; a dead man arising from the grave was impossible. The physical and material world knew nothing but corruption and decay, sin and death. But seated there eating with them was Jesus. He had risen from the dead and come back to life again. They knew that death was now conquered and that man could now live forever (Jn.20:31).

They knew just what Jesus wanted them to know. They knew the great reality of His resurrection body and the great reality of His sovereign majesty and care for them in conquering death.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn.5:24).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn.11:25-26).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim.1:10).

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb.2:14-15).

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev.21:4).

7 (21:14) **Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: Jesus' resurrection was affirmed by John. Remember why John was writing.

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32).

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak" (2 Cor.4:13).

	G. Event 7: The Great Question of a Disciple's Love and Devotion, 21:15-17	saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.	a. God's love (agapao) b. Peter's love (phileo) c. Feed my sheep
1 After the meal, Jesus focused on Peter **2 Do you love me more than these?** a. Pointed to disciples b. Pointed to fishing equipment c. Feed my lambs	15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.	17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.	**4 Do you love me as a loyal brother—love me with agape love or phileo love?** a. Lord's love (phileo) b. Peter's love (phileo) c. Feed my sheep
3 Do you love me with God's love—love me enough to feed my people?	16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He		

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THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

G. Event 7: The Great Question of a Disciple's Love and Devotion, 21:15-17

(21:15-17) **Introduction**: this is a critical passage for the church and its ministers. It has one great lesson: love is the one basic essential for ministry. Without love, ministry counts for nothing in God's eyes. This passage concerns three questions asked by our Lord.

1. After the meal, Jesus focused on Peter (v.15).
2. Do you love me more than these (v.15)?
3. Do you love me with God's love (v.16)?
4. Do you love me as a loyal brother (v.17)?

(Note: this passage is best studied as a whole, comparing each question with the other two questions. Because of this, all three points are studied together and not by separate points. It is also helpful to see notes, *Love*—Jn.13:33-35; 14:15.)

1 (21:15) **Ministry**: the meal was finished. Jesus and the disciples were sitting around talking and sharing together after the meal. Remember four things.

⇒ Jesus had already met Peter all alone in a private session to discuss Peter's denial and to make sure he was fully restored (cp. 1 Cor.15:4-5).

⇒ Peter's leadership needed to be reinforced publicly among all the disciples. They all knew about Peter's denial.

⇒ Jesus had to make sure Peter would never deny Him nor fall back from his mission again.

⇒ Jesus needed to teach the disciples the one basic essential for ministry. None of them, not even a charismatic leader such as Peter, could ever minister and bear godly fruit unless he *loved* the flock of God. A man may be the most gifted person in the world, but he is nothing and can do nothing of value *in God's eyes* unless he first loves (cp. 1 Cor.13:1-3). Abilities, talents, gifts, commitments, good deeds, and works just do not qualify a man before God nor make a man acceptable to God. The one great thing—in fact the only thing—that makes a man acceptable and that qualifies him to serve God is *love*.

These are the reasons for what Jesus now did. He turned to focus upon Peter. Note: He called Peter by his full name, Simon Peter, and reminded him that he was the son of Jonas (cp. Jn.1:42). This did two things.

⇒ It attracted everyone's attention, stressing that what was to follow was important—more important than usual.

⇒ It reminded Peter where he had come from. He was of humble beginnings, from a lowly father. All that Peter had become and would become was of God. Peter was *nothing apart from Christ* and *nothing apart from the mission he was about to receive*.

Thought 1. A man must know that he is nothing apart from Christ. How many persons would have more in life—more purpose, more meaning, more significance—if they would only surrender to Christ? How many have actually been called by Christ and rejected His call; therefore, they have missed out on their purpose in life and on making their contribution to society and to the world?

2 (21:15) **Love—Commitment**: there is a difference between the three questions Jesus asked of Peter. Question one asked Peter who he loved the most, the Lord Himself or "these." Just what is meant by "these" is not clear. Jesus could have been pointing to the disciples sitting around. If so, He meant, do you love me more than you love these men or your family? Or, Jesus could have been pointing to the fish, the nets, and the boat. If so, He was asking, do you love me more than your profession and career (cp. Jn.21:3)? Perhaps Scripture is unclear at this point in order to make "these" apply to anything and everything in our lives.

Question two asked Peter if he loved with God's love. This is seen in the Greek word for love. Jesus used one word, but Peter used another. Jesus used the word *agape*, the highest form of love, the love of God Himself. But Peter did not reply, "Yea, Lord, I *agape* you." He said, "Yea, Lord, I *phileo* you." That is, I love you just like a brother; I love you with a brotherly love." *Phileo* means brotherly love, the love between two brothers.

Question three probed the genuineness and loyalty of Peter's love. Here Jesus descended to the human level of love. He used *phileo*. He simply asked Peter, "Peter, do you really love, *phileo* me—even as a brother?" And questioning the loyalty of his love grieved Peter. But Jesus assured Peter that his love would one day reach the ultimate height (Jn.21:18). Peter would be called upon to demonstrate *agape* love, the sacrificial love of God. Peter would be called upon to die for Christ, to give his life for preaching the love of God to those who do not care for it and who react violently against it.

Jesus was preparing His disciples for a new kind of love that was yet to come. Up to the time of Christ's death and ascension, the greatest love known to man was *phileo love*, the willingness of a man to die for a friend. But in Christ, God was showing the world a new kind of love—*agape love*. *Agape love* is a love so new that a new meaning had to be given to the Greek word "*agape*." *Agape* became the love that was willing to give and die even for an enemy. The early Christian leaders recognized this new dimension of love, so they lifted the meaning of *agape love* up to God's love for the world. *Agape love* is the highest level of love possible; it is the love of God: "God [who] so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).

Agape love is Christ's dying...

- for people who have no strength (Ro.5:6).
- for the ungodly (Ro.5:6).
- for sinners (Ro.5:8).
- for the enemies of God (Ro.5:10).

Peter and the disciples did not yet understand this. They could not because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given, and *agape love* is shed abroad in the heart only by the Holy Spirit (Ro.5:5). It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal.5:22).

3 (21:16) **Ministry—Church**: three times Peter was commissioned to feed and tend the flock of God. If Peter really loved the Lord, then he was commissioned to be a shepherd of the flock of God. Note three things.

1. Scripture identifies the lambs and sheep as the flock of God, that is, as the church of God. Jesus was talking about feeding His church, His disciples within the church.

> **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).**

Note: in this verse (Acts 20:28) the charge is to guard oneself as well as the flock of God. This is similar to what Jesus was saying to Peter: if you love me, guard youself and be faithful; feed my lambs and sheep, my church.

2. The flock of God is made up of both lambs (arnia, v.15) and sheep (probatia, v.16-17).
   ⇒ Lambs: children, young converts, the handicapped or special cases, believers who need special attention.
   ⇒ Sheep: mature believers, believers who have walked and grown in the Lord for a long time. (See note, pt.5—Mt.25:31-33 for more discussion.)
3. The ministry to the flock or church is twofold.
   a. The first ministry is to feed (boske, v.15, 17).
      ⇒ To give food, teaching both the milk and meat of the Word.

> **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pt.2:2-3).**
>
> **"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles [Word] of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of us have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb.5:12-14).**

      ⇒ To guide into the study of the Word—showing oneself approved unto God.

> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**

Note that the word used for feeding (boske) is the word used for both the lambs (v.15) and the sheep (v.17). Both the lambs and sheep are to be fed on the same Word and fed in the same way.

> **"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts" (Jer.15:16).**
>
> **"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12).**
>
> **"Know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live" (Dt.8:3; cp. Mt.4:4).**
>
> **"How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Ps.119:103).**

   b. The second ministry is to shepherd (poimaine, v.16). Shepherding involves all the works of the ministry.

> **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Pt.5:2-3).**

(See note—Jn.10:2-3 for the work of a shepherd. See note—Mk.6:34.)

4 (21:17) **Love**: Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him with *agape* love or *phileo* love. The difference between *agape love* and *phileo love* is as follows.

Phileo love is the love of tender affection, of warm and deep feelings within the heart. It is the deep and precious love of those near and dear to one's heart. It is brotherly love, a love between family members, a love that would die for its brother.

Agape love is the love of the mind, of the reason, and of the will. It is a love that is born of choice; one simply chooses to love regardless of feelings. A person may insult, injure, or humiliate; but *agape love* chooses to seek only the highest good for that person. It is sacrificial love, a love that is willing to die even for its enemies.

Agape love means...

- sacrificial giving
- free acceptance (one freely accepts without any expectation of return)
- cherished attachment
- unselfish devotion
- personal commitment
- genuine concern
- strong loyalty
- precious tenderness

Agape love was so new and so unusual that it can be said that after Christ a new word for love had to be created. Jesus' primary interest with Peter was, of course, that he possess *agape love*: the love that comes from reason and will, that controls the corruptible lusts and wandering thoughts of life, that puts a willingness within a man to serve and to die for all men—even for a person's enemies. Even the enemies of God must hear the gospel and have an opportunity for salvation. However, the fact that Jesus also used *phileo love* with Peter shows that God wants the love of man's warm instinctive feelings as well.

Agape love means at least eight things.

1. *Agape love* is not only a love of emotions. It is a matter of the mind as well as of the heart, of the will as well as of the emotions.

> **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**
>
> **"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro.5:6-8).**
>
> **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 Jn.4:9-10).**

2. *Agape love* is God's love—His very nature. It is the love that God extended toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

> **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us....For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Ro.5:8, 10).**
>
> **"Beloved, let us love one other: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins....And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 Jn.4:7-10, 16).**

3. *Agape love* is a seed that can be planted in the heart only by Christ. It is a fruit of the Spirit of God.

> **"And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro.5:5).**
>
> **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal.5:22).**

4. *Agape love* is the great love that God holds for His own dear Son.

> **"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).**
>
> **"And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (Jn.17:26).**

5. *Agape love* was perfectly expressed when God gave up His own Son to die for man.

> **"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor.5:14).**

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us" (Eph.2:4).

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph.3:19).

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph.5:2).

6. *Agape love* is the love which holds believers together. For three years Jesus Himself had held the apostles together. Now that He was about to leave them, what was going to keep them together and keep them at the task? One thing: the new commandment—*agape love*. *Agape love* is the love believers are to have for one another.

"Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn.13:33-35).

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn.3:17-18).

7. *Agape love* is the love which believers are to have for all men.

"Let all your things be done with charity [love]" (1 Cor.16:14).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (1 Th.3:12).

"And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Pt.1:7).

a. Agape love seeks the welfare of all.

"Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification" (Ro.15:2).

b. Agape love works no ill to its neighbor.

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Ro.13:8-10).

c. Agape love seeks opportunities to do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal.6:10).

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness" (Col.3:12-14; cp. 1 Cor.13:1f).

8. *Agape love* is proven by obedience to Christ. Doing as one wishes instead of doing as God wills shows that one does not have agape love.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments....He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him....Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn.14:15, 21, 23).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (Jn.15:10).

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 Jn.2:5).

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 Jn.5:3).

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandment. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it" (2 Jn.6).

	H. Event 8: The Great Call to Total Commitment, 21:18-25	21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?	a. Peter questioned John's task
		22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.	b. Jesus rebuked Peter c. Jesus challenged & called Peter again
1 Total commitment demands following the leadership of another (the Holy Spirit) a. When young: Peter walked and did as he willed b. When old: Another would carry Peter where he would not go	18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.	23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?	d. John corrected the rumor
2 Total commitment demands the cross—death to self: "Follow me"	19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.	24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.	**4 Total commitment demands bearing witness to Jesus Christ** a. John bore witness[DS1] b. John's witness was true c. John's witness includes only a few of the things that Jesus did[DS2]
3 Total commitment demands undivided attention to one's own task	20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?	25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.	

DIVISION XVI

THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE RISEN LORD, 20:1-21:23

H. Event 8: The Great Call to Total Commitment, 21:18-25

(21:18-25) **Introduction**: this is the final passage of John's gospel. It is the great call to total commitment.

1. Total commitment demands following the leadership of another (the Holy Spirit) (v.18).
2. Total commitment demands the cross—death to self: "Follow me" (v.19).
3. Total commitment demands undivided attention to one's own task (v.20-23).
4. Total commitment demands bearing witness to Jesus Christ (v.24-25).

1 (21:18) **Commitment—Dedication**: total commitment requires following the leadership of another (the Holy Spirit). Who is meant by "another"? In this context it can mean either those who were to carry Peter to death, the Romans; or the Holy Spirit, who was to carry Peter through a life of suffering and martyrdom for the cause of Christ. Jesus seemed to be referring to the whole of Peter's life, ranging from his earlier years when he did what he wished over to his older years when he would be doing what God wished. Because of this, it seems best to interpret "another" as the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was challenging Peter to serve Him, to "feed my sheep" (v.15-17). He was calling Peter to total commitment, and total commitment requires following the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Note two points.

1. When Peter was young he girded himself, dressed and walked where he willed. Before he knew Christ, he...
   - ran his life as he willed
   - did what he wanted
   - went where he wished
   - talked as he willed
   - chose the pleasures he desired
   - chose the profession he wanted

When he was younger, before he ever came to know Christ, Peter was able to live and do what he wanted when he wanted. But no more. Peter could no longer live as he wished. Jesus Christ, his Savior and Lord, was now to control his life. AND I Pray my Life

2. When Peter was old and mature, the Holy Spirit would dress him and carry him places he would not choose or will to go. This, of course, refers to the suffering and martyrdom Peter was to undergo for the sake of Christ.

Since Peter was accepting the call of Christ to *feed His sheep*, Peter would have to...

- live his life as the Spirit willed.
- do what the Spirit wanted.
- choose the profession the Spirit willed.
- go where the Spirit wished.

Note: Jesus was saying that Peter was to be carried "where he would not."

⇒ He was to live a life of suffering (cp. his imprisonments, Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:4).

⇒ He was to die the death of a martyr. His death was to be for the cause of Christ and the glory of God.

Remember that Peter had a wife (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Mt.8:14). At the time of this event, Peter was to live some forty years or more, so he was probably a newlywed. Tradition says that Peter's wife served with him in the ministry for many years. A touching picture is given by Clement of Alexandria who says that she was martyred with Peter:

"On seeing his wife led to death, Peter rejoiced on account of her call and her conveyance home, and called very encouragingly and comfortingly, addressing her by name, 'Remember thou the Lord'" (Stromateis 7:6. Quoted by William Barclay. *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.313.)

There is strong evidence that Peter was crucified in Rome. Tradition says he felt so unworthy to die in the same manner as His Lord that he begged to be crucified upside down.

Thought 1. The call of Christ is to *total commitment*, not just to commitment. Total commitment demands that we follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

1) We can no longer dress and walk as we will.
2) We are to dress and walk as the Holy Spirit wills. (See notes, *Holy Spirit*—Jn.14:15-26; 16:7-15 for more discussion.)

Thought 2. The call of Christ involves persecution. The true believer lives a sacrificial and godly life, bearing a strong testimony and a strong witness. Such a life is rejected and opposed by most in the world.

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim.3:12).

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Ph.1:28).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (1 Pt.4:12-14).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pt.2:21).

The world persecutes the person who lives godly; it persecutes him at work, at play, at home—wherever and whenever it pleases. The world...

- reproaches
- ridicules
- mocks
- bypasses
- shuns
- ignores
- attacks
- curses
- abuses
- martyrs
- murders

Christ was calling Peter to such a life, telling him that the Holy Spirit would carry him to places he would not choose. Christ tells us the same thing. Total commitment requires following the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and all who follow the Holy Spirit shall suffer persecution.

Thought 3. We shall die, everyone of us. How we die should concern us...

- whether we die in self: having lived in comfort, ease, plenty, pleasure, wealth, extravagance, pride, unbelief.
- whether we die for Christ: having lived a godly life, bearing testimony, witnessing, helping, giving, ministering and meeting the desperate needs of a world reeling in sin and death.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9:27).

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor.5:10).

2 (21:19) **Commitment**: total commitment requires the cross, death to self. One must *follow* Christ (see DEEPER STUDY # 1—Lk.9:23 for discussion).

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk.9:23).

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:26).

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk.14:33).

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn.8:12).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour" (Jn.12:26).

3 (21:20-23) **Commitment**: total commitment requires undivided attention to one's own task. Peter asked Jesus what John would be doing in his ministry. Peter and John were very close. John was younger than Peter, probably still a teenager. Apparently, Peter had taken a very close liking to John and had taken him into his care even before Christ had come along (cp. John, Introduction—Author). Peter's interest in John's task and future was therefore natural. Note three things.

1. Jesus rebuked Peter. He told Peter that John's task was not his concern. His own task was to be his concern. Peter was not to look at another man's call and ministry and...
   - be distracted.
   - wish he had that ministry.
   - desire another ministry.
   - compare their calls and ministries.
   - copy or conform to that ministry.
   - meddle.

> **"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (1 Cor.10:24).**
>
> **"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor.10:32-33).**
>
> **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Ph.2:3-4).**

2. Jesus challenged and called Peter again: "Follow me" (v.22).
   ⇒ Concentrate on your own call and task.
   ⇒ Focus your attention, will, energy, and efforts upon your own call and task.
   ⇒ Realize that God knows where you can best serve and that He calls you to that task.

> **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).**
>
> **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pt.5:2).**
>
> **"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you" (1 Cor.9:22-23).**
>
> **"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim.1:12).**
>
> **"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer.3:15).**
>
> **"And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD" (Jer.23:4).**
>
> **"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me" (Ezk.3:17).**

3. John corrected a rumor, an error spreading throughout the church. Some had taken the words of Jesus and misconstrued them, saying that Jesus meant that John would never die. Some were saying that John would survive until Jesus' return to earth. John very simply said this was not what Jesus was saying.

Thought 1. Note how easily the Lord's words are misunderstood unless they are taken at face value, exactly as He spoke them.

> **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim.2:15).**

4 (21:24-25) **Commitment**: total commitment demands bearing witness to Jesus Christ and fulfilling one's task on earth, just as John bore witness and fulfilled his task. John bore witness: the Gospel of John is his witness to the world. And note: John emphasized that his witness was true; he had not lied.

> **"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (Jn.20:31).**

Thought 1. The primary task of every believer is to bear witness to the truth: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God who has come to give life to man—both abundant and eternal life.

> **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn.10:10).**
>
> **"But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**
>
> **"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim.2:2).**
>
> **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pt.3:15).**

DEEPER STUDY # 1
(21:24) **Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection—World, Hope of—Man**: the great witness of John (and of the other gospel writers) is:

> **"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn.3:16).**

Very simply stated, the great witness is the glorious news of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ changes the fate of world history and the whole attitude of man. If the death and resurrection of Christ had never taken place…

- then of all creatures, man would be the most miserable and hopeless.
- then the life of Jesus Christ would have been the most tragic and despairing event in all history.

Why? Because the most merciful and compassionate, the most giving and helpful human being in all the world was treated and killed in the most savage way. However, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ did happen, and because it did, it has changed the whole perspective and truth of world history. Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, life and history have become purposeful. Since Christ has died and risen from the dead, men look at the cross and get a sense, a feeling…

- that the punishment for sin has been paid (atonement).
- that sin can now be forgiven (forgiveness).
- that a perfect life has been sacrificed for man (propitiation).
- that man can now be reconciled and made one with God (reconciliation).
- that man can now be reconciled to man, both personally and worldwide (peace, unity, community, fellowship).
- that man can now be declared righteous (justification).
- that man can be made into a *new creature* before God (regeneration).
- that man can be redeemed (redemption).
- that man can be set apart unto God (sanctification).

DEEPER STUDY # 2
(21:25) See note, *Jesus Christ, Works*—Jn.20:30 for discussion.



PURPOSE STATEMENT

LEADERSHIP MINISTRIES WORLDWIDE

exists to equip ministers, teachers, and laymen in their understanding, preaching, and teaching of God's Word by publishing and distributing worldwide *The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible®* and related *Outline* Bible materials, to reach & disciple men, women, boys, and girls for Jesus Christ.

•MISSION STATEMENT•

1. To make the Bible so understandable - its truth so clear and plain - that men and women everywhere, whether teacher or student, preacher or hearer, can grasp its Message and receive Jesus Christ as Savior; and...
2. To place the Bible in the hands of all who will preach and teach God's Holy Word, verse by verse, precept by precept, regardless of the individual's ability to purchase it.

The ***Outline*** Bible materials have been given to LMW for printing and especially distribution worldwide at/below cost, by those who remain anonymous. One fact, however, is as true today as it was in the time of Christ:

• The Gospel is free, but the cost of taking it is not •

LMW depends on the generous gifts of Believers with a heart for Him and a love and burden for the lost. They help pay for the printing, translating, and placing ***Outline*** Bible materials in the hands and hearts of those worldwide who will present God's message with clarity, authority and understanding beyond their own.

LMW was incorporated in the state of Tennessee in July 1992 and received IRS 501(c) 3 non-profit status in March 1994. LMW is an international, nondenominational mission organization. All proceeds from USA sales, along with donations from donor partners, go 100% into under-writing our translation and distribution projects of ***Outline*** Bible materials to preachers, church & lay leaders, and Bible students around the world.

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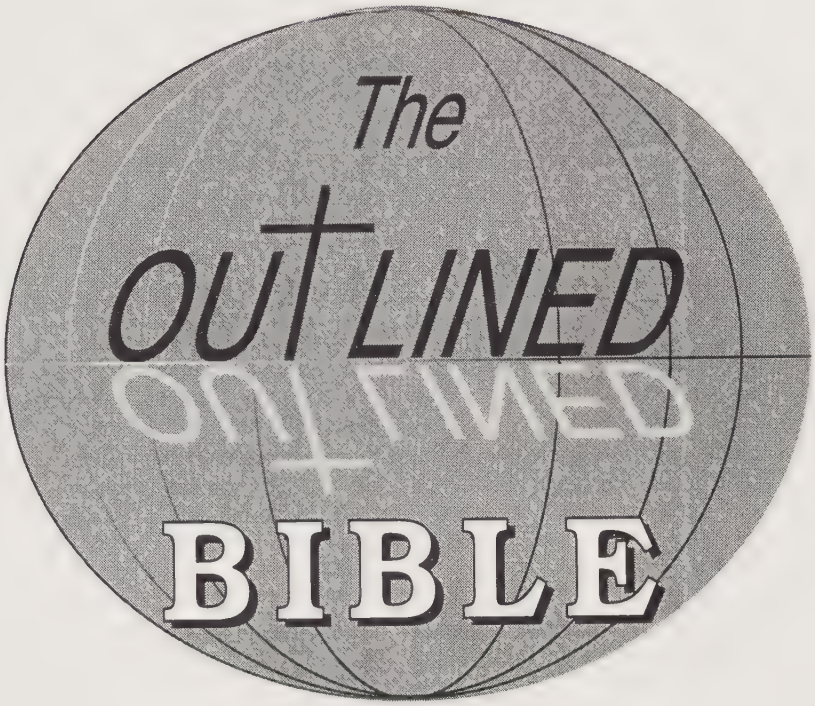

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